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Producing European Modernity: Mythmaking and (Racial) Bourgeois-Capitalist Worldmaking in Modern Philosophical and Literary Writings

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Summary

This paper examines the ways in which modern philosophical and literary accounts have shaped and produced European modernity. The author looks at the myth as such, but especially in the quest, justifications, and narratives provided by Rousseau, Locke, and Daniel Defoe, among all. They are seen as grounding examples of modern mythmaking in which the concept of savagery has been uplifted and opposed to cultivating and civilizational practices, and used as a conceptual axis for articulating ideas of progress, self-preservation, and the state of nature. It is shown that modern bourgeois power of mythmaking through writing cannot be detached from racial bourgeois-capitalist worldmaking, or from the production and reproduction of racial capitalism – a structural and historical nexus of capitalism and racial oppression. The article concludes that by perpetuating myths of rational individuals rationally organizing the world, cultivating the wilderness, and enjoying freedom of production and consumption, European bourgeoisie conceptualized and constructed a fictional framework of modern man set within the mechanism of the modern state and capitalist production, that legitimized the predatory socio-economic practices based on harvesting social and natural resources, the same practices held by global capitalism as well.

Keywords: Modernity, Mythmaking, Rousseau, Locke, *Robinson Crusoe*, Racial Capitalism

Plato's greatness, among all, is in his storytelling. In Book 2 of the *Republic* Socrates proposes his fellows to undertake a philosophical journey – to imagine and create in their minds a city from the beginning. This political creationism is viewed as a rational answer to the mythical and traditional understandings of justice per-

petuated through the common everyday narratives, superstitions, and poetry. But what looked like an argument based on reason and reasoning among Socrates, Adeimantus and Glaucon in particular, in Book 3, had been legitimized by one of the greatest myths of Plato's storytelling – the myth of the metals, also known as the "noble lie" argument (Plato, 2004: 99). This myth in the heart of Plato's narrative shows how actually myth, not reason, plays a fundamental role in producing desired political or social outcomes. Plato's way of storytelling about the origin of the state, however, is hardly different from his modernist successors. Yet, Plato's very awareness that the quest for origins and legitimation of a socio-political order calls for a foundational myth, not truth, is perhaps what makes the fundamental difference.

In this article I am going to discuss the ways in which European modernity has been produced in philosophical and fictional modern writings as a myth of cultivation/civilization opposed to nature/savagery, and articulated throughout the concepts of progress, self-preservation and the state of nature. This myth has been one of the founding elements in bourgeois-capitalist worldmaking where racial oppression appears as its constitutive part. Recently Nancy Fraser problematized this nexus of capitalist modernity and racial oppression. For her, dependent labor, or capitalist accumulation accompanied with unfree or expropriated labor, is one process that makes a link between capitalism and racial oppression. The other comes from political subjection, or the process that constituted one group of people as workers, and another as lesser beings – as colonized subjects or slaves. While moderns were seeing savagery and barbarism as the constitutive axis in developing a narrative about the blessings of the modern state, freedom, civilization, and progress, we should "disclose a hidden barbaric underside of capitalist modernity: beneath surface niceties of consent and contract lie brute force and overt theft" (Fraser, 2019). In order to discuss this problem, I will pick a few paradigmatic modern philosophical and literary writings to see how European modernity has been shaped through this myth of barbarism and civilization.

In that respect I will be discussing modernist fanaticism in its quest for origins as a mean to legitimize the subjection of the world as well as its fear from the new human fall into barbarism (based on the similar Christian myth of the Fall to the state of savagery of Adam and Eve's descendants depicted in the imagery of Cain's murder of Abel)[1] by using the above mentioned myth of the state of nature

[1] This obsession with the Christian myth of the Fall was common in modernity even among the most prominent modern figures who were retelling this myth to enhance the dichotomy between civility and savagery, and legitimize the rule of law. For instance, Francis Bacon writes: "That upon the fall of Man, death and vanity entered by the justice of God, and the image of God in man was defaced, and heaven and earth which were made for man's use were subdued to corruption by his fall..." (Bacon, 2002: 109).

and its ideological distinction of civility vs. savagery for the purposes of establishing a bourgeois-capitalist worldview. Producing European modernity thus presupposes mythmaking through writing understood as the way in which social frames of meaning have been constructed through "writing as *culturing* – a productive, active practice in which individuals draw on social, historical, and cultural resources to make meaning and construct their lived realities" (Stornaiuolo and Whitney, 2018: 207). This practice was crucial for constructing modern European identity, and not merely an intersection with non-European cultures. European colonization of the globe propelled, among all, "European sense of self in the metropole" (Mitchell, 2000: 4) that had to be narrated in this new context, both to shape European bourgeoisie and the colonized subjects. Mitchell, for example, emphasizes: "The cultural field we know as English literature was constructed as a curriculum and tool for character formation in colonial India before its appearance in England" (*ibid*.: 3). Hence, not only the perception of geographical centrality of Europe in global relations, but rather a production of meaning became a key for understanding the ways in which European modernity has been produced. It was premised on the view of historical time in the writings of modern authors "in reference to which all other histories must establish their significance and receive their meaning ... The conception of historical time renders history singular by organizing the multiplicity of global events into a single narrative. The narrative is structured by the progression of a principle, whether it be the principle of human reason or enlightenment, technical rationality or power over nature" (*ibid*.: 7, 8-9). This production of historical time understood as singular and progressing from the lower stages of development to those more advanced, makes no possibility for an alternative political and economical setting since there is, as Mitchell pointed out, "no possibility of more than one history, of a non-singular capitalism" (*ibid*.: 8).

Starting from Barthes's analysis of the structure of the myth and the mythological character of the Enlightenment outlined by Horkheimer and Adorno, as well as by relying on de Certeau's analysis of language and writing, I will be discussing the ways in which modern thinkers – focusing mostly on Rousseau and Locke, and touching on Smith – as well as writers – Defoe with his *Robinson Crusoe* in particular, but others as well – have been producing European modernity, a mythologized worldview in which "Reason" of an "industrious" (European) man cultivates the Earth and triumphs over savagery, and how, according to my argument, this narrative with its racial and colonial logic has survived in contemporary global capitalist practices with the help of new mythological narratives.

