

## **Cultural Relativism and Universal Human Rights: Contribution From Social Science of the Middle East**

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**KEYWORDS** Human Right. Middle East. Relativism. Cultural. Practices. Anthropology. Social Science

**ABSTRACT** The authors discuss cultural relativism and universal human right as these two concepts clash in the practices of implementing international human right accords in countries of the Middle East. They argue that Anthropologists have erred on the side of relativism, thereby denying the diversity of values and culture within particular societies and often lending legitimacy to despotisms. Sociologists and economists tend to make the opposite error. Yet, the tolerance and openness that are central to human rights require the discourse of universalism, even as that discourse itself implies a relativism in its local implementations.