ARMANDO SALVATORE

The Sociology of ISLAM

Knowledge, Power and Civility

WILEY Blackwell

Praise for *The Sociology of Islam*

A brilliant, pioneering effort to explain the cosmopolitan ethos within Islamicate civilization, *The Sociology of Islam* encompasses all the terminological boldness of Marshall Hodgson, making the Persianate and Islamicate elements of civic cosmopolitanism, across the vast Afro-Eurasian ecumene, accessible to the widest possible readership in both the humanities and the social sciences. **Bruce B. Lawrence,** *author of Who is Allah? (2015)*

Sociologists of religion have long been awaiting a successor volume to Brian Turner's pathbreaking but now dated *Weber and Islam* (1974). Armando Salvatore's new book provides just this update and much more. Ranging across a host of critical case studies and theoretical issues, Salvatore provides a masterful account of religious ethics, rationalization, and civility across the breadth of the Muslim world, from early times to today. The result is a book of deep intellectual insight, important, not just for the sociology of Islam, but for scholars and students interested in religion, ethics, and modernity in all civilizational traditions. **Robert Hefner,** *Boston University*

The sociology of Islam has been a late and controversial addition to the sociology of religion. This field of research has been the principal target of the critique of Orientalism and after 9/11 the study of Islam became heavily politicized. Terrorist attacks in Paris and Beirut have only compounded the long-standing difficulties of objective interpretation and understanding. In the first volume of what promises to be a major three-volume masterpiece, Armando Salvatore steers a careful and judicious course through the various pitfalls that attend the field. The result is an academic triumph combining a sweeping historical vision of Islam with an analytical framework that is structured by the theme of knowledge–power. One waits with huge excitement for the delivery of the remaining volumes. **Bryan Turner,** *City University of New York*

THE SOCIOLOGY OF

ISLAM

KNOWLEDGE, POWER AND CIVILITY

ARMANDO SALVATORE

WILEY Blackwell

This edition first published 2016

Registered Office
John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

Editorial Offices
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA
9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK
The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

For details of our global editorial offices, for customer services, and for information about how to apply for permission to reuse the copyright material in this book please see our website at www.wiley.com/wiley-blackwell.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Salvatore, Armando, author.
Title: The sociology of Islam : knowledge, power and civility / Armando Salvatore.
Description: 1 | Hoboken, N.J. : Wiley, 2016. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2016005808 (print) | LCCN 2016006680 (ebook) | ISBN 9781118662649 (hardback) | ISBN 9781119109976 (paper) | ISBN 9781118662625 (pdf) | ISBN 9781118662632 (epub)
Subjects: LCSH: Islamic sociology. | Civil society–Islamic countries. | BISAC: RELIGION / Islam / General.
Classification: LCC BP173.25 .S34 2016 (print) | LCC BP173.25 (ebook) | DDC 306.6/97–dc23
LC record available at http://lccn.loc.gov/2016005808

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Cover image: Khaju bridge, Esfahan, Iran. © Aurora Photos / Alamy

Set in 10.5/13pt Minion by Aptara Inc., New Delhi, India

1 2016

Contents

Preface and Acknowledgments

The sociology of Islam is an emerging, strategic field of inquiry, teaching, and debate located at the delicate intersection of a variety of disciplines, including sociology, history, Islamic Studies, anthropology, comparative religion, and comparative civilizational analysis. It deals both with conceptual questions and historical interpretations as they originated back in the 1970s, particularly in the pioneering work of Bryan S. Turner and his commentary on Marshall Hodgson's monumental trilogy *The Venture of Islam*. Covering this field of study is a longer-term undertaking that cannot be completed in one volume. This is why this book was born with an introductory intent and use value.

While the beginnings of the sociology of Islam should be traced back to Bryan S. Turner's *Weber and Islam* (Turner 1974), my own entry into the field as a scholar goes back to the early 1990s and coincides with the beginning of my PhD dissertation, which I completed at the European University Institute, Florence in 1994 and published in 1997 (Salvatore 1997). Yet my baptism of fire into the sociology of Islam occurred when I taught my first graduate seminar, in the winter of 1995, at Humboldt University, Berlin. The seminar was titled, in a kind of self-indulgent provocation, 'Is a Sociology of Islam Possible?'

Clearly, whatever the sociology of Islam was by the mid-1990s, it still appeared fragile, dependent on scattered contributions and intermittent collaborations among individual scholars. Still absent, or at best latent, was the sense of a nexus between historical and empirical work, on the one hand, and whatever we happen to call 'theory,' on the other. In the summer prior to that graduate seminar, right after my arrival in Berlin, I convened a small panel on the sociology of Islam at an international conference sponsored by

the leading social science journal *Theory, Culture and Society*. The event took place, by sheer coincidence, in Berlin. The journal editor, Mike Featherstone, had months earlier suggested to me that I invite Bryan Turner and Georg Stauth as speakers to the panel. I had never met them before, though I had read a lot of what they had published, including their co-authored works. These included *Nietzsche's Dance* (Stauth and Turner 1988) which, though devoted to a philosopher, was largely an alternate reading of the genesis of sociology which was to have an impact on my own understanding of the sociology of Islam. During the panel, I was struck by the difference between Bryan's and Georg's papers (and, more generally, approaches), since I had until then strictly associated their names as scholars with each other, and both of them together with the sociology of Islam. Even more, from that point onward, I admired what they had accomplished together, by being able to build powerful synergies and by combining their different sociological geniuses. Twenty years later, I am still profoundly attracted to the scholarship of both Bryan Turner and Georg Stauth and my debt to them in my own venture into and across the sociology of Islam is correspondingly high.