The Myth, the Enlightenment, and the Bourgeois Power of Writing

For Barthes "myth is a type of speech", "a system of communication", "a message" (Barthes, 1972: 109) that can be seen as a semiological system transforming and distorting reality (*ibid*.: 111). Since, according to this view, every object can be appropriated for interpretation, there are no limits for any mythical appropriation. It happens when the semiological system is created. Thus, a myth operates through "the tri-dimensional pattern" (*ibid*.: 114) or through the semiological triangle – when the signifier (the spoken or written word, picture, film, etc.) is linked with the signified (the concepts or ideas) and the sign (the object of the concept's reference). The purpose of a myth, Barthes argues, is to transform history into nature, and this is, according to Barthes, particularly exemplified in the case of bourgeois ideology, "in the process through which the bourgeoisie transforms the reality of the world into an image of the world, History into Nature. And this image has a remarkable feature: it is upside down" (*ibid*.: 129, 141). Barthes adds: "Semiology has taught us that myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification, and making contingency appear eternal" (*ibid*.: 142). Therefore, Barthes concludes that myth does not only simplify, but it is profoundly cunning in its fabrication of reality: "In passing from history to nature, myth acts economically: it abolishes the complexity of human acts, it gives them the simplicity of essences, it does away with all dialectics, with any going back beyond what is immediately visible, it organizes a world wide open and wallowing in the evident, it establishes a blissful clarity: things appear to mean something by themselves ... Myth does not deny things, on the contrary, its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural or eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact" (*ibid*.: 143).[2] What seems crucial for Barthes is to understand the ways in which this "pass from semiology to ideology" happens (*ibid*.: 128).

Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is premised on the view that modernist domination over nature along with its disenchantment of the world form the myth and superstition, as it was articulated in Bacon's idea of the liberating power of knowledge that "knows no limits", can be understood as being the myth itself according to which "Reason" becomes an ideological device for ruling "over disenchanted nature" (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002: 2). They write:

[2] Mussolini's speech before the March on Rome is such a paradigmatic act of myth creation: "We have created a myth, this myth is a belief, a noble enthusiasm; it does not need to be reality, it is a striving and a hope, belief and courage. Our myth is the nation, the great nation which we want to make into a concrete reality for ourselves" (Schmitt, 1988: 76).

> In order to escape the superstitious fear of nature, enlightenment has presented effective objective entities and forms without exception as mere veils of chaotic matter and condemned matter's influence on the human agent as enslavement, until the subject, according to its own concept, had been turned into a single, unrestricted, empty authority. The whole force of nature became a mere undifferentiated resistance to the abstract power of the subject. The particular mythology, which the Western Enlightenment, including Calvinism, had to do away with, was the Catholic doctrine of the *ordo* and the pagan popular religion, which continued to flourish beneath it. To liberate human beings from such beliefs was the objective of bourgeois philosophy. However, the liberation went further than its humane originators had intended. The market economy it unleashed was at once the prevailing form of reason and the power which ruined reason (*ibid*.: 70).

All these were symptoms for seeing enlightenment having the same resemblances as the epic tradition and mythology: "Enlightenment has always regarded anthropomorphism, the projection of subjective properties onto nature, as the basis of myth" (*ibid*.: 4). The purpose of every myth is "to tell of origins", or "to narrate, record, explain" (*ibid*.: 5). The mythological character of the enlightenment is based on the modern concept of reason that "serves as a universal tool for the fabrication of all other tools" (*ibid*.: 23). This view of reason is related to survival, self-preservation, and fear by attempting to dominate over the unknown, over nature, via the production of principles, laws, and calculations: "reason is the agency of calculating thought, which arranges the world for the purposes of self-preservation and recognizes no function other than that ... Self-preservation is the constitutive principle of science" (*ibid*.: 65, 68). In that sense, modern storytelling about the primordial state of men and the origins of order, along with the urge for self-preservation, and the cultivation of nature as a demand either of providence, or of a rational drive for improving the world, for progress, produced a new mythologized worldview. Yet, it is constituted in a contradiction – the reason liberated from the tutelages of previous superstitions and myths has become trapped in the self-preservation that ultimately "proved to be a destructive natural force no longer distinguishable from self-destruction" (*ibid*.: 71).

This ideology of self-preservation paved the way toward the invention of the bourgeois individual whose new destiny in subjugating nature, in taming savagery of his own and particularly of those other non-enlightened races, is going to be expressed via the production and consumption matrix presented as freedom of a civilized man from the natural world of necessities. Such a view allowed for, especially among Scottish Enlightenment writers, "an elaborate theory of 'civil society' ... a theory which discerned the movement of history in the refinement of taste" (Xenos,

1989: 11).[3] This was understood as a precondition of the modern remaking of the world on the bourgeois image based on arts and sciences. At the same time, the idea of savagery as a conceptual axis for narrating the world has been proliferated through the philosophical accounts about the state of nature and the savage conditions. These narratives were perpetuating fears from being thrown away in a pre-civilized disorder not governed by tastes anymore, but by our necessities, namely offering a dark vision of relapsing into barbarism and savagery without the fetters of civil society. Hence, the ongoing motif in these narratives was to bring order out of chaos by attempting to cultivate the wilderness and its savage beings with the enlightened 'torch' of the industrious mind. Savagery became a key concept for understanding the idea of progress as well as for defining European modernity and its model of civil society as its opposite. Such bourgeois understanding of civil society as a vehicle for refining human needs had been elevated to the only possible environment for developing humanity: "The human being may have an innate sense of refinement through which to mediate his or her needs, but left to oneself, that innate sense would languish" (*ibid*.: 12-13). Linking the idea of civil society with the refinement of tastes, its norm for beautiful with pleasurable and desirable, and thus with the bourgeois-capitalist production of wealth, fortified a myth of European modern man as qualitatively different from various unrefined non-Europeans. As Blaney and Inayatullah emphasized: "Since the 'discovery' of the Americas, Europeans struggled to make sense of continents and peoples that were difficult to place alongside scriptural and classical authority" (Blaney and Inayatullah, 2010: 28). On top of that, this myth of differences among the races is based on the assumption that bourgeois rational quality equals moral quality that is mirrored in a theory of human progress: "the Scots add a crucial element: the idea that human nature itself contains an impetus to progress. As distinct from (other) animals, humans seek to improve their condition and capabilities ... Though variable climate and geography might be of some importance, the key differences in the environment are those humans themselves create" (*ibid*.: 38). Theorizing civil society in such a way has perpetuated a bourgeois racial matrix according to which other non-European humans have been measured and treated. For example, in the *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* Kant wrote:

[3] According to Nicholas Xenos, Adam Smith and Hume made a crucial move by linking luxury to needs, unlike Ferguson who associated luxury with corruption: "Feeding desire with new luxuries helps to move humanity along a trajectory defined by the refinement of taste and the development of new needs. 'And this perhaps is the chief advantage which arises from commerce with strangers,' Hume claims. 'It rouses men from their indolence; and presenting the gayer and more opulent part of nation with objects of luxury, which they never before dreamed of, raises in them a desire of a more splendid way of life than what their ancestors enjoyed'" (Xenos, 1989: 11-12).

