Global Sociology Revisited

Toward New Directions

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Abstract

As newly elected President of the International Sociological Association, I unfold my vision for new directions for global sociology. After defining what a global sociology is, I will point out two particular directions for this sociology: supplementing the postcolonial approach with an anti-authoritarian one, and theorizing post-secular society. One cannot but acknowledge the scars of the colonial era, but postcolonial studies have been rightly used but also abused. I would identify two abuses: the over-emphasis on external factors while neglecting local ones, and the binary logic of antagonistic categories such as East/West, universalism/contextualism. Thus, I make the call to supplement the postcolonial approach with an anti-authoritarian one. There are three levels of authoritarianism: one relates to the political regime; another relates rather to neoliberalism; and the third concerns attitudes. The authoritarian attitude is closely related to the difficulty of dealing with religion in our society. Global sociology should take into account in any contemporary analysis of society the new features of our post-secular society, a sort of low-key secularism in confluence with neoliberalism. In light of these two directions, I would like to see global sociology moving forward. But what should the features of this global sociology be? The article will discuss five features for global sociology.

Introduction

I was honored to be elected as the President of the International Sociological Association (ISA) during its congress in July 2018 in Toronto. Among the twenty elected ISA Presidents, only two have come from outside Europe and North America, and I am the third. I come with specific sensitivities to sociology, influenced by my personal and professional trajectory as someone who grew up in a Palestinian refugee camp and did his university studies in Syria and then France, and worked in different academic institutions in Egypt, Palestine, France and Lebanon. I have thus been surrounded by the myriad debates in these settings. From this positionality, I would like to unfold my vision to new directions for global sociology that I outlined in my speech as a candidate for this position.[2] 'While one may think of many directions for sociology to address all the social, economic, political, and ecological challenges of our modernity, I will point out particularly

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[2] An early short version of this paper was published in the International Sociological Association's *newsletter Global Dialogue*. See http://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/global-sociology-toward-new-directions-2/.

two directions: supplementing postcolonial approach with an anti-authoritarian one, and theorizing post-secular society.[3]

However, what is a global sociology? This concept was dear to my predecessor presidents of ISA, Immanuel Wallerstein, Michel Wieviorka, Michael Burawoy and Margaret Abraham. For us, the label "global" is much better than "International" or "universal," as both qualifications are loaded terms, and can generate binarized categories as to what would be the national or the local of the context. There is no universal sociology, but we are still working towards finding some universal concepts and values. Global problems, such as social inequality, violence, oppression, migration, and racism, require not only good methodologies to deal with, but also a normative stance of an epistemic sociology community. The term "Global" is indeed an invitation to introduce geographical space as central to the formation of knowledge and to take sociology to task from below. This means that there can be no global sociology without accounting for national ones (Burawoy 2008) and different traditions (Patel 2009). A global sociology has a three-fold requirement: first a declaration of the positionality of its authors, including everything related to their biographies and varying geographies that can effect their vision in relation to this sociology. Second, a good methodology that redresses various forms of state-centrism, whether akin to what Ulrike Beck called "methodological nationalism" (Beck 2002), that frames our relationships to social phenomena within the confine of the nation-state, or what Julian Go called "the occlusion of global and transnational forms, dynamics, and processes lies in its analytic infrastructure which analytically bifurcates social relations across space and emphasizes a variable-based causal scientism" (Go 2018:133). Finally, it is not only about combining the global/transnational/general with the national/local/particular, but how to start is important. It is rare to get to the global if one starts from the particular.

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I. Towards an Anti-Authoritarian Approach

One cannot but acknowledge the scars of the colonial era. They are still present; they cripple some and they remind others of roads we dare not tread again. While the postcolonial approach, as a theory and praxis, has been flourishing in American academia since its inception in the 1960s with Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, it moved to many places:[4] in Europe with Gurminder Bhambra (UK), Stephane Dufoix (France), in Latin America with Aníbal Quijano (Peruvian sociologist), Walter Mignolo (Argentinian Sociologist) and Enrique Dussel (Argentinian philosopher) and Edgardo Lander (Venezuelan Sociologist). Bhambra calls for "Postcolonial Global Sociology" (2014) to develop an approach built on postcolonial and decolonial critiques of Eurocentrism as a better way of understanding a shared global present. Aníbal Quijano's concept *coloniality of power,* as the main challenge for the formation of genuinely national and plurinational states in Latin America, has the merit of spotting not only

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[3] Beyond the literature review, this article draws on my longstanding observation of knowledge production in the Arab world and beyond in the last 12 years. I conducted many in-depth bibliometric studies and content analyses of scholarly and journalistic publications. See for instance the analysis of some scholarly work in (Hanafi and Arvanitis 2016, Chapter 8) or Op Eds in (Idem, Chapter 9). In addition, being the editor of the *Arab Journal of Sociology (Idafat)* since 2006, I have read a huge number of manuscripts, submitted to this journal.
[4] See the analysis of this approach by (Al-Hardan 2018).

the external domination, of an empire over a colony or neocolony, but also an internal domination, of the ruling elite over the rest of the society. (Lynch 2019) They have been working within the modernity/coloniality perspective, arguing that the experience of modernity has meant something radically different for the North and the South, and this has deeply impacted knowledge production.