Since the summer of 1995, Georg Stauth has been an invited speaker at every institution I have worked for. His assiduous presence and our serial conversations have fed into my endeavors to develop an original yet balanced approach to the sociology of Islam. Georg has consistently responded to my cultivation of his rich and complex scholarship by offering me the chance to co-edit with him the *Yearbook of the Sociology of Islam* until it ceased publication in 2008, and by inviting me to be a member of the research group he directed at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, Essen, on 'Islam and Modernity' between 2003 and 2006.

This trajectory of twenty years culminated in a conference that took place in June 2015, just a few weeks before this manuscript went into production. The conference's topic was quite straightforward, 'Sociology of Islam: Reflection, Revision, & Reorientation' and I contributed to it a paper on "The Sociology of Islam and the Rise of China." It was convened by the Sociology of Religion section of the German Sociological Association and took place at the Center for Religious Studies (CERES) of Ruhr University, Bochum. The event was inaugurated by a keynote given by Bryan Turner which looked back at forty years of development in the field. Georg Stauth was not present and we missed his critical mind. His absence was for us a healthy warning on how the incessant, climactic politicization of Islam-related themes within the global public sphere presents a serious challenge to the sociology of Islam.

Yet this politicization is also a major reason why a viable sociology of Islam is urgently needed. As Bryan Turner reminded us in his introductory keynote, this field of study, born in the 1970s parallel to—yet independent from—the critique of Orientalism, was propped up by 9/11, alongside other academic fields dealing with Islam from the angle of modernity. The sociology of Islam should avoid being suffocated by this politicization while aiming to retain a scholarly significance and contemporary relevance by also speaking to the concerns of colleagues and students within political science and international relations, as much as it entertains key dialogues with scholars from history and anthropology. Not by chance does this introductory volume address the key dimension at stake in the majority of such conversations, namely power. I hope that this book, due to the consistent interdisciplinary porousness of the sociology of Islam from its beginnings, will attract the attention of practitioners of all academic disciplines concerned with power as well as that of a lay public interested in what—with a crude shorthand similar to those I tried to deconstruct in my PhD thesis more than twenty years ago—we often call 'political Islam.' This construct increasingly depends on Western—and more recently Chinese—perceptions and interests more than on the inner and outer complexities of the diverse social dynamics variably associated with Islam. The sociology of Islam does not ignore this interpretive syndrome but works to shield its object—namely the nexus of religion and civility produced by social forces associated with Islam—from the risk of a preventive, and potentially devastating politicization determined by the interests of powerful observers more than by the concerns of embattled actors.

In pursuing the goal of investigating the nexus of religion and civility, this introductory volume adopts a combined historical, theoretical, and comparative perspective, while it privileges key entanglements that push forward the classic boundaries of comparison. Historical references in the book are of crucial importance, yet by necessity selective. They reflect key periods, characters, or formations and illuminate particularly significant, long-term, and transregional processes of transformation. The main emphasis is on how social relations produce associational bonds and institutional configurations: therefore I opted to explore the unfolding of what I call 'the knowledge–power equation' and the way it produces patterns of civility. The book refers most consistently to the core 'Nile-to-Oxus' area of the Islamic ecumene and to its Central Asian and Mediterranean extensions.

While absolute comprehensiveness is unrealistic in a single, introductory volume, the trilogy that it intends to introduce (also in association with

the forthcoming *Wiley Blackwell History of Islam*, a textbook that I have been editing together with Roberto Tottoli and Babak Rahimi over the last few years) will rebalance such initial regional and thematic foci. Ideally, the present volume should be followed by one dedicated to *The Law, the State, and the Public Sphere* and by a concluding study on *Transnationalism, Transculturalism, and Globalization*.

The book is primarily addressed to the same type of audiences and thematic discussions that generated it in the first place: classes of advanced undergraduate and graduate students on the one hand, and interdisciplinary explorations and debates with fellow scholars on the other. Social activists and policy analysts might also find inspiration in the proposed sociology of Islam for facilitating an understanding of Islam as a longer-term force providing a socio-cultural nexus and an institutional glue to a variety of relations and arrangements.

The Introduction situates the sociology of Islam in its historical and disciplinary context and provides a first discussion of the basic concepts used in the volume. Chapters 2 and 3 refer to the epoch that Marshall Hodgson (whose majestic historical trilogy provides the main source of inspiration for the sociology of Islam) called the Middle Periods (mid-10th to mid-15th centuries). Chapters 5 and 6 embrace early modernity and the colonial stage of late modernity. Chapters 1 and 7 discuss theoretical questions directly relevant to the analysis, while Chapter 4 adopts an explicitly comparative perspective. The Conclusion summarizes the results of the exploration while also providing an initial bridge to future studies and volumes.