> The Negros of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the trifling. Mr. Hume challenges anyone to cite a single example in which a Negro has shown talents, and asserts that among the hundreds of thousands of blacks who are transported elsewhere from their countries, although many of them have been set free, still not a single one was ever found who presented anything great in art or science or any other praiseworthy quality, even though among the whites some continually rise aloft from the lowest rabble, and through superior gifts earn respect in the world. So fundamental is the difference between these two races of man, and it appears to be as great in regard to mental capacities as in color (Kant, 1991: 110-111).

These "evidences" made bourgeois imperialism legitimate, seeing it as a historical mission and a tool for improving the world. In the words of Blaney and Inayatullah:

> Many European thinkers treated the New World peoples' physical and social distance from the singular moment of Edenic creation as proof of their degeneration from Christian faith and civilized behavior. Reports of cannibalism, human sacrifice, and deficient arts and sciences confirmed the distance and degeneration of the Amerindians from the norms of human (i.e. European) practice. Numerous thinkers sought to contain the disorder the Indians represented thereby by placing them below the threshold of humanity, justifying enslavement or extermination. Or if their humanity was accepted, Indian difference was translated into a form of infancy that European tutelage might steer. Thus, imperialism's pedagogical component was deployed quite early (Blaney and Inayatullah, 2010: 28).

All of the Enlightenment's ambitions to turn European experiences of the unknown, experiences with the non-European "savages", based on numerous written reports about different cultures, into various scientific theories of human nature, have been perpetuated and proliferated through the most powerful tool of bourgeois production – writing. As Blaney and Inayatullah pointed out, "a science of man required the telling of tales and the writing of historical narratives, so as to incorporate all this disparate material into a truly 'philosophical account'" (*ibid*.: 37).

Writing becomes fundamental in elevating all those fables of origins, of human nature, and the laws of nature to the mythological status. Thus, a major role in the production and formation of European modernity belongs to writing as a distinctively bourgeois endeavor. For Michel de Certeau a key for understanding modernity is not a narrative as such, but the activity "of producing a text and producing society as a text. 'Progress' is scriptural in type" (Certeau, 1988: 134). Writing is defined as "the concrete activity that consists in constructing, on its own, blank space (*un espace propre*) – the page – a text that has power over the exteriority from which it has first been isolated" (*ibid*.). This modern power of writing is in

its ability to "produce *a new history*" and as such it becomes a paradigmatic "modern mythical practice" whose mastering has been responsible for a bourgeois world creation: "It is thus not without reason that for the past three centuries learning to write has been the very definition of entering into a capitalist and conquering society" (*ibid*.: 135, 136). This modern ability to shape the world through philosophical, political, or fictional tales either of a bourgeois individual thrown in the state of nature, or of various "savage" cultures not knowing any fruits of civilization, becomes fundamental in modeling a "scientific" worldview that fortified "a new power, a 'bourgeois' power', that of making history and fabricating languages. This power ... also defines the code governing socioeconomic promotion and dominates, regulates, or selects according to its norms all those who do not possess this mastery of language" (*ibid*.: 139). Accordingly, these speculations about rational, cultural, and developmental distances between the European "world-maker" and the non-European idle "savages", were presented in the writings of the prominent philosophers, economists, and writers, as the process of unfolding the principles of "reason", namely "the discovery and application of a new method of philosophizing, the kind of enthusiasm which accompanies discoveries, a certain exaltation of ideas which the spectacle of the universe produces in us", as pointed out by D'Alembert (Cassirer, 1966: 4). Yet, these dictates of reason imagined to govern European modernity were hardly anything more than an assemblage of fairy tales. This modern European search for origins needed the concept of the primitive in order to show either the rise of a productive bourgeois individual confronted with fears from his own savage other, i.e. fears from his possible post-Edenic Fall into barbarism imagined as a perpetual self-preservation beyond the frontiers and fruits of civilization, or, on the other hand, to portray an idealized, bucolic, uncorrupted being free from any imposed social, economic, and political relations. In the following part we will be seeing how this bourgeois power of writing was fundamental for producing European modernity. Hence, I will focus on analyzing some of the canonical philosophical and fictional texts.

Producing Modernity: The Myth of the Bourgeois Man and the Savage World

For the purposes of our inquiry I am first going to discuss the ways in which the modern quest for origins has been articulated throughout philosophical and fictional writings, and how this mythmaking as worldmaking narrated and shaped the destiny of modern bourgeois man. I will start with a detailed account on Rousseau, following with Locke, Defoe, and taking some other writings as examples along the way. The reason why I will be discussing Rousseau first is not only that his quest for origins is perhaps the deepest among various modern writers, but also because of his deepest unease with European modernity that paralleled his glorification of the

so-called noble savage. Rousseau's writings have been seen as a subversion of Enlightenment's efforts to propel the idea of a rational industrious mind having pleasures in subverting nature to his needs. This is why Hume wrote that Rousseau "is surely the blackest and most atrocious Villain, beyond comparison, that now exists in the World" (Xenos, 1989: 21). A culmination of such a view can be later found in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* that can be seen as a paradigm of modernity – a true horror story of modernity, a view of modernity as monstrosity. This famous novel does not only represent disillusionment with the idea of mastering over nature, but a consequence of such attempts. But Rousseau, unlike Shelley, despite his discomfort with what he described as an alienated and 'savage' life of modern civilized man in the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (*Second Discourse*), in the *Social Contract* retreats from this earlier diatribe on modernity by actually legitimizing the consequences of modern life within the civil state.

Rousseau's Discontents with Modernity and His Quest for Origins

"It is of man that I have to speak", Rousseau says at the opening of his *Second Discourse* (1987a: 37), and the closing paragraphs clearly delineate the genealogical method of his project as "discovering and following thus the forgotten and lost routes that must have led man from the natural state to the civil state" (*ibid*.: 80). Uncovering the hidden threads in search for origins demands the effort that goes beyond the given depiction of modern man. The present horizon is limited and closed and as such it cannot be taken as the starting point of analysis; it rather represents the ballast for reasoning. Rousseau's method of interpretation aligns with Ricoeur's understanding of 'appropriation' that aims toward self-clarification in which the interpreter, in this case Rousseau himself, "understands himself better, understands himself differently, or simply begins to understand himself" (Ricoeur, 1981: 158). Thus, Rousseau's project can be seen as the one not only abridging the premises of the modern individual as outlined by his predecessors and contemporaries, but also as an attempt to provide new foundations for understanding modernity. Wrapped up in the story about the search for origins of human inequality, Rousseau in fact provides a diagnosis of modern man by questioning the given understandings of human nature, savagery, and civilization. But how is this project conducted?

