

My new book in Arabic.

علوم الشرع والعلوم الاجتماعية: نحو تجاوز القطيعة- أليس الصبح بقریب. مركز نهوض للدراسات والبحوث (2021)

Addressing the rupture between the religious and social sciences: Is the morning coming soon?

<https://nohoudh-center.com/books/%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%88%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%B9-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%88%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%86%D8%AD%D9%88-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B7%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9>

Here is a summary of the book in English:

This 800-page book, which targets specialists in Islamic studies and the social sciences, provides methodological and epistemological grounds for future interdisciplinary dialogue. It starts from the premise that religion cannot be reduced to jurisprudence, that jurisprudence requires an understanding of ethics, and that, therefore, bringing jurisprudence to reality requires scientific tools that have developed in the socle of humanities in general, and in the social sciences in particular. This book contains the summary of five years of fieldwork, in which the faculties of the *Sharīah* and/or Islamic studies in some Arab countries in the East (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait and Qatar) and North Africa (Morocco and Algeria), and Malaysia were examined. Specifically, universities in these locations were studied in terms of their curricula, knowledge production, methods of teaching religious sciences, and in terms of the relationship these sciences have to other scientific fields.

The book concludes by highlighting major challenges these faculties are facing in terms of how they choose to orchestrate their teachings – notably among them, is the quasi absence of social sciences courses in these faculties, the marginalization of *Maqāsid al-Sharīah* for *ijtihad*, and the rarity of teaching a course on (applied) ethics. In addition, I argue that the boundaries between Islamic studies and *Sharīah* studies should be blurred, as their differences are not in the methodology, but in their particular focuses. The book then proposes three alternative models in the Islamic world that can help the faculties of *Sharīah* to overcome these challenges: the Dar El-Hadith El-Hassania Institute for Higher Islamic Studies (Morocco), the College of Islamic Studies (Doha), and the International Islamic University of Malaysia.

Finally, the way out of the tough antagonistic dichotomies between the *Sharīah* and the social sciences can only be achieved if they are combined through a double educational approach – even if this is only done on a minimum format. I.e. adding to faculties of shariah introductory courses in different social sciences disciplines and adding for other faculties and departments course(s) in religion as university requirement (that can be some electives under a rubric of cultural/civilizational/ethics studies). This is an approach necessary in order to build practical reasonings that are able to effectively integrate the pluralistic views that stem from religion, local culture, and the social sciences and humanities. Without this, there is no way to successfully, simultaneously work with liberal arts education and religious and cultural ideals, which need to include fostering the ability to work out tensions between them. If not, the Islamic world will continue to have conflicting elite formations in which religious scholars are insensitive about the mutation in their local context, or social sciences scholars don't sufficiently account for norms and values from the performative perspective of social actors. This is not because religion can take the form of illiberal doctrine but also those who are anti-clericalist become illiberal and even exclusionary and inegalitarian as well.

By providing a critical assessment to the “Islamization of knowledge” paradigm, the book argues that any epistemological reasoning requires being furnished with reality-check exercises, locally and globally. The process of knowledge integration and the ecological approach of knowledge seek to take advantage of both universals and local specificities – a sort of cross-fertilization of social science disciplines and Area Studies (here, being Islamic Studies) – rather than adopting a position that pits local theoretical context against “Western materialistic” theories. Western theoretical frameworks cannot be reduced to being materialistic, purely empirical, and/or individualistic. Similarly, Islamic frameworks do not essentially entail idealism, spirituality, and community. The issue at stake is not simply praising the importance of the community over the individual, but rather to allow for the ability to conduct analysis that focuses on certain social classes or social groups, like the underprivileged.

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(<https://www.ajis.org/index.php/ajiss/article/view/1086/2058>)

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