Thanking all the colleagues who have directly or indirectly enriched my path through the sociology of Islam would appear as a replica of my email inbox of the last twenty and more years. In what follows, I remember as many as I can among my key interlocutors and I apologize for those omitted due to lapses of memory. I owe thanks to Setrag Manoukian, Fabio Vicini, Tom Troughton, Johann Arnason, Dale Eickelman, Klaus Eder, Arpad Szakolczai, Hatsuki Aishima, Benoit Challand, Khalid Masud, Gianfranco Poggi, James Piscatori, Şerif Mardin, Prasenjit Duara, Bruce Lawrence, Volkhard Krech, Levent Tezcan, Recep Şentürk, Michael Feener, Faisal Devji, Mark LeVine, Fabio Petito, Massimo Galluppi, Gennaro Gervasio, Enrico De Angelis, Andrea Teti, Mohammed Bamyeh, Jeanette Jouili, Schirin Amir-Moazami, Michael Gilsenan, Reinhard Schulze, Jamal Malik, Shmuel Eisenstadt, Alessandro Pizzorno, Charles Hirschkind, Ruth Mas, Sami Zubaida, Kathryn Spellman, Pnina Werbner, Chiara Bottici, Ian Chambers, Talal Asad, Jose Casanova, Craig Calhoun, Ali Zaidi, Meena

Sharifi-Funk, Werner Schiffauer, Bob Hefner, Michael Gasper, Amyn Sajoo, Rouzbeh Parsi, Mohammad Tabishat, Joel Kahn, Aziz Al-Azmeh, Agnes Horvath, Alexander Caeiro, Tommaso Trevisani, Linda Herrera, Asef Bayat, Saba Mahmood, John Bowen, John Esposito, John Voll, Badouin Dupret, Hussein Agrama, Irfan Ahmad, Satoshi Ikeuchi, Ruba Salih, Margot Badran, Mona Abaza, Sigrid Nökel, Valerie Amiraux, Irene Becci, Nadia Fadil, Said Samir, Riem Tisini, Emilio Spadola, Frederic Volpi, Gabriele Marranci, Rouzbeh Parsi, Benjamin Soares, Martin van Bruinessen, Luca Mavelli, Abdulkader Tayob, Ebrahim Moosa, Filippo Osella, Pnina Werbner, Caroline Osella, Massimo Campanini, Albrecht Hofheinz, Georges Khalil, Jörn Thielmann, Michelangelo Guida, Claudio Lojacono, Mara Tedesco, Bo Stråth, Stefano Allievi, Vincenzo Pace, Olivier Roy, Andreas Christmann, Naveeda Khan, Brinkley Messick, Dyala Hamzah, and Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi. I am also grateful to all the students who attended my classes, seminars, and summer schools over the last twenty years at various institutions and who contributed to the exploration and discussion of key transformations within the Islamic ecumene.

I should not forget to show my appreciation of the endeavors of the editors and administrators of a cluster of new academic initiatives within the sociology of Islam. Right after the cessation of the publication of the previously mentioned *Yearbook of the Sociology of Islam* an increasingly successful listserv and newsletter on the sociology of Islam saw the light, followed more recently by an academic journal, published by Brill, entitled *Sociology of Islam*. These fora have provided an uninterrupted supply of fresh fuel igniting kaleidoscopic debates and corroborating the contemporary relevance and transdisciplinary scope of the sociology of Islam.

In conclusion, I would like to offer my special thanks to the institution that has hosted me during my last year of mostly integrative endeavors on the manuscript, namely McGill University. I remember here in particular Ellen Aitken, the painfully missed Dean of Religious Studies, and I thank all the colleagues from the Institute of Islamic Studies, particularly Rob Wisnovsky and the Institute's Director, Rula Jurdi Abisaab, who have been consistently supportive from the first minute. I have always associated the Institute with the teachings of two towering scholars who have influenced my scholarly trajectory since I was working on my PhD dissertation, namely Wilfred Cantwell Smith and Toshihiko Izutsu. Even more, I thank the Keenan Foundation and particularly Barbara Keenan for believing in the idea of reviving and renewing the heritage of those seminal teachings at McGill, whose significance clearly transcends the study of Islam to embrace

the multiple entanglements between various religious traditions and their nexus with cultures, societies, and politics.

Armando Salvatore
Montreal, September 2015

References

Salvatore, Armando. 1997. *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity*. Reading: Ithaca Press.

Stauth, Georg and Bryan S. Turner. 1988. *Nietzsche's Dance: Resentment, Reciprocity and Resistance in Social Life*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Turner, Bryan S. 1974. *Weber and Islam: A Critical Study*. London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Introduction

Knowledge and Power in the Sociology of Islam

The project of the sociology of Islam is first indebted to the main paradigms of sociology. Sociology is, in several ways, the queen of the social sciences, but also a discipline interfacing with several crucial subdivisions and dimensions of the humanities, most notably with philosophy and history. One key trait of sociology is its rise as a scholarly reflection of (and on) modernity and its constitutive and transformative processes. It is the discipline not only inquiring into but also theorizing about modern society and its genesis. How we understand modernity probably depends more on sociologists' understandings and definitions of the term than on the work of historians or philosophers. While sociology is characterized by such a strong focus (sometimes bordering on obsession) on modernity, the discipline has often allowed for waves of transdisciplinary opening toward other horizons of scholarship. At a more recent stage of its development, sociology has also shown a capacity to question the supposed Western monopoly on the definition and management of modernity and ultimately some of its own certainties, or at least paradigms (see e.g. Eisenstadt 2000; 2003). This step has coincided with a reflexive turn within sociology led by the initiative of rereading several key authors both within the heart of sociology as an academic discipline and at its margins, often with a view to better contextualizing their works and intellectual biographies (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Szakolczai 2000). While this 'reflexive turn' cannot be considered representative of the discipline as a whole, it has certainly affected the trajectory, if not the genesis, of the sociology of Islam.