While the importance of considering the impact of coloniality in the past is still salient today, the use of postcolonial studies is not without certain abuses. I would identify two abuses: the over-emphasis on external factors while neglecting local ones, and the binary logic of antagonistic categories such as East/West, universalism/contextualism.[5] These abuses are not indeed related to postcolonial theory, but to various trends in postcolonial discourse.

Regarding **the first abuse**, many examples can be brought forth. If we know from Edgardo Lander (2013) that many Venezuelan NGOs are funded by US, how much will this "colonial-euro-centered grammar of politics" inform us about the social and political dynamics of Venezuela today, rather than the real internal crisis of the current Venezuelan regime?

After half a century of authoritarianism in the Arab World, some postcolonial anti-imperialist academics and journalists have been unable to comprehend local power dynamics, or they have been overlooked. For these academics, democracy is not on at the forefront of their agenda. Worse yet, some do not consider democracy as a priority at all. This is why David Scott (2004)witnessed the end of the Bandung project and the transformation of anti-colonial utopias into postcolonial nightmares. Hamid Dabashi's *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism* (2012) is the best criticism of the regime of knowledge production that ignores the development and social and intellectual changes inside of the Arab world. More generally, some of postcolonial critiques have ignored the current crises in Venezuela, Ivory Coast, Myanmar, Peru and other societies suffering from (neo)colonial structures, but also from structures that have nothing to do with the condition of coloniality. These entangled post-independent regimes cannot be understood by highlighting only external factors. These factors cannot be captured by only the current neo-colonialism and the imperialism but also by the emergence of new empires (Hardt and Negri 2001). For instance, if one would analyze the Syrian conflict, one should think of the Iranian, Russian, Saudi empires and not only the American and French one.

Concerning **the second abuse** (constructing a binary categories), some postcolonial scholars ended up reifying cultural differences and generating cultural compassion, and thus unsuccessfully grappled with the reality of globalization (both its history and its more recent intensification) and with the reality of specific historical contradictions in the ongoing crisis of late, transnational capitalism and repressive regimes in many Southern countries. Studying the knowledge circulation across centre–periphery structures, Wiebke Keim (2014) shows that reception of ideas cannot be understood without the exchange that goes beyond the binary of center-peripheries.

Instead of following Talal Asad, who looks to any authority behind social science discourses (Bardawil 2016), some postcolonial scholars understand this authority as emanating only from Western power. Many call for de-westernizing and decolonizing knowledge production in the Arab region, but end up impoverishing themselves because of the tendency to keep harkening back to the achievements of historical vernacular scholars (Ibn Khaldoun for instance). Some

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[5] For more details about my criticism of some trends of postcolonial studies, see (Hanafi 2018)

Arab authors were aware of this sort of a reverse orientalism: Abdullah Laroui (1967), argued "The refusal of Western culture does not in itself constitute a culture, and the delirious roaming around the lost self shall never stir it up from dust." As an editor of the *Arab Journal of Sociology (Idafat)* since 2006, I have found that authors often either employ a decorative reference to Ibn Khaldoun (1332- 1406) or Malik Bennabi (1905–1973) or force the analysis to fit some of their concepts. For instance, in spite of the fact that the French colonial authority and the post-independent state have destroyed Algeria's tribal structure, many social researchers continue to invoke *asabiyya* (tribal cohesion) as a major foundation for political organizations.

Again, all my criticism of some trends of postcolonial discourse should not undermine the seminal contribution of the postcolonial theory in understanding some conditions of knowledge production. Yet, to redress some of its excess, **I call for supplementing it with *anti-authoritarian approach***. This is an approach that take into account how much authoritarianism effects not only our societies, but our knowledge production. The self-centered and the unspoken becomes more important than the told.[6]

One may wonder if an anti-authoritarianism approach concerns only the obvious authoritarian countries, such as those of the Arab world; this is not at all the case. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt (1985) urged us to learn to recognize how different elements of fascism crystallize in different historical periods, and form different aspects of authoritarianism. Such anti-democratic elements combine in often unpredictable ways, and I believe they can currently be found in many of the political practices, values, and policies that characterize many countries in the world, including in the West. As Henry A. Giroux rightly puts it: "The discourse of liberty, equality, and freedom that emerged with modernity seems to have lost even its residual value as the central project of democracy" (Giroux 2007: 76).