By Rousseau's own confession his writings should be understood as a work of fiction: "Let us therefore begin by putting aside all the facts, for they have no bearing on the question. The investigations that may be undertaken concerning this subject should not be taken for historical truths, but only for hypothetical and conditional reasonings, better suited to shedding light on the nature of things than on pointing out their true origin" (Rousseau, 1987a: 38-39). However, even fictional Rousseau is going to convince his reader that his storytelling corresponds with

man's real nature, that he will provide a direct link with nature in narrating the history of mankind: "O man, whatever country you may be from, whatever your opinions may be, listen: here is your history, as I have thought to read it, not in the books of your fellowmen, who are liars, but in nature, who never lies. Everything that comes from nature will be true; there will be nothing false except what I have unintentionally added" (*ibid*.: 39). While being dismissive of other "fellowmen" that, according to his view, were inscribing their thoughts onto nature, Rousseau actually falls in the same trap that he wishes to avoid by pretending to provide a truthful narrative regarding the origin of man. For him, the others were unable to detach themselves from the view of already socialized rational individual that becomes an impermeable membrane in concealing our real and thus hidden strain of human nature. This is why his project has to dig deeper: "The philosophers who have examined the foundations of society have all felt the necessity of returning to the state of nature, but none of them has reached it" because they "transferred to the state of nature the ideas ... acquired in society" (*ibid*.: 38). As a consequence, the *Second Discourse* is going to dismantle the concept of rational individual enjoying the fruits of civilization that has been fostered by his modern predecessors and contemporaries. Civilized life brings pain and tensions among people, leading to inequality and struggle. Surprisingly, the answer for these calamities of modernity becomes the greatest modern political invention – the social contract, not any premodern political design. In the *Second Discourse* this contract appears as a prudent move for grounding civil peace, but it is a cunning device of the rich to cement economic inequality by offering equality for all in front of the law. Finally, in the *Social Contract* Rousseau offers his version of modern man by favoring the concept of a moral individual within a moral community.

For Hobbes, civilized society is the answer for the savage life in the state of nature lacking any rational and meaningful human existence, namely in which "there is no place for industry ... nor use of the commodities ... no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society" but only "continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" (Hobbes, 1998: 84). For Rousseau, at the beginning a civilized society is a problem, not a solution to man's existence. However, both views presuppose the existence of European modern division between a civilized and a savage man. What makes Rousseau's argument provocative is his upside-down characterization of this differentiation. Rousseau's savage, although a pre-rational being, possesses a quality that is missing in modern bourgeois individual – the ability for compassion:

> an innate repugnance to seeing his fellow men suffer ... I am referring to pity, a disposition that is fitting for beings that are as weak and as subject to ills as we are; a virtue all the more universal and all the more useful to man in that it precedes in

> him any kind of reflection, and so natural that even animals sometimes show noticeable signs of it ... Pity is what carries us without reflection to the aid of those we see suffering (Rousseau, 1987a: 53, 55).

Rousseau's aim to dispel the narrative of rational *homo-economicus* by favoring the image of a savage being both emotional and strong serves as a rhetorical device for condemning the view of modern bourgeois man in perfecting the world. In fact, for Rousseau, this bourgeois man is weak and his intervention into the world is a product of fear, of his weakness. Civilization leads man not to progress, but to his own downfall, to degeneration and enslavement: "In becoming habituated to the ways of society and a slave, he becomes weak, fearful, and servile" (*ibid*.: 43). Man's faculty of self-perfection, of perfectibility, is not a rational impulse for improving oneself and the world along with it. Rather, it is an outcome of the stages of human development in which common interest pushed for human interactions by paving the way toward common living, and ultimately toward "the need to satisfy a multitude of passions which are the product of society" (*ibid*.: 53). However, Rousseau, unlike his modern predecessors, emphasizes the dark side of this perfectibility since it assumes "the pleasure of domination" (*ibid*.: 68) that makes man "a tyrant over himself and nature" (*ibid*.: 45). For Rousseau, every stage of human development and accompanying social institutions lead to greater misery and disorder. This narrative echoes the nightmare of the Edenic Fall in the Age of Reason, of those Cain-like destructive forces being unleashed by modern bourgeois man. The idea that cultivating and perfecting the world through the faculty of reason lead to greater satisfaction, and that luxuries and wealth are the consequences of human progress, failed to address the suffering that this modern man stamped to the world, a reflection Rousseau provides in the opening paragraph of his *Emile*:

> Everything is good as it leaves the hands of Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man. He forces one soil to nourish the products of another, one tree to bear the fruit of another. He mixes and confuses climates, the elements, the seasons. He mutilates his dog, his horse, his slave. He turns everything upside down; he disfigures everything; he loves deformity, monsters. He wants nothing as nature made it, not even man; for him, man must be trained like a school horse; man must be fashioned in keeping with his fancy like a tree in his garden (Rousseau, 1979: 37).

What looks like Rousseau's predominantly anti-bourgeois project in the *Second Discourse* is not only based on glorifying the "Noble Savage" and his innocence in the state of nature, but it is pivoting around the view that cultivation brings divisions, not only in terms of land or property, but among men themselves allowing some to dominate others by tricking them into social arrangements that would make these divisions legitimate, hence seeing all these arrangements as a product

of cunning reason. For Rousseau, what characterizes modernity is the lack of transparency – "the savage lives in himself", modern man "is always outside himself" (Rousseau, 1987a: 81), and on top of that he "often wears the mask of benevolence" behind which lurks "the hidden desire to profit at the expense of someone else" (*ibid*.: 68). This Rousseau's attack on the bourgeois-capitalist matrix of "competition and rivalry" (*ibid*.) whose purpose is the accumulation of wealth, here represents a blow to the myth of enlightened and industrious reason perfecting the world. Yet, in the *Social Contract* his narrative takes a different turn that can be viewed not only as a search for a unity lost, but also as Rousseau's adoption to the bourgeois settings he adamantly wanted to escape from.

At the beginning of the *Social Contract* Rousseau famously states: "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains ... How did this change take place? I have no idea. What can render it legitimate? I believe I can answer this question" (Rousseau, 1987b: 141). Unlike Rousseau's earlier repudiation of the shackles of civil society and his quest for origins seen as rhetorical escapism to uncorrupted nature "who never lies" (Rousseau, 1987a: 39), here Rousseau not only takes "chains" as given, but as something that will not disappear, that will actually need new and proper legitimation. Man's natural freedom, celebrated in the *Second Discourse*, now becomes an obstacle for legitimizing civil society. The loss of natural liberty is substituted, and thus legitimized, with civil liberty (Rousseau, 1987b: 151). Rousseau offers three different views of human nature, or rather three distinctive traditions of man: compassionate, rapacious, and moral. Even though the second might be explained as a succession of the first, this would not be the case with the third view since it presupposes the ultimate break with all previous stages of human development. Namely, it is based on the idea of creating an ideal society from scratch, one that will transform human nature based on the Enlightenment's imperative of transforming, perfecting, and mastering the world. Natural liberty becomes a synonym for savage life equated with the life of beasts, and thus cannot appear as a basis for new moral existence within civil society.