The Sociology of Islam: Knowledge, Power and Civility, First Edition. Armando Salvatore

The reason why the sociology of Islam dovetails with the reflexive turn is also due to the initial challenge that the study of Islam has presented to solidified sociological categories, including, if not mainly, modernity. During the 19th century a wide array of academic disciplines targeting an increasingly comparative study of religions, cultures (primarily languages), and civilizations have constructed Islam as a powerful yet sinister counter-model representing a potential of resistance, both in history and the present, to how Western modernity tamed and appropriated the force of religious traditions (Masuzawa 2005: 179–206). This process occurred prior to the rise of sociology, which only saw the light as an academic discipline between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Yet sociology inherited this biased view of Islam for the simple reason that as a new discipline it initially depended on the findings and ideas of linguistic, textual, and historical disciplines. This is particularly evident in the German case, which also witnessed a continuous role of philosophers in mapping the global relations between cultural and religious traditions (Stauth 1993; Johansen 2004). However, the idea that Islam simply does not fit into modernity, though still popular among Western media professionals and policy-makers today, could not hold for too long once sociology took over. Yet Islam's full normalization and its folding into the 'sociological normal' did not work either. Thus Islam was bound to remain a force able to permanently unsettle sociology's never-renounced ambitions to explain the factors and impediments of social transformations and social cohesion on a global scale. It goes without saying that the quality and weight of this purportedly ambivalent role of Islam, along with the extent to which this characterization embarrassed rather than bolstered sociological paradigms during the 20th century, are themselves manifestations of the initial paradigmatic limitations of Western sociology.

Sociology is too often (and rather wrongly) perceived as a strongly self-entrenched discipline, whose main internal cleavage is merely a tension between quantitative vs. qualitative methods. Against such simplified views, we should see sociology's limits as potentially productive of new openings. The sociology of Islam takes such limitations as a resource. Let us first consider the way one of the fathers of sociology, Max Weber (1864–1920), championed the idea of a specifically Western path of rationalization of life conduct as the potentially universal key of access to the modernity of capitalism and of state bureaucracies. He essentially viewed power as the basic engine of instrumental human relations. Correspondingly, he understood modernity as the stage of human development at which the

instrumentalization of power relations reaches a particularly high sophistication and also a point of no return. This instrumentalization is particularly evident in a process that he called 'rationalization.' The process, whose cradle was North-Western Europe, embraced both economic production in the form of capitalism and political rule in the guise of bureaucratic steering. The primary tool of sophistication of this instrumental rationalization consists in a reliance on calculative reason. This yielded an unprecedented optimization of instrumental power, measured in terms of the output of economic production and the effectiveness of the legal order.

What remained largely undetermined, though not ignored, by Weber was the extent to which this modern triumph of power obliterated earlier dynamics. He was interested in the process through which the sheer power commanded by the social elites who controlled wealth and violence has been resisted and largely tamed in various societies since antiquity. This resistance was associated with the cultural production of knowledge and meaning via intellectual and scholarly elites. It is here that religious traditions enter the center stage of Weberian sociology. Teachings and practices providing instructions on human salvation and/or liberation from pain and suffering have offered a foremost example of such a counter-dynamics to sheer power, and have ushered in the creation of forms of immaterial, knowledge-based, alternate power. This latter process should also be understood, according to Weber, as a rationalization, albeit one oriented to perfecting what he called cultural values rather than to maximizing sheer power. One main channel through which cultural elites tame power is by defining its legitimate exercise through enacting religious and cultural values. In this manner the elites, often acting as counter-elites, have been able to acquire a power of definition of patterns and forms of socially and politically acceptable authority. They have legitimized themselves and acquired weapons of conditional legitimation of rulers. Cultural elites (better defined as the elites in charge of knowledge production) might not have understood this process in terms of rationalization, which is indeed a conceptual label it acquired through the categories of Weber, the sociologist. Yet it seems plausible that the elites of knowledge played the game of legitimization of power by taking a leading role—in a quite conscious way—in its authoritative definition.

One particular modern turn of religion, which Weber condensed in his famous (or infamous) Protestant Ethic Thesis, has religion, in the shape of Calvinist Christianity, working as the very engine of the transformation of rationalization processes from value oriented into instrumental within

European modernity (Weber 1986 [1920]: 17–206). Calvinism, i.e. the most radical and successful expression of the Protestant Reformation, was credited with providing key impulses to shaping the self-propelling dynamism of capitalist enterprise. However, one would grossly misunderstand Weber's thesis if one did not relate it to his wider argument. He intended to explain the advances in the rationalization of sheer power as an autonomous social factor similar to those we associate with modernity in general. This applies in particular to the modern, increasingly secular state and to the type of capitalist development that the state itself promoted. But the core of Weber's explanation intended to highlight a coincident, and to some extent prior, development, or rather metamorphosis. This process unfolded at the cultural and more specifically religious level. It consists of the ways the early modern Protestant Ethic, while rooted in the search for salvation, led to a sharp maximization of the purposive rationality of religious traditions by breaking through the idea itself of value reflecting a purpose. The consequence of this breakthrough was the folding of the originally value-oriented rationality into an ultimately autonomous and instrumental type of rationality. This occurred because salvation, which the Calvinists saw as absolutely depending on God's grace, could only be ascertained through success in a brave new enterprising world and therefore depended on a rigorously calculative chase of profit. This triumphing model of rationality is now almost exclusively guided by the pursuit of pure wealth (which we could see as a more liquid, yet also symbolically effective, form of power), via calculation (capitalism) and regulation (bureaucracy).