With the War on Terror, market fundamentalism, and religious radicalism, many democratic values are eroding, and the first of them to fall is freedom of expression. As Michael Burawoy, in his editorial of *Global Dialog* in 2017, aptly put it: "Duterte [of the Philippines], Erdogan [of Turkey], Orban [of Hungary], Putin [of Russia], Le Pen [of France], Modi [of India],.. and Trump – they all seem to be cut from a similar nationalist, xenophobic, authoritarian cloth"(Burawoy 2017). The list should be further extended to include Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu, Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro and China's Xi Jinping.

One cannot understand the surge in this form of authoritarianism by referring only to the concept of populism. Meaning, referring only to a direct political bond between a charismatic leader and the masses, a bond that occurs outside established institutional channels (Etzioni 2018), a bond that fosters the anti-pluralism by the very claim of the leader that he, *and only he*, represents the people (Fuchs 2018). We live in a real crisis of globalization and technical democracy (devoid of philosophy and principles). Arlie Russell Hochschild (2016) gives us compelling deep stories of Tea Party supporters in US who are full of anger and resentment towards the political establishment, and environmental and migration regulations. These conservatives should not be dismissed simply as racists or bigots, as they genuinely feel the contradiction between freedom of the market and social freedom. Nascent Trump voters would reflect not only the crisis of the

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[6] In the previous version of this article I called this approach post- authoritarian one, as for me the lexical kinship of *post-authoritarian* with post-colonial means that it could, by association, draw on a number of assumptions underpinning the latter category, especially in terms of power structures. However, this brought many confusions (such as understood to mean "over and done with").

capitalism, but also the crisis of imagination, ie. how to exit this entangled situation. More generally, these social consequences have been in the making for decades, as liberal democracies have propelled third-wave marketization (Burawoy 2005) with its attendant precarity, exclusion, and inequality. As Nassif Nassar (2017) argues, democracy cannot be discussed outside the issue of the type of development we want, and to which extend we take seriously the question of social justice and the identity of the nation.

The triumph of all these mini-Trumps has given new energy to illiberal movements and dictatorships. The international reaction to the mass violation of human rights in many countries (Syria, China, Saudi Arabia, etc.) is terribly mild, if not nonexistent. In March 2018, China introduced a resolution at the U.N. Human Rights Council, entitled "Promoting the International Human Rights Cause through Win-Win Cooperation." The title might sound benign, but the resolution gutted procedures to hold countries accountable for human rights violations, suggesting "dialogue" and "cooperation" instead. Adopted by a distressingly strong majority, this resolution would become a start of a process to wither away the UN human rights eco system. (Dorsey 2019)

Authoritarianism, in our conceptualization, is more than the tendency of states to act undemocratically by deploying bureaucratic and police compulsion in social life. In this more descriptive rendering, all states are to some degree authoritarian. Also authoritarianism is not simply where the sovereign deploys Carl Schmitt's state of exception. We know that all states contain "moments" or tendencies of exception and authoritarian practice. Authoritarianism is rather the systematic removal of popular accountability or participation in the decisions of the state and a substantial centralization of executive power in a bureaucracy. (Harrison 2018)

There are three levels of authoritarianism: one relates to the political regime; another relates rather to neoliberalism; and the third concerns attitudes.

Brutalizing Authoritarianism

Norbert Elias' major idea in his famous *the civilizing process* (Elias 2000) is that societies evolve through a movement of regression of individual violence (the pacification of behaviors). However, we are now witnessing what Josepha Laroche called "the return of the repressed" (2017) or what George Mosse (1991) referred to as "brutalization" to highlight the erosion of this civilizational movement. According to Laroche (2017: 103-104), this process of brutalization starts with the destruction of social ties and solidarity, leading to the othering and exclusion of groups, such as poor people and foreigners, from the national community and enabling an everyday barbarism against them which eventually becomes generalized across society. The authoritarian regimes use the state of exception (Agamben 2005), as an inherent mechanism of the modern sovereign and the hidden relationship that ties law to violence, becomes so normalized, allowing the brutalization of undesirable categories of population. The state of exception becomes more equipped for brutalization when there are physical spaces of exception, such as the miserable Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, where dwellers have been denied for two-third of century the basic rights to work or to own property (Hanafi and Long 2010), or re-education camps for the one million Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang that have reportedly been incarcerated.

The famous film director David Cronenberg, in his documentary *A History of Violence,*[7] shows in graphic vivid terms that, once activated and unleashed, as Alain Gabon[8] put it, violence (interpersonal, civil war, inter-state violence) is like an unstoppable, mutating virus that cannot be contained and will contaminate the whole body. It can then be transmitted to the next generation, according to various logics and processes which no one can predict but, will be far worse and more durable than we imagine. In the Arab world for instance, the violence did not end by the achievement of independence, but rather it became endemic. Authoritarian Arab regimes have heavily repressed their societies with the help of a political economy dominated by crony capitalism, and even predatory and cannibalistic economies both during wartime and after.