In other words, from the beginning of the *Second Discourse* it was clear that Rousseau's destiny for man is civil society and that his fantasizing about the savage is rather a trope in his rhetoric against the rise of the modern bourgeois-capitalist accumulation of wealth and luxuries that resulted in "an excess of corruption" (Rousseau, 1987a: 79). However, aside from his harangue regarding "the usurpations of the rich" (*ibid*.: 68), Rousseau implies that "the rich" makes civilization possible through "the most thought-out project that ever entered the human mind", i.e. the social contract as a bulwark against lawlessness, so "the rich" can "use in his favor the very strength of those who attacked him" in order to assure his possessions (*ibid*.: 69). Even crooked as it is in Rousseau's own depiction, the social contract becomes a horizon of modernity, making this dichotomy between civiliza-

tion and savagery firm, i.e. organizing the state to protect the bourgeois-capitalist ways of production and accumulation due to the fact that the social contract is going to "compensate for the caprices of fortune by subjecting the strong and the weak to mutual obligation" (*ibid*.). In Book II of the *Social Contract* in the chapter *On the Legislator*, Rousseau finally made the social contract's "chains" completely legitimate by introducing "an architect", a legislator as a paradigm of the Enlightenment's idea of mastering society through the use of reason in order to transform the social environment: "Discovering the rules of society best suited to nations would require a superior intelligence that beheld all the passions of men without feeling any of them" (Rousseau, 1987b: 162). This "superior intelligence" should be "in a position to change human nature, to transform each individual ... In a word he must deny man his own forces in order to give him forces that are alien to him and that he cannot make use of without the help of others. The more these natural forces are dead and obliterated, and the greater and the more durable are the acquired forces, the more too is the institution solid and perfect" (*ibid*.: 163). In other words, Rousseau's description of the erosion of the state of nature, this genealogical attempt to search for origins in order to reconstruct the stages of human inequality, actually leaves the origins of "the original accumulation of capital" such as "slave-based production, colonial ports and settlements, genocide, international finance, modern warfare, and the organized power of a central state" (Mitchell, 2000: 10) fundamentally unchallenged in his writings. Quite to the contrary, he is going to make this sort of accumulation legitimate as it results from the institutional arrangements of justice opposed to the rule of basic instincts: "The passage from the state of nature to the civil state produces quite a remarkable change in man, for it substitutes justice for instinct in his behavior and gives his actions a moral quality they previously lacked" (Rousseau, 1987b: 150). Therefore, regardless of his criticism of modern man, Rousseau has been perpetuating the myth of European modernity as a radical break with our savage past by ultimately legitimizing not only "the chains" of the political order but also the very redistribution paradigm it rests on, while at the same time pretending to provide this modern man with new moral and civil quality.

Locke and the Invisible Hand of the Capitalist God

John Locke's portrayal of the individual in the "state of nature" looks like a political pamphlet for inscribing particular bourgeois-capitalist 'Englishness' into nature. Unlike Rousseau whose work the author himself admitted to be, at least to a degree, a work of fiction and speculation, Locke's mythological account in the *Second Treatise of Government* is based on a semiotic triangle – God, the free individual, and property – out of which all legitimate social frameworks of meaning will be constructed and justified. Accordingly, Locke's mythological depiction of the origins of the human condition is suited to provide the political and economic founda-

tions of civilized society in order to mirror a particular view of bourgeois modernity linked to the appropriation of property as the product of God's rational plan for a bourgeois man. Locke's theory of property along with its transcendent anchor thus fortifies the myth of "the industrious and rational" (Locke, 1980: 21) Englishman, or in wider sense European, whose God-given mission is in "subduing or cultivating the earth" (*ibid*.: 22), the mission aimed to further furnish "the conveniences we enjoy" (*ibid*.: 26), and "increase the common stock of mankind" (*ibid*.: 23).

This bourgeois-capitalist project posits itself in opposition to the way of life of those savage "nations of the *Americans* ... poor in all the comforts of life", where even a king "feeds, lodges, and is worse than a day-labourer in *England*" (*ibid*.: 25-26). Such a view constitutes Locke's labour theory of value according to which "labour ... puts the difference of value on every thing", i.e. "labour makes the far greatest part of the value of things we enjoy in this world" (*ibid*.). Locke additionally clarifies: "Nothing was made by God for man to spoil or destroy ... As much land as a man tills, plants, improves, cultivates and can use the product of, so much is his *property* ... God and his reason commanded him to subdue the earth, i.e. to improve it for the benefit of life..." (*ibid*.: 21). The introduction of money overcomes the only caveat regarding the problem of initial accumulation that concerns those perishable goods that might be spoiled or destroyed, so once men agree that the value of perishable goods is translatable into nonperishable items (i.e. gold, silver, etc.), from that point on there is no moral wrong in accumulating property (*ibid*.: 23-28). Accordingly, what will emerge out of this accumulation is not a caprice of those who are greedy, but rather a divine reward for the "industrious and rational". Indeed, Locke's theological argument presupposes the invisible hand of God in worldmaking. God made the world to belong to all, but he had another plan – a plan to transform this initial "communist" setting of the world, this "common state nature" (*ibid*.: 19), that recognizes no property rights, into a bourgeois-capitalist project of endless accumulation and domination over the world. Namely, God himself is interested in the preservation of property, both in the case of men and the earth. Locke precisely states: "God gave the world to men in common; but since he gave it them for their benefit, and the greatest conveniences of life they were capable to draw from it, it cannot be supposed he meant it should always remain common and uncultivated. He gave it to the use of the industrious and rational" (*ibid*.: 21). Moreover, not only that the world is given to "the industrious and rational", but those allowing things to perish, and hence not promoting this God's project are "liable to be punished", while all their already accumulated property "might be the possession of any other" (*ibid*.: 24).