Once such rationalization dynamics have been set in motion, the originally religious impulse gives way to secularization. The "spirit of capitalism" theorized by Weber as the product of the Protestant Ethic no longer needs religious virtue in order to unfold. However, the Weberian distinction between a modern and a premodern pattern of rationalization (an instrumental one vs. one oriented to the creation of cultural values) remained a major resource for dealing with the broader process to whose explanation sociology remained committed more than any other modern social science, namely the transformation of human society from a stage dominated by tradition to a phase characterized by modernity. Clearly tradition and modernity work as polar opposites within sociological discourse. A key arrow of tradition is commonly identified with religious practice and doctrine and sociologists have been no exception in primarily collapsing religion into tradition. Yet they also saw their relation as dynamic, not static. Two other founding fathers of sociology, namely Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) and

Georg Simmel (1858–1918), passionately dealt with religion's crossing the purported boundary between tradition and modernity (Salvatore 2009). Rooted in the traditional construction of knowledge-based cultural values, religion is transformed and transmitted to modern societies in ways that make it an indispensable resource within modern patterns of rationalization themselves, even when there is no specific intervention of a Weberian type of religious ethic (Protestant or otherwise). Far from erasing religion, modern society, while resting on an increasingly rational and complex social division of labor, facilitates a human appropriation of religion's pristine force in altered, increasingly secular, civic forms, which have often cohered into what has been dubbed a 'civil religion' (Bellah and Hammond 1980). The quintessentially modern form of religion is therefore less its disappearance than its manifestations as a key ingredient of civility, as a provider of what Durkheim called 'civic morals' (Turner 1992). In other words, religion is not merely on the resisting side to the rise of modern instrumental rationality, of modern individualization, and modern solidarity. Secularity itself appears to be the continuation of religion with other (and more powerful) means, to the extent it has to draw on, and transform, the pristine cohesive form of religion in order to produce responsible individuals committed to a rational, social division of labor and corresponding patterns of solidarity.

It is sociology's dynamic, rather than static, view of religion that ultimately compels to complexify the relation between tradition and modernity, in ways that transcend what the founding fathers of the discipline were able to do. This complexification should help reframe and elasticize the very notion of religion in a perspective that overcomes the merely comparative analysis of its role in a variety of (Western and non-Western) societies. The sociology of Islam contributes to this larger task through addressing the specificities of Islamic commitments in history and in the present as being both rooted in religious teachings and practices and by necessity transcending the horizon of faith. The birth of the sociology of Islam might be traced back to the publication of *Weber and Islam* by Bryan S. Turner in 1974 (Turner 1974). This occurred in the middle of the decade that saw the breakdown of modernization theory, the rise of theorems of reislamization, and the global critique of Orientalism, which in the 1960s had been restricted to intellectual interventions quite rigorously framed within the anti-colonial and liberation discourse. An increasing part of Turner's work on the sociology of Islam dealt with these overlapping developments in Weberian terms. However, and from the beginning, the idea was not so much to merely apply Weberian categories to Islam (Weber's references to Islam are scant and

scattered: see Nafissi 1998 and Schluchter 1999 [1987]) but rather to redress them (or their trivialization via 'Weberist' orthodoxies) by studying the complexities themselves of Islam as a religion, a civilization, and a complex matrix of social and institutional arrangements. Within this trajectory Turner also published, in the same year as Said's *Orientalism* (1978), the often-neglected *Marx and the End of Orientalism* (Turner 1978).

It is at this juncture that inserting Islam's diversity into sociological questions and paradigms becomes a potential instrument for renewing sociology's ever unfulfilled universal ambitions. The sociology of Islam was born through the way Bryan Turner almost singlehandedly connected the historical study of Islam—most notably the work of Marshall G.S. Hodgson, whose monumental trilogy *The Venture of Islam* was published posthumously in 1974 (Hodgson 1974, I–III), the same year as Turner's *Weber and Islam* (Turner 1974)—to key transversal questions inherited (and left unsolved) by the fathers of sociology. However, what emerged from this tour de force was not just the need to review some paradigmatic concepts of sociological theory, like charisma, social cohesion, social development, and rationalization. The pioneering endeavors of Turner also revealed latent questions connected to how some defective conceptualizations within Weber's corpus might derive from the skewed ways the Heidelberg sociologist coped with the conceptual heritage of earlier key thinkers like Karl Marx (Turner 1978) and Friedrich Nietzsche (Stauth and Turner 1988). In both cases, the interactions between the globally hegemonic, modern West—whose bourgeois cultures and ideologies Marx and Nietzsche had famously criticized from different angles—and the closest part of the hegemonized non-West, represented by the Islamic ecumene, started to be seen as a crucial terrain for theoretical critiques and revisions.

This preliminary work on the sociology of Islam acquired a strong relevance throughout the 1980s, a decade that witnessed serious interpretive contentions (often through the opaque prism of 'reislamization') on the nature of the relations between religion, society, and politics in Muslim contexts. The dissertation I started in 1990 and which led to the publication of my *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity* in 1997 (Salvatore 1997) also originated from the quite rapid opening of a field of contentious reflections. The contours of a 'mission' for the sociology of Islam started to take shape: helping sociology to emancipate itself from a particularly weighty 'original sin,' namely a reluctance to recognize the social and civil dynamism of non-Western articulations of religion. While after the Iranian revolution of 1979 Henry Kissinger had pontificated that

modernization theory does not work, now the sociology of Islam could help in raising the issue of an 'Islamic modernity' as a research question to pursue and no longer as an oxymoron. Not by chance a leading thinker of the age like Michel Foucault (1926–1984) had visited Iran during the revolution and suggested that the engine of historical transformations, the 'spirit' of revolutions, had left the West and moved East, adopting an Islamic vocabulary (Salvatore 1997: 145–55). In a coincident development, a collection of translated writings by the Iranian Islamic intellectual Ali Shariʿati, who passed away shortly before the revolutionary events in his country, was published under the title *The Sociology of Islam* (Shariʿati 1979). One started to take seriously the possibility of seeing the emergence of a truly transformative potential of Islam vis-à-vis society, even in the absence of those precise factors of modern rationalization that had been at work in the Western trajectory. Islam was no longer static but 'in movement.'