While state actors are the major players in the brutalization of society through the police and army apparatus, there is an increasing presence of non-state actors. An example for me, as someone who has lived in Syria and Lebanon, is ISIS and other sectarian and interstitial actors that circumvent the state by deploying community solidarity. But one should also think of global non-state actors such as multinational companies, and financial markets, that constitute what James Rosenau (1990) called "sovereign-free actors". However, non-state actors rarely operate without the consent and facilitation of state actors. ISIS would not be possible without the total closure of political space by the Syrian ruling elite, or the highly sectarian Iraqi regime. State and non-state actors not only brutalize society, they also herald the brutalization of the world, of which today we are the witnesses and stakeholders. Worse, as in Myanmar, Syria, Libya, and Yemen, war causes a "brutalization of politics," that is, politics becomes difficult without violence.

Soft Authoritarianism

Some interaction of the economic and the political may lead to the emergence of a peculiar configuration, coined as neoliberal authoritarianism, or authoritarian capitalism. Compared to the previous mode of authoritarianism, I will refer to this as 'soft authoritarianism,' as I don't want to consider any automatic correlation between the development of capitalism and the resurge of authoritarianism, as this could dilute the meaning of authoritarianism, and as Albert Camus once said, "To name things wrongly is to add to the misfortune of the world".[9] However, there are new factors in the neoliberal age or late capitalism which make the correlation plausible. First, let us put it negatively, conventional thinking has naturally associated marketization with democracy (Bloom 2016). Second, whenever capitalism promotes ideological closure (the War on Terror that curtails civil liberties, financial marketization, etc.) this would lead to surge of authoritarianism. In the word of Peter Bloom, "affective authoritarian discourses linked to values of 'modernization' and 'democratization' are legitimizing neoliberal development." (Bloom 2016: 12) So there is new configuration which is not merely a combinatory outcome, but rather the result of an articulation that in many respects alters both neoliberalism and authoritarian rule. (Roccu 2012)

We know that neoliberalism has generated widespread social and economic injustice and impoverishment. However, what is new is the systematic and purposeful deployment of the state's centralized and coercive power to generate capitalist transformation in societies in which a capitalist class is weak and not dominant. If classical capitalist society often generated a system of domination through a democratic political regime, this is not the case in many peripheral societies, as well in

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[7] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wi-cPZWWtkY.
[8] Email discussion with the French scholar Alain Agabon.
[9] "Mal nommer les choses, c'est ajouter aux malheurs du monde"

Western ones where the capitalist class has become thinner and more heavily contested. (Harrison 2018) The relation of social forces underpinning the state are not only shaped by class, as Nicos Poulantzas (1975) argued, but include racial and gendered hierarchies shaped by processes of what Aníbal Quijano (1972) called the coloniality of power, articulated in different ways in time and space. When it comes to space, some regimes are clientelistic of new empires' structures. This is why the postcolonial approach should be kept in mind while analyzing the surge of the authoritarianism.

If neoliberalism has historically been linked to the globalization of capital, there is a tendency to nationalize it, as in the policies of President Trump. Instead of raising the question of justice in this neoliberal turn, right-wing movements are pushing the question of sovereignty. Raising the second question without the first one is an introduction to authoritarianism, and the enhancement of chauvinism among the majority.

There are three features of neoliberal authoritarianism that one can find in peripheries and semi-peripheries, and others in the developing countries.

The first feature is related to societies in transition to neoliberal capitalism. This transition is often characterized by the *weakness of national bourgeoisies* and the absence of a process of capitalist development. The state then will develop authoritarian modes of governance to shore up its power against popular discontent. (Jenss 2018) China and Russia are a good example of this 'authoritarian capitalist' state – a government whose monopoly rule done by the (new) apparatchik not only survives amidst marketization, but who in fact uses its non-democratic power to further its capitalist economic agenda. (Bloom 2016, 16)

The second feature is related to *centralization of politics, combined with the surveillance and securitization*. This becomes so normalized that often one can find examples in many northern or southern countries. Cemal Burak Tansel (2018) gives an excellent example of the current government in Turkey, that has facilitated executive centralization, "whereby key decision-making powers are increasingly concentrated in the hands of the central government while democratic avenues to contest government policies are curtailed through legal and administrative reforms, and the marginalization of dissident social forces". (Tansel 2018: 6)