All in all, Locke's myth of the origins of property is threefold. First, property is a gift of God. It has been "given to men for the support and comfort of their being" (*ibid*.: 18). The argument implies the existence of the communal ownership

in the very original setting of the world. Second, in this primordial setting "every man has a property in his own person" meaning that "this no body has any right to but himself" (*ibid*.: 19). By owning his body, man owns all the outcomes of labour that his body may produce. The assumption that man's labour is, on the one hand, inalienable to his person and, on the other hand, something intrinsic to his being is fundamental. "The labour of his body", says Locke, "and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his" (*ibid*.). Thus, Locke's concept of the individual property or the property of person is the concept of self-ownership as an original possession embodied in our physical being. This fact becomes fundamental for developing his theory of private property. Labour becomes the source of almost all value or wealth and a sway in the transformation of the common world to the world of private property. When we employ our labour to execute God's command in subduing and cultivating the land, by mixing it with the fruits of the natural world, the products of our labour become rightfully ours. This is the third element of Locke's theory of property that articulates the origin of private property as an interaction and fusion of the common property and the individual property. At that moment property becomes an exclusionary right "that excludes the common right of other men" (*ibid*.: 9), and thus it becomes private property. Finally, the invention of money may not only prevent the spoilage of goods, but it opens up an insatiable process of property accumulation that goes beyond the right of preservation. Now, the owner of accumulated property in the form other than land, accumulates the surplus, or money, and transforms this money into capital that could be used either as a source of production, or for further accumulation through commerce (*ibid*.: 29). Hence, this process of money-accumulation, as unrestrained and infinite, outweighs the value of land-accumulation since the land, sooner or later, becomes scarce.

Locke's mythmaking as worldmaking not only glorifies the idea of bourgeois-capitalist man, distancing him from the initial savage condition in the state of nature, but also this new logic of production gives him an upper hand over any prior economic settings of the world. By implying the invisible hand of the "capitalist" God who commands his creatures to subdue and cultivate the earth, Locke's mythmaking presupposes not only a qualitative distinction between those partaking in this grandiose divine plan, and those not able to understand God's will, but also it draws the line between the natural and civilized. In this context, the state of nature, as a concept, serves as a model for displaying a crooked alternative of the ideal worldmaking, and as such it is fundamental in perpetuating the above mentioned difference between the civilized and developed as opposed to the savage and primitive. Locke's bourgeois myth of improving the world thus allows not only for the greatest possible exploitation and expropriation of natural resources, but also of "human resources", especially those seen as racially different, considered to be in proximity to nature, and as such prone to be "naturalized" and used as a resource,

as labour. Precisely, Locke's paradigm of worldmaking implies that bourgeois individual assumes the use of someone else's labor. Namely, in describing the process that transforms common ownership into private property that can be made without "the express consent of all the commoners", Locke, by giving an example of that transformation, takes the expropriation of other human's labor as an economic paradigm – i.e. "the turfs my servant has cut ... become my property" (*ibid*.: 19-20). Such accumulation of capital that resides on someone else's labor not only makes Locke contradict his own premise about intransitivity of individual property, but shows that what is crucial for capitalist accumulation is its reliance on "unfree, dependent, and unwaged labor", or "labor that is expropriated" (Fraser, 2019). While exploitation has been "reserved" for free subjects, colonial expropriation was practiced on "politically defenseless racialized subject peoples" (*ibid*.). This last sort of capitalist accumulation cannot be detached from racial oppression, and as such it is deeply entangled with European modernity. In the following part we will see how this narrative perfectly echoes in Locke's contemporary Daniel Defoe whose novel *Robinson Crusoe* fortifies this bourgeois myth of being thrown back in the state of nature along with all other elements of racial capitalist worldmaking.

The Myth of Bourgeois Paradise Lost: Robinson Crusoe *and the Rise of Racial Capitalism*

Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* should be considered as an archetype of writing as culturing and "one of the rare myths that modern Occidental society has been able to create" (Certeau, 1988: 136) in European modernity. But, is it a myth of the Rousseauvian "paradise lost", or a myth about the bourgeois "paradise regained"? It can be argued that Rousseauvian nostalgia for returning back to nature is carefully displaced since the novel is perfectly toned to deter from questioning the ways of modern civilization. There is no consolation, a Rousseauvian relief beyond the bourgeois matrix. Actually, a Rousseauvian hero would be faced with a nightmarish alternative – either with a descent to post-civilized anarchy and savagery, or (surprisingly) with a reconstruction of a bourgeois "paradise lost".

The first scenario has been depicted in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. This anti-Rousseauvian novel dispels the idea of man's natural goodness that only comes to surface once the layers of corrupted civilization are left behind. On the contrary, we see that the kids – as the symbols of purity of innocence, in opposition to the corrupted civilized world of adults – when able to start from scratch, actually fall in the state of ultimate savagery much worse than the existing power relations and violence of ordinary social life. In other words, by fantasizing about the return to the state of innocence or about starting anew, the novel in fact demonstrates the consequences of transgressing given political and economic order. Namely, the threat is

essentially located outside of the bourgeois order, in the call for reconstructing the natural order of things. In other words, the break with the bourgeois order means the break with civility and slipping into barbarianism. Golding's novel reproduces this modern European divide, but also installs the fear from the fall, not merely of the existing order, but of humanity as such. By warning about the fall of man if the present condition is challenged, this fictional narrative functions like a "protection racket" – deploying the need for an extraordinary intervention to preserve the given order while at the same time creating fear of the fall, so the reader ultimately feels relief when the situation turns back to "normal" (political and economic routine).[4]

In the second scenario, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe freed from the bourgeois "fetters" nevertheless remakes the same old bourgeois world on the desolate island thus dispelling either a fantasy, or a possibility of returning back to "a romantic-virginal state of nature" (Schmitt, 1996: 10), to a non-bourgeois and non-capitalist paradise. The story offers an imagination of a fantasy world for those underprivileged in the real world so they would be able to recreate themselves as those in power by subduing others and organizing new production. In other words, the myth of Robinson Crusoe operates as a trap in which even those unprivileged and powerless would be able to appropriate, internalize, and reify the bourgeois logic of subjection. Thus, Defoe's mythmaking through the imaginary castaway Robinson Crusoe offers a template for bourgeois-capitalist worldmaking, i.e. it is both, a bourgeois nostalgia for the loss of a civilized "paradise", and a model for cultivating an untouched savage "paradise".