The sociology of Islam thus started to help sociology in general, and the sociology of religion in particular, gain a much richer and less Eurocentric notion of religion. The key to reappraising religion as a compound of knowledge and power articulated through the prism of civility (be it the source of social cohesion or mobilization) is to distinguish between a rather institutional notion of religion, which ultimately coincides with its authorities, creeds, and practices, and its rather creative, and in this sense eminently rational (following Weber's sense of value rationality), meta-institutional impetus. This creative power is manifest in forms of social knowledge that have the capacity to invent and initiate (or reconstruct and collate) new types of human institutions serving a variety of social needs. This richer notion of religion cannot simply consist of emphasizing the plurality and often syncretic dimension of religions (their authorities, practices, and creeds) found among the non-Western other but should rather focus on religion as a potentially universalizable, meta-institutional, and knowledge-based type of power. As we will see, studying Islam facilitates this step to the extent that in the Islamic case (or rather cases) the relation between tradition and modernity can no longer be streamlined in easy functional terms as was the case within the original parameters of Western sociology summarized above. Less functionalization means a greater focus on both the regularities and the unpredictabilities of what I will call 'the knowledge–power equation,' which substantiates the meta-institutional, creative, and 'constellating' power of religion.

Therefore the sociology of Islam should not be reduced to a mere application to Muslim-majority societies of standardized Western sociological

approaches to the way religion is first constituted and then transformed in the modern world. The sociology of Islam has rather to treasure the tensions and antinomies that underlie the originally Western, yet over time global, sociological project of modernity and the ambivalent role of religion therein (see Milbank 1990; Heilbron 1995 [1990]; Kilminster 1998)]. The most crucial among such tensions are strictly related to yet unsolved dilemmas of sociology's coping with Islam's challenge. For example, from the viewpoint of Western historic experiences of modernity, sociology produced, particularly in the second half of the 20th century, by going beyond its own classics, key ideas of secularization that were part of a wider theory of modernization—only to radically question this 'secularization theory' in the latter quarter of the century. Yet from a perspective inspired by the specific weight and richness of historic Muslim practices and interpretations of religion, a full-fledged theory predicting either the privatization or disappearance of religion is quite problematic in sociological terms. This is the case even if we reformulate the idea of secularization in terms of religion's confinement to a specific field of society. This is the 'religious field,' in the terminology of one of the leading sociologists of the last part of the 20th century, Pierre Bourdieu (1971).

The difficulty in endorsing either an outright privatization or a rigorous confinement of religion in the case of Islam does not disprove the existence of secular trends and processes of differentiation of religious authority within Muslim-majority societies at several stages of their transformations, as we will see in this volume. This difficulty rather disqualifies Western binaries of religious vs. secular spaces and practices from being adopted as universal standards of analysis and comparison. Thus the increasing acknowledgment since the end of the 1990s, in several branches of the social sciences, that the 'secular' and religion are closely intertwined in their becoming (most exemplarily and influentially, see Asad 2003), is much more of a given from the viewpoint of a sociology of Islam. It is also in this sense that a sociology of Islam is not just the sociology of a specific religion or civilization but a channel of intervention into key questions and concepts of sociology, the social sciences at large (particularly anthropology), and the humanities as a whole (especially history). The sociology of Islam should be the trigger that can make the sociological project both more dialogical and more useful to account for the emerging multiverse of civility patterns in the world. By integrating Islam, sociology, along with a host of key concepts it successfully produced and disseminated (from charisma through secularization to modernity itself), does not look the same.

An important and growing portion of original research, in both historical and contemporary perspectives, on a variety of aspects of Islam since the end of the 1980s has established significant links to wider conceptual debates in social theory and cultural studies. The *Yearbook of the Sociology of Islam*, published between 1998 and 2008 (launched by Georg Stauth, and which I co-edited for several years), was instrumental in linking the sociological recontextualization of the study of Islam with the main research program through which sociology has tried to deparochialize itself by escaping the grip of 'Westernist' assumptions. I am referring to the adoption of an increasingly reflexive, theoretically informed, yet also historically conscious, perspective on the interaction between ideas and practices of modernity in the West, in South, East, and Southeast Asia, and in the Islamic ecumene. This approach has animated a research field that happened to be labeled, perhaps reductively, 'civilizational analysis' (for seminal contributions within this trajectory see Arnason 2003; Arjomand and Tiryakian 2004).

Yet while the sociology of Islam certainly benefits from adopting a comparative perspective (in this volume still largely focused on a comparison with Western Christendom) and a theoretical focus (which here is still crucially determined by a critical dialogue with sociological classics like Max Weber and Norbert Elias), it cannot be completely satisfied by both. To the extent that it studies Islam as a devotional commitment, as an idea of moral and social order, and as an historical ecumene that transcends civilizational boundaries, the sociology of Islam is bound to unsettle those evolutionist postulates which see modern life and modern society as emerging out of poorly defined 'traditions' (see Salvatore 2007). Such postulates have proved resistant in providing benchmarks for societal and civilizational comparisons. In this sense, a sociology of Islam defies common wisdom and unquestioned assumptions about key concepts of sociology and in so doing also questions the value of comparison as a panacea against Eurocentrism. In small doses comparison can have a heuristic potential by helping open up new horizons of meta-institutional analysis oriented to understand the workings of knowledge and power and with it of what we call religion. In heavy doses comparison risks entrenching the analysis within solidified categories.