Third feature is its *depoliticization of the decision making* either through unelected bureaucrats or alliance with entrepreneurship networks. Angela Wigger (2018) shows us how the bureaucrats of the European Commission dictate its policy of pushing the industrialization of Europe thought *ever greater efficiency, productivity and maximal* competitiveness in very authoritarian way, sidelining the unions and other social forces that are affected by such decisions.[10] Internal devaluation and dismantling of the welfare state become inevitable through devaluing labour, intensifying competition, and reducing corporate taxes takes centre-stage. The establishment of social entrepreneurship networks, composed of social entrepreneurs, business and political elites, and international actors, fosters processes of authoritarian renewal through neoliberal forms of co-optation, or under the format of crony capitalism. This form can be often found in the Middle

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[10] This has given rise to growing restrictions on liberties and the erosion of democratic government where it still exists. Competitiveness in the framework of (global) market dictatorship has indeed "isolated individuals into lonely sole bowlers tempted to compensate for the collapse of society and community with exclusivist communalist, authoritarian and even totalitarian ideologies and practices." (Kienle 2010)

East and the good example could be what Nadine Kreitmeyr (2018) finds in Jordan and Morocco and Roberto Roccu (2012) in Egypt.

Authoritarian Attitude

As a political system deployed by state actors and non-state actors, authoritarianism exists in correlation with individual adopting authoritarian attitudes. In an early version of this article I entitled this section "authoritarian citizen." However, the problem of such labels is that they recall quickly the famous work of Theodor Adorno et al. (1950) *Authoritarian Personality* who rely heavily on Freudian psychoanalysis. In spite of its relevance today in understanding not only the long and dark history in USA with its witch-hunts fueling McCarthyism, but beyond, I intend to describe something else in this section.

We know that authoritarian leaders stifle the imagination by seeking gray automatons that follow their commands (Kokobobo 2018) and they outsource to the mob the task of censoring critical voices, yet social actors may simply opt for adopting authoritarian attitudes or practical reasoning. According to the Irish philosopher Maeve Cooke (2007) there are two interrelated components of authoritarian practical reasoning. First, there are authoritarian conceptions of knowledge: these restrict access to knowledge to a privileged group of people and assert a standpoint removed from the influences of *history and context* that guarantees the unconditional validity of claims to truth and rightness (epistemological authoritarianism). Second, there are authoritarian conceptions of justification which split off the validity of propositions and norms from the reasoning of the human subjects for whom they are proclaimed to be valid (ethical authoritarianism). To make it clearer, epistemological and ethical anti-authoritarianism are linked by the ethical idea of autonomous agency: this agency that can make descriptions, interpretations and normative projections contestable and that contestability requires the reasoning of concrete human agents (in historically specific socio-cultural contexts) and can be attributed to the ethical intuition that the freedom of human beings consists in important measure in the freedom to pursue their conceptions of the good on the basis of reasons that they are able to call their own. (Cooke 2005)

Those who share one of these two components of authoritarian practical reasoning are difficult to argue with in the public sphere. Cooke in fact distinguish between arguments based on a radically contextualist position, which reject any universal validity, and context-transcending positions that appeal to universal rationality or purpose (but without teleos, see the conclusion of this article). She steers us from the context-transcending position, whether it comes from universal secularists, or dogmatic religious groups. About the former, she criticizes Jürgen Habermas' post-metaphysical – secularist – model that unnecessarily restrict the access of the religious community to the formal deliberation of public reason. His model internalized particular historical and cultural traditions on the basis of which the secular structure of political authority was once regarded as justified (Cooke 2007, 234; Asad 2009). As with critical social theory, only by maintaining a dialectic of immanence and transcendence can one can avoid epistemological and ethical authoritarianism. In processes of revolution and counter-revolution in the Arab world, and in debates identifying democratic forces, attention is rarely given to the elite's practical reasoning, with the emphasis almost exclusively being on the secularization paradigm. Secular forces were seen as systematically immune to authoritarian practical reasoning, while the political Islamic movements by definition operate within such reasoning. This is indeed simplistic, and needs to be scrutinized, as authoritarian attitudes can be found among both these elite formations. If religious differences are highly salient markers of the

Otherness, yet, as (Dillon 2010: 150) argues, independently of whether an individual is religious or not, tolerance of otherness does not come easily. Some secularists and social researchers are producing knowledge that is not accessible to the public (either being not in the local language, or being riddled with academic jargon) and this would lead to authoritarian practical reasoning, in Cooke's sense.

Observing practical reasoning becomes urgent when our society is replete with those who have long been forced to rely on the propaganda of Arab authoritarian regimes. When these regimes play so successfully to people's need for the absolute, establishing facts and truth becomes difficult. Hannah Arendt wrote once that "The ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi or the convinced Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction (i.e., the reality of experience) and the distinction between true and false (i.e., the standards of thought) no longer exist." (Arendt 1985, 193) Authoritarianism cannot be ended in the Arab world without minimal agreement among different elite formations about the form of the transition to democracy. Other issues should be postponed when democratic process is consolidated. As some political theorists in the transitology studies argue, the role of the elite is indeed so crucial in the democratic transition and only by establishing non-authoritarian practical reasoning in the public debate that a Rawlsian overlapping consensus would be reached.