Crusoe's imperative to rebuild the world according to the bourgeois model can be understood as a cry for the lack of bourgeois environment, as well as the ultimate opportunity for a new beginning, for a clean slate in rational organization of the world, and as such it represents a metaphor for modernity. Marx wrote: "Our friend Robinson Crusoe ... having saved a watch, ledger, ink and pen from the shipwreck, he soon begins, like a good Englishman, to keep a set of books. His stock-book contains a catalogue of the useful objects he possesses, of the various operations necessary for their production, and finally of the labour-time that specific quantities

[4] The concept "protection racket" along with the acting as a "racketeer" has been actually linked to Tilly's understanding of the process of state-making. In Tilly's words: "... consider the definition of a racketeer as someone who creates a threat and then charges for its reduction. Governments' provision of protection, by this standard, often qualifies as racketeering. To the extent that the threats against which a given government protects its citizens are imaginary or are consequences of its own activities, the government has organized a protection racket. Since governments themselves commonly simulate, stimulate, or even fabricate threats of external war and since the repressive and extractive activities of governments often constitute the largest current threats to the livelihoods of their own citizens, many governments operate in essentially the same ways as racketeers" (Tilly, 1985: 171).

of these products have on average cost him" (Marx, 1990: 170). But Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* does not only warn "a good Englishman" about what a life would be without all the fruits of civilization, i.e. when faced with scarcity and wilderness. Marx's irony in describing Robinson's "survival kit" for organizing the savage world, makes Robinson, as Certeau noticed, ready for "the capitalist and conquering task" that starts with his "decision to write his diary, to give himself in that way a space in which he can master time and things, and to thus constitute for himself, along with the blank page, an initial island in which he can produce what he wants. It is not surprising", adds Certeau, "that since Rousseau who wanted his Emile to read only this book, Robinson Crusoe has been both the model recommended to the 'modern' educators of future technicians without voices, and the dream of children that want to create a universe without a father" (Certeau, 1988: 136).

Robinson's power of worldmaking through writing his diary, his "mastery of language", as Certeau pointed out, "guarantees and isolates a new power, a 'bourgeois' power' [where] ... the subject of writing is the master, and his man Friday is the worker who has a tool other than language" (*ibid*.: 139). The mastering of both language and writing establishes the distinctive quality between the subject and the object – first being the voice shaping the world by naming things like the Biblical Adam, i.e. Robinson by naming a savage Friday, and making rules and norms like Moses; second being the voiceless tool in production that has been situated in already imagined and given order of things. But in order to make this bourgeois revolutionary expression of control and power possible, a certain level of economic development is assumed. Subjection, servitude and submission of a savage man is not only grounded on Robinson's superiority to exercise violence over other savages, or on his mere ability to enslave one of them due to his possession of advanced weaponry. It is established on a certain pre-given outline of what is understood as legitimate economic production based on expropriated labor and "racial" hierarchy between an Englishman and a savage man, as well as upon fundamental inequality of wealth and distribution among the parties in the initial stage. This is what Friedrich Engels in *Anti-Dühring* describes as the original sin of economic production:

> For the whole affair has been already proved through the famous original sin, when Robinson Crusoe made Friday his slave ... how did Crusoe come to enslave Friday? ... Crusoe enslaved Friday only in order that Friday should work for Crusoe's benefit. And how can he derive any benefit for himself from Friday's labour? Only through Friday producing by his labour more of the necessaries of life than Crusoe has to give him to keep him fit to work ... Crusoe, 'sword in hand', makes Friday his slave. But in order to manage this, Crusoe needs something else besides his sword. Not everyone can make use of a slave. In order to be able to make use of a slave, one must possess two kinds of things: first, the instruments and material for his slave's labour; and secondly, the means of bare subsistence for him.

> Therefore, before slavery becomes possible, a certain level of production must already have been reached and a certain inequality of distribution must already have appeared. And for slave-labour to become the dominant mode of production in the whole of a society, an even far higher increase in production, trade and accumulation of wealth was essential (Engels, 2010: 113-114).

This paradigmatic "original sin" of slave-labor that the myth of Robinson Crusoe embodies, mirrors colonial violence and capitalist expropriation as constitutive features of European modernity. Similarly, Locke's myth of "the industrious and rational" reproduces European exceptionalism under the guise of liberty and equality for all. Hence, this type of mythmaking in modern political philosophy and literature shows, among all, that "[t]he tendency of European civilization through capitalism was thus not to homogenize but to differentiate ... From the twelfth century forward, it was the bourgeoisie and the administrators of state power who initiated and nurtured myths of egalitarianism while seizing every occasion to divide peoples for the purpose of their domination" (Robinson, 1983: 26). This divide between the productive European colonizer and the non-productive native was founded on a qualitative racial hierarchy that mirrors an already implicit bourgeois "fraternal pact".[5] For Gargi Bhattacharyya racial capitalism presupposes the discourse of an inferior savage linked to nature, and thus perceived as a resource (of cheap labour), hence supporting the system of racial violence and dehumanization in the capitalist production. She writes: "The tendency of capitalism is to dehumanize labour in the pursuit of profit ... to redirect the encroachment of such tendencies into the lives of those designated (however fictionally and temporarily) as lesser beings. This, then, is a clue to follow: in the realm of the economic, racism is an attempt to safeguard the interests of those deemed dominant or 'unraced' ... In a time when access to 'cheap nature' may be at an end, racial capitalism might come to describe the processes by which some populations are forcibly 're-naturalised', as the boundaries between human and nature are redrawn again in an attempt to preserve status, stability and access to resources for some" (Bhattacharyya, 2018: 21, 63). In other words, modern capitalist development, as Nancy Fraser argued, "can be viewed as a sequence of qualitatively different *regimes of racialized accumulation*" (Fraser, 2019). Hence, when Robinson compels Friday "to render his economic service as a slave or a tool" (Engels, 2010: 110), this fictional relationship mimics a racial bourgeois-capitalist matrix of subjugation, displacement, ex-

[5] The concept of the "fraternal pact" is suggested by Carole Pateman (1988) to mark the rise of the modern patriarchy that has been, according to Pateman, fraternal in its form in a sense that "women are subordinated to men as men, or to men as a fraternity" (*ibid*.: 3, 77). The same logic can be extended here as well in the case of the bourgeois myth of "the industrious and rational" in the mission to subordinate those not considered to have this bourgeois trait.

propriation, and exploitation of indigenous people. In that sense *Robinson Crusoe* becomes a textbook for bourgeois remaking, reorganizing, and mastering the world premised on racial capitalism. Today its migratory exploitative character reappears in the form of modern-day slavery and abuse of domestic and migrant workers in the sweatshops of Latin America, Africa, and Asia, but also under the Kafala system in the Gulf countries.