Throughout the volume, I am consciously referring to Islam as an 'ecumene.' This term is hardly used within sociology and should be considered distinct both from civilization (a concept dear to the humanities) and community (which usually denotes within sociology the traditional

background of modern societies). If a translation of the protean Islamic concept of *umma*, intended as a rather 'an-organic' collective body that can constellate into cohesive groups at local, translocal, and global levels, is afforded, it would be 'ecumene.' By 'an-organic' I refer to a dimension of the social bond producing cohesion through a rather rhizomatic replication of connectedness, more than via the 'organic' dimension of solidarity within modern societies, particularly as theorized by Durkheim. The *umma* is farther from being quintessentially unmodern since built on rather fluid, connective patterns of sociability and cohesion. As a correction to the bias describing the *umma* as a traditional, particularistic, unmodern community, the term 'ecumene' represents the overlapping, both religious and civil dimensions of a potentially global, cohesive nexus. As such, it has the potential to absorb, desaturate, and dynamize the sociological meaning of both civilization (now understood as an ongoing 'civilizing process') and community (intended as an incessant process of knowledge–power 'constellation'). Ecumene also denotes the process of map-making that is necessary to the constitution of this global nexus, in view of the fact that it is difficult to consider an ecumene as gravitating on an exclusive center. The Islamic ecumene should be then understood as an extremely mobile set of patterns of normativity and civility providing both cohesion and orientation to translocal networks and a variety of locales. Such an ecumene nurtures social life by facilitating and legitimizing modes to build flexible institutions that provide for a variety of social needs, from cooperation to education, from health to the production of meaning, from provision for the poor to the encoding of high culture, including court culture. The latter in turn can work as a tool for selecting, instructing (or advising) elites, and implementing blueprints of governance.

While new approaches to comparisons between societies and civilizations (as well as to their definitions) have provided initial impulses to the sociology of Islam, their limitation is due to their strong anchoring within 'post-classic' views of societal evolution and underlying assumptions about tradition and modernity (or, in the plural, traditions and modernities). On the other hand, it should also be acknowledged that even immanent critiques of one-sided and ultimately self-celebratory ideas of (Western or Western-centered) modernity within sociology, social theory, and philosophy, like those produced within postcolonial and cultural studies, have not fared much better in revising established, yet weak and lopsided, conceptualizations in ways that could benefit the sociology of Islam. Such limits become apparent to the extent that postcolonial and cultural studies

too often take on Western hegemonic views of modernity and disarticulate them, without seriously enquiring whether completely different entry points into binaries like tradition and modernity or knowledge and power can be gained from non-Western perspectives. Such alternate angles would not only unsettle Western theory but also the need for purported critiques and deconstructions thereof from reiterated (and badly disguised) Western-centric perspectives.

A radical deconstruction of Western categories often leads to the decentering of power with its related production of knowledge, without questioning whether such a deconstruction really challenges the notions themselves of knowledge and power or, as I will suggest, the articulation itself of the knowledge–power equation as seen from a Western hegemonic perspective. Most prominent here is the work of Michel Foucault, the inspirer of several such critiques and the author of popular reformulations of modern Western definitions of how knowledge is folded into power without residues. Foucault framed the knowledge–power equation through the prism of the historical force of the Western disciplinary, institutional, and subjective powers which he uncovered in a series of brilliant 'archaeologies' and 'genealogies' (for a synthetic view, see Foucault 1991). However, the limits of such a type of work for a critique of the Western knowledge of Islam are revealed by the largely self-enclosed (and, through a proliferating fandom, self-complacent) critique of Orientalism performed by Edward Said and based on revised Foucaultian postulates. This critique has proved embarrassingly unable (even to attempt) to uncover alternative Islamic perspectives on the articulation of the knowledge–power equation and thus on the attendant relation between tradition and modernity. It should be nonetheless acknowledged that by shaking the self-confidence of Western Orientalism such critiques have indirectly provided key stimuli for such a parallel and distinct enterprise as the sociology of Islam. These endeavors have also, admittedly and thankfully, benefited from traversing an intermediate, poststructuralist stage in the 1990s (nonetheless, an earlier critical recontextualization of Foucault's and Said's work from the viewpoint of an embryonic sociology of Islam was already central at that stage of transition: see Salvatore 1997: 133–55).

Ultimately, the sociology of Islam not only has the potential to provide coherence to the new, postorientalist wave of historical and contemporary studies on Islam, but also and even more to disturb the conventional wisdom of sociology itself as the harbinger of an enlightened self-understanding of modern society. The sociology of Islam can perform this task by going

beyond the critique of sociological notions of modernity performed by debates on postmodernism and postcolonialism. The critical angle opened up by the sociology of Islam within the body of sociological enquiry and theory allows us to not only look at Western modernity as if from its margins but also to critique the idea itself of a fixed core of modernity within a rapidly evolving global order. This is possible since Islam provides, in its historical trajectory of 'map-making' as an increasingly transcivilizational ecumene, a bundle of alternate perspectives on such an order. In this way, Western modernity can free itself from its illusions of having authored an incomparably original rupture with tradition via a unique yet (paradoxically) universal type of (individual and collective) subjectivity. Through the path initiated by the sociology of Islam, Western modernity itself can open itself up to more genuinely pluralistic and crosscivilizational conceptions of modern society and agency therein which are more suitable to meet global challenges, including the obvious, albeit slow, eclipse of the geopolitical centrality of the West. The undeniable peculiarities of the Western subject and attendant conceptions of modern political order (impinging on the trajectory and plasticity of notions and practices of religion) are then susceptible to be reframed within a wider horizon of ruptures and reassemblages within the historic Afro-Eurasian civilizational realm (also known as the 'Eastern hemisphere') than would be allowed within a strictly Foucaultian framework of immanent (Western) critique.