To conclude this section, I would like to reiterate that postcolonial theory and a non-authoritarian approach are not opposed but mutually complementary, and enable us to understand the resurgence of authoritarianism and its impact on our society. The authoritarian attitude is also closely related to the difficulty of dealing with religion in our society. Global sociology should take into account in any contemporary analysis of society the new features of our post-secular society, a type of low-key secularism in confluence with neoliberalism. This will lead us to the second new direction for a global sociology.

II. Post-secular society

While secularization, understood as a way of dissociating the state from religion, is still a very important pathway toward democracy and citizenship, this process needs to be problematized. This can be done within the context of the current theorization of what has been coined as 'post-secularism society,' in order to free it from some of its excesses and pathologies. In a recent conversation with Jim Spickard, the former President of ISA's Research Committee Sociology of Religion, he admitted that sociology has historically embraced secularization theory, which sociologists such as David Martin, Manuel Vásquez, and himself have traced to the intellectual battle that early sociologists waged against reactionary religion in late nineteenth and early twentieth century France. The evolutionism that typed religion as "past" and sociology as "future" baked the secularization thesis into our thinking. As a result, religion's public revival in the 1980s and 1990s was instantly typed as "fundamentalist" and "a reaction against modernity." For Peter Berger (2014), this theory, which saw modernity as leading to a decline of religion, has

been empirically falsified, and should be replaced by a nuanced theory of pluralism. These debates are only not emerging from the center, but from all over the globe.[11]

In spite of moving beyond secularization theory, the evolving debate is still framed by meta-narratives. Ulrike Popp-Baier (2010) depicts three meta-narratives. The first is a narrative of *decline* of religious affiliations, practices and beliefs due to the dissemination of a scientific worldview. The second is a narrative of *transformation*, with arguments about "invisible religion," "implicit religion," "believing without belonging," "vicarious religion," "judicialization of religion," and, in recent years increasingly prominently, "spirituality," suggesting a metamorphosis of the social form of religion in the context of more general cultural and societal changes relating to individualization and subjectivization. The third is, a narrative about *rise*, linking religious vitality to religious pluralism and a market of competing religious organizations; for Islam, this rise is associated with radicalism and even terrorism. (Popp-Baier 2010, 35–36)

Beyond these three narratives and beyond the multiple secularities[12], what would the post-secular society look like? There is a great deal of emerging literature, especially since the dawn of this century, concerning the theorization of post-secularism, particularly with the work of Jürgen Habermas, William Connolly, Roberto Cipriani (2017) and José Casanova (2007), (each attributed some meaning to this term). For James Beckford (2012), there are six clusters of meanings that generate tension. Yet for me, this term is still salient for two reasons: first as a declaration of the necessity of a finding a new approach to secularism, distinct from the historical way of seeing it; second the changing in religion from its social secularization to its public resurgent, to its piety conveying political subjectivity (that the Arab uprisings, for instance, unleashed). I will argue here that post-secular society needs to be theorized as a society dealing with three challenges: first, religion in multi-ethnic and multicultural society needs to be managed by the state, second, the rise of public religion, and finally, the deliberation in the public sphere which is in confluence with neoliberalism.

First, secularism does not mean the state cannot manage religion. With our multi-ethnic and multicultural society, the state should recognize and help organize religious institutions while maintaining the relative autonomy of such institutions. Across a broad spectrum of politics – from the most repressive authoritarian states to liberal democratic regimes – states are drawn into the management of religion. (Barbalet, Possamai, and Turner 2011) State management of religion can be positive (Inclusive policies, upgrading, integration/assimilation, cosmopolitanism, politics of recognition) or negative policies (exclusive policies, downgrading or degrading, enclavement, cultural indifference, politics of misrecognition) (Turner 2011) The global sociology should observe some problems related to this management, where often some religions are favored over others in the public sphere are considered partners in the delivery of public policies for managing diversity and combating inequality.

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[11] In the Arab world, Arab authors such as Azmi Bishara (2013, 2015) and Abdel Latif Hermassi (2012, Chapters 1 and 2) did a great theoretical work of criticizing secularization theory and proposing ways for establishing healthy relationship between state, society and religion. Even in France, the bastion of hardline secularism, French authors have provided insightful critiques, such as Albert Piette (2013) who called classical approaches "methodological atheism" and called their antitheses "methodological theism".

[12] About the differentiation of secularism see the excellent article of Wohlrab-Sahr and Burchardt (2012)

Second, contrary to what John Rawls (1993) advocates, citizens cannot be asked to have a moral responsibility to justify their political convictions independently of their religious ones. Jürgen Habermas (2008)acknowledges the place of religion in the public sphere, but confines it to informal deliberation and excludes it from an institutionalized one. He argues that religious communities must engage in hermeneutical self-reflection in order to develop an epistemic stance toward the claims of other religions and worldviews, toward secular knowledge, especially scientific expertise, and toward the priority of secular reasons in the political arena. (Walhof 2013) But is it indeed possible to disentangle "religious" reasons from "secular" ones? Scholars such as Darren Walhof (2013: 240) who studied the same-sex marriage debate in the USA pointed out that "theology, politics and the identity of a religious community are all tied up with each other, as religious leaders and citizens apply and reformulate their theologies in new political contexts." Maeve Cooke (2007) states that the problem of religious positions is not that they appeal to a single non-shared framework, as Habermas would state, but that they tend to be authoritarian and dogmatic in their formulation. However, if non-authoritarian arguments are formulated by religious actors, in which positions are not taken as absolutes, but are subject to argumentation, then those arguments can be translated into the public sphere without jeopardizing the freedoms necessary for democracy existence. A different measure for non-authoritarianism could be the attempt to integrate secular and religious knowledge in a single framework, in which both sets of knowledge are understood in light of one another. The attempt of religious people to reconcile their worldview (and their justifications) with the findings of science is an example of this. This would allow religious people not to let go of the certainty they find in faith (which can be subject to innovation -*ijtihad*-), and to engage in a public dialogue in which the both secular and religious languages are integrated into one worldview. (Aduna 2015) This was one of the findings of my recent study of gender equality in the inheritance debate in Tunisia and the formation of the non-authoritarian practical reasoning. (Hanafi and Tomeh forthcoming) The serious challenge of our modernity is how to combine the rule of law with the rule of virtue, as the later needs a constant argumentation. As one of the producers of virtue, religion is always involved and seeks moral enforcement through rituals. Post-secular society is the one which encourages non-authoritarian practical reasoning while those who ascribe to different worldviews/ideologies are deliberating, paying attention the borderline between critique and incitement to all forms of hatred.

The final challenge is related to our socio-economic system that influence argumentation, surmounting existing divisions in the public sphere accounting for different worldviews. This deliberation will be heavily affected by local and global neoliberalism. Society as well as religion are both under the effect of the systematic colonization of the lifeworld, ie. "the replacement of mechanisms of social coordination by those supporting accumulation of financial resources and political power". (Possamai 2017, 824) Instead of getting a Habermasian communicative action (ie. cooperative action undertaken by individuals based upon mutual deliberation and argumentation), Adam Possamai is right to show the effect of instrumental reasoning (ie. the use of reason as an instrument for determining the best or most efficient means to achieve a given end) through his observation of the public sphere debates within the 'western world.' This deliberation, for instance, more easily accepts the Sharia when it comes to Islamic finance (which means attracting wealthy Muslim money and selling halal food), than when it is related to family matters, as if there were indeed a good Sharia and a bad one. Global sociology

should reveal such colonization of the lifeworld and propose strategies for undermining the effect of neoliberalism.

III. Taking a global sociology to task

In light of these two directions, I would like to see the global sociology moving forward, but what should be the features of this global sociology? I will focus here in five features for global sociology.

The first feature is that different national sociologies should be in dialogue. This will not be possible without deconstructing the binary logic of antagonistic categories, such as tradition/modernity, East/West, universalism/contextualism, religious/secular, indigenous knowledge/transplanted one, empirical sociology/normative one, etc. Such rigid binaries often lead to identity politics, which is not conducive for sociological dialogue. One should go beyond such dichotomous categories and create what Nancy Fraser called a 'field of multiple, debinarized, fluid, ever-shifting differences' (1997: 25), especially concerning the merging of a postcolonial approach with an anti-authoritarian one. Global sociology should bring some complexity, nuance, precision and caution to any sweeping a-historically and apolitically universalized concepts that deflect attention from historical-structural heterogeneity of our world. This is a call for *constructing a more appropriate theoretical framework* for understanding the mix of micro and macro that characterizes the global situation today. This paper calls for a framework that is always sensitive of power structures, from anywhere they may come, and raises questions such as "Whose voice? and who silence?[13], a framework that constructs *Sociological Theory Beyond the Canon* (Alatas and Sinha 2017), and mitigates some of hegemonic and androcentric sociology's shortcomings by reading Ibn Khaldoun with Max Weber, Fatima Mernissi with Nancy Fraser, Karl Marx with WEB Du Bois, and José Rizal with Frantz Fanon and not "either/or". In the same vein, global sociology needs to engage in conversations around a new paradigm for post-secular society and (religious, legal and epistemological) pluralism in an age of multiple modernities. The entanglement of the religious and the secular invites us to put an end to the monopoly of redemption and truth: the religious cannot prevent believers of other religions (or nonbelievers) from spiritual redemption, nor the secular can prevent the religious from civic redemption.