However, the most immediately relevant backgrounds to the emerging field of the sociology of Islam are not the slippery scholarly battlefields within social theory and cultural studies but the tectonic (though often overly dramatized) shifts in the reimagination and practice of Islam that occurred at a variety of levels in recent decades. Such background transformations include, since the 1970s, a deep restructuring of the post-World War order both at the level of capitalist development and of interstate relations, and the increasing centrality of the Near and Middle East within global affairs, due to critical issues of energy supply and price, alongside an array of regional conflicts. This development has been matched by the emergence of Southeast Asia as a major pole of economic growth and political change. Such a major restructuring of fragile global and inner-Islamic balances has deeply affected the way an inherently diverse, long-term Islamic perspective on the fit between religion and civility can alter global articulations of the production of knowledge and the accumulation of power. In this context, the increasingly tense coexistence of Western hegemony (which is conceptual before it is practical) and a variety of non-Western challenges

has inevitably revived the significance of Islam as a force capable of shaping social relations at a variety of local and translocal levels. This capacity does not necessarily reside in the rather totalizing way propagated by the Islamist groups that have raised the exclusive banner of the implementation of *shari'a* (Islamic normativity, imperfectly translated as 'Islamic law'). It more commonly manifests itself through what I have defined as the longer-term, meta-institutional articulation of the knowledge–power equation through civil patterns of organization and governance.

This crystallization of civility will be the main object of analysis in this volume. A meta-institutional force shapes social reality not via a ready-made institutional solution (such as a *shari'a* frequently misconstrued as a legal code ready to be applied) but by empowering social actors to draw on a civilizational reservoir to creatively shape solutions to social problems based on the specific circumstances of a locale and of the age. An initial mapping and analysis of the meta-institutional power of Islam is provided in this Introduction and in the following chapters. If the map is that of the Islamic ecumene and of its wider Afro-Eurasian civilizational environment, the meta-institutional power of Islam is the force that draws and redraws the map. The sociologist of Islam, being herself a product of the long waves of modernization and globalization, can only sit on the border of the map in order to observe and diagnose regularities and volatilities within the movements of the square compasses represented by this Islamic power.

If we relate recent developments within Islamic movements to the above-mentioned novelties within sociological theory and those set in motion by the critique of Orientalism, we can improve our understanding of the imperative to shift the study of Islam away from predominantly text-oriented methodologies toward analyzing it as a continual 'mapping' process. This process was set in motion by aspirations, attritions, and conflicts generated by social complexification and geopolitical expansion, drawing from a rich discursive reservoir that we easily associate with just one, largely reified (yet still inherently dynamic) word, namely *islam*/Islam. Being a verbal noun of the fourth form and as such possessing a marked inchoative force, *islam* as the keyword denoting surrender to Allah/God does not signify an accomplishment, but a new, continual beginning. The contemporary attention paid by observers to the increasingly complex social entanglements of Islamic movements, groups, and associations, of their programs and visions, allows us to see just the tip of the iceberg of the historic and contemporary dynamism manifested by the meta-institutional power of Islam.

In the context of the global constraints of economic restructuring, liberalization, and commodification, diverse types of strictly or loosely Islamic associational networks (i.e. with a stronger or weaker relation to the historic waves of Islam's meta-institutional power) have taken form. These are largely independent from the traditional religious establishment that represents just one historic pattern of institutional crystallization of that power. Rather than signing up to the wholesale image of an 'Islamic revival' or 'awakening,' practitioners of the sociology of Islam should acknowledge the highly ambivalent place of Islamist movements within much more complex upheavals occurring within Muslim-majority societies. It has been increasingly recognized since the 1980s that such groups and movements, even if and while they reconstruct a kernel of supposedly immutable, God-given, fundaments of knowledge and truth, at the same time partake in processes of social innovation which often decisively shape their direction as movements. This typically occurs via a direct or indirect confrontation with (or, alternately, selective assimilation of) the norms of what is conventionally (yet also reductively) called neoliberal globalization (see e.g. Tugal 2009). However, against a rising tide of academic discourse claiming that contemporary Islamism is largely to be explained as an accommodative folding of Islam's force into the creases of neoliberal globalization, I suggest in this book that the long-term impetus of the meta-institutional power of Islam cannot be (at least up until the present) seen as having exhausted its autonomy and creativity. Such an exhaustion would only be warranted if we were to diagnose Islam's ineluctable submersion within an allegedly alien, overwhelming, quintessentially modern and global force of history (called modern capitalism).

By uncovering such complex entanglements where confrontation meets assimilation, the sociology of Islam can play a crucial role in developing a study of multiple traditions and entangled modernities as it takes into account alternative, non-Western genealogies and articulations of the knowledge–power equation. This angle alters the comparative perspective and facilitates a reflexive dealing with religion, politics, and secularity, now considered not just as solidified fields but as contentious arenas of knowledge and power. In the process, Islam as an innerly diversified religious, meta-institutional matrix, as a civilizational idea and as a blueprint of life conduct facilitating individual devotion and collective aspirations, does not disappear from the modern stage (as predicted by modernization theorists of the 1950s and 1960s: Masud and Salvatore 2009). It rather undergoes multiple and often unpredictable metamorphoses. The sociologist of Islam