The second feature is that there can be no science and no a global understanding of our world without admitting **the universality of certain concepts** (social class, democracy, citizenship ..) and values (human rights, gender equality). If we want, at the same time, to be universalist and contextualist, how do we reconcile the local and the universal? There are three conditions for a concept to be a universal: the first is it being the outcome of a quasi-cross-cultural consensus, and not by generalizing or universalizing values embedded from the Euro-American context. Second, it is not a teleological concept, but a historical experience (Rosanvallon 2008) that gets its normativity as a result of a collective historical learning process (inherently open-ended). Third, its universality is impossible except as an imaginary; a general wide flexible concept, not

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[13] See for instance the excellent work of Vrushali Patil and Bandana Purkayastha (2018) who tracking the transnational assemblage of Indian rape culture.

a model to be exported.

For instance, is democracy universal? Yes it is, but not as a model to be exported (Guénard 2016), nor as a concept with teleos, but as a historical experience that could be traced back to the French Revolution, to the 1980s in Latin America, the 1990s in Eastern and Central Europe and finally the 2010s in some countries in the Arab world. It is indeed a collective historical learning process. What is universal, is an *imaginary* of desire for democracy, whose traces are in the slogans raised by the Arab demonstrators demanding liberty, justice and dignity. Another good example is the universality of gender equality as an imaginary. It is in a sense universal, but how can one conceptualize, in a specific time-space, how it would enter into competition with other values, such as family solidarity? I argue that Elham Manea (2016), in her *Women and Shari'a Law: The Impact of Legal Pluralism in the UK*, did not take gender equality as an imaginary but as a model to be exported. While I do agree with some of her criticism of the way legal pluralism in the UK was operating, highlighting some of the decisions of the Muslim courts, I don't agree with her call for closing them. Even though problems occur in these courts, one should admit that there are two competing universal values gender inequality and legal pluralism. The model to be constructed is to keep these courts, as they play a significant role in reducing social conflicts within the family and the community, while requesting more state control over these courts (as part of state management of religion diversity). Gender equality as an imaginary needs to be operationalized not only while moving it into another context, but even within the Western one. One can also think as Nancy Fraser (2012) who considers the social class issue, and views sharing wealth as a value competing with the meritocratic equality that is adopted by the mainstream feminism movement.

What we witness today is not the crisis of the universality of concepts such as democracy or social inequality, but the crisis of imagination, i.e. how to transform the imaginary of democracy into workable model in a given context. This normative universalism is light, affordable and does not preclude the existence of what Armando Salvatore calls "different patterns of civility" (2016). Thus, we need to keep the encounter between different forms of knowledge production, without framing this debate as only about emancipation from the colonial condition and Western knowledge production hegemony.

The **third feature is the necessity to link knowledge production at the international and local levels**. It is important not to oppose the internationalization of knowledge to its local relevance and its societal anchors. Whether one likes it or not, English has become the lingua franca necessary for any conversation with peers at the global level. Publications should be both in English and in other, local languages. In a previous publication, I summarized this dilemma as "publish globally and perish locally vs. publish locally and perish globally" and have called for bridging the gap between these two scholarly spheres through multi-lingual publications. (Hanafi 2011) The call for more sociological dialogues from the publication aspect has also received support from scholars in different regions: for instance Fernanda Beigel (2011) in Latin America.

The forth feature is that global sociology should go more normative, more public and accompany the formidable social movements we have witnessed today, such as those which are claiming the end of authoritarianism in Sudan and Algeria, or social justice in South Africa

and France. We should not posit powerlessness in front of all constraining political and social structures which stem from colonial and authoritarian powers. These powers are not homogeneous but ambivalent, and this ambivalence opens up spaces of possible resistance. Being more normative is to have a sociology not only *of* the global but also *for* the global. The global sociology should embody humanism.

Finally, the fifth feature of the global sociology is that it should **capture the fears and feelings of the present moment for so many people around the globe.** It should listen to them while taking seriously the rise of different forms of racism (especially Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and white supremacism). In post-postcolonial era, increasingly one can observe illiberal democracies that become more procedural and emptied from their values. Playing with the people's fear, this may explain the demand for authoritarianism in many places in the world[14], the cult of strong man and the surge of populism. This translated into an assault on some well-founded democracies, and on civil rights and liberties.

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[14] See for instance some of the results of a public poll in France revealing that 41% of the French has the temptation of an authoritarian regime in France. *Ouest-France* commissioned a poll at the Ifop Institute on the theme "The French and the Power". (http://www.tellerreport.com/news/--western-france-info---41%25-of-french-people-tempted-by-authoritarian-political-power-.rklKlnQUnm.html)

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