Concluding Remarks: Modernity and Monstrosity of Global Capitalism

There is no such thing as a fiction-free European modernity. Modern mythmaking driven by the bourgeois power of writing has constituted fictional narratives of man and his natural inclinations, while envisioning his future in the society within the given conceptual frames of modernity. I was using various philosophical and fictional writings to show the ways in which European modernity has been produced and reproduced through the bourgeois division between civility and savagery, and accordingly by invoking, on the one hand, the discourse of self-preservation, struggle, and survival propelled by the fear of the relapse to barbarism, and on the other hand, the vision of an exceptional rational creation of order, progress, and capitalist production as pillars of the rising bourgeoisie. Resulting from the view of the moral superiority and the God-given mission to cultivate the world, this sort of European modern mythmaking legitimized "the tendency to subordinate the use of violence to rational calculus [that] has been long ago acknowledged as a constitutive feature of modern civilization" (Bauman, 1989: 29). In other words, constructing and reproducing those narratives related to the concept of the "state of nature", and bringing the "gospel" of enlightenment to "savages", cannot be detached from the rise of modern state and colonial bourgeois-capitalist expropriation, racism, and structural violence over an indigenous population.[6] Moreover, it fits well into what Marx identified as "primitive accumulation" that allowed for a rationalized plunder and extraction of capital by the European colonists considered to be "more industrious, more enterprising, and more inventive" (Tocqueville, 2011: 155) in comparison

[6] Adam Smith epitomized this model in his description of slavery: "The pride of man makes him love to domineer, and nothing mortifies him so much as to be obliged to condescend to persuade his inferiors. Wherever the law allows it, and the nature of the work can afford it, therefore, he will generally prefer the service of slaves to that of freemen. The planting of sugar and tobacco can afford the expense of slave cultivation ... In our sugar colonies ... the whole work is done by slaves, and in our tobacco colonies a very great part of it. The profits of a sugar-plantation in any of our West Indian colonies are generally much greater than those of any other cultivation that is known either in Europe or America ... The number of negroes accordingly is much greater, in proportion to that of whites, in our sugar than in our tobacco colonies" (Smith, 1937: 365-366).

to natives. By perpetuating these myths of rational individuals rationally organizing the world, cultivating the wilderness, progressing while struggling for self-preservation, and discovering an emancipatory power of freedom of production, commerce and consumption as history moves toward "the refinement of taste" (Xenos, 1989: 11), European bourgeoisie conceptualized and constructed a fictional framework of modern man set within the mechanism of the modern state and capitalist production that legitimized the predatory socio-economic practices based on harvesting social and natural resources, both at home and abroad.

The same practices have been harbored by contemporary global capitalism that, unlike Adam Smith's ideal, is far from being "led by an invisible hand" of the entrepreneur employing "his capital in the support of domestic industry", i.e. "preferring the support of domestic to that of foreign industry" and as such promoting the public interest while advancing his own self-interest (Smith, 1937: 423). [7] Smith's view is premised on his moral understanding of human nature according to which "for one man to deprive another unjustly of any thing, or unjustly to promote his own advantage by the loss or disadvantage of another, is more contrary to nature than death" (Smith, 2004: 163). However, the ideology of global capitalism has no such moral constrains outlined in Smith's work, yet the myth of the invisible hand opened the door for an unrestrained accumulation in the name of some imaginary interest of all.

As it was the case with Smith and modern thinkers, they assumed that "a science of man required the telling of tales and writing of historical narratives ... in order to tell a story with a clear moral point" (Blaney and Inayatullah, 2010: 37), and such modern storytelling gave impetus to the myth of progress and its staged theory

[7] Smith's famous quote is based on his view that promoting self-interest is always counter-balanced by the power of reason able to control "the strongest impulses of self-love" that would be destructive for the whole if left unchecked, as he argued in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. This myth of reason's ability to annul human passions and desires for more is inscribed in Smith's naïve construct of human nature explained in the following paragraph: "It is a stronger power, a more forcible motive, which exerts itself upon such occasions. It is reason ... the great judge and arbiter of our conduct. It is he who, whenever we are about to act so as to affect the happiness of others, calls to us, with a voice capable of astonishing the most presumptuous of our passions, that we are but one of the multitude, in no respect better than any other in it ... It is from him only that we learn the real littleness of ourselves, and of whatever relates to ourselves, and the natural misinterpretations of self-love can be corrected only by the eye of this impartial spectator. It is he who shews us the propriety of generosity and the deformity of injustice; the propriety of resigning the greatest interests of our own for the yet greater interests of others; and the deformity of doing the smallest injury to another in order to obtain the greatest benefit for ourselves. It is not the love of our neighbour, it is not the love of mankind ... It is a stronger love, a more powerful affection, which generally takes place upon such occasions; the love of what is honourable and noble, of the grandeur, and dignity, and superiority of our own characters" (Smith, 2004: 162).

of human development in order to explain diversity among human beings,[8] namely the abyss between the so-called "civilized" and "savage", between the Old and the New World, without harming modernist philosophical assumptions about universal human nature. Actually, in this modernist narrative it was human nature itself inducing human progress, so cultural and historical conditions were considered to be obstacles for equal human development, and variations in these conditions were accountable for differences in modes of production and the distribution of wealth.

By showing that culture and history make a difference, namely that the diversity among human beings is the product of nurture, not nature, modern and enlightenment thought built the myth that "worldwide prosperity and universal peace will inevitably follow" (Gray, 2004: 65) once the parochial structures and traditions dissolve. In the context of global capitalism, however, this tension between culture and human nature has been attempted to resolve in the myth of multiculturalism. However, according to Slavoj Žižek and Shannon Speed, promoting multicultural politics around the globe should not be predominantly viewed as a way to reverse historical injustices toward indigenous people and minorities, but a strategy for subjecting cultures and traditions to the uniform logic of the market. Žižek claims:

> ... the ideal form of ideology of this global capitalism is multiculturalism, the attitude which, from a kind of empty global position, treats *each* local culture the way the colonizer treats colonized people – as 'natives' whose mores are to be carefully studied and 'respected' ... In other words, multiculturalism is a disavowed, inverted, self-referential form of racism, a 'racism with a distance' – it 'respects' the Other's identity, conceiving the Other as a self-enclosed 'authentic' community towards which he, the multiculturalist, maintains a distance rendered possible by his privileged universal position. Multiculturalism is a racism which empties its own position of all positive content (the multiculturalist is not a direct racist, he doesn't oppose to the Other the *particular* values of his own culture), but nonetheless retains this position as the privileged *empty point of universality* from which one is able to appreciate (and depreciate) properly other particular cultures – the multiculturalist respect for the Other's specificity is the very form of asserting one's own superiority (Žižek, 1997: 44).

For Žižek, multiculturalism and neoliberalism are not opposed to each other. Rather, multiculturalism is seen as a Janus-faced strategy for careful infiltration of neoliberal, global capitalism that often includes racism while the multinational companies use the slogans of culture, tradition and empowerment to sell their goods and services, not to take their particularities and traditions seriously, or to

[8] For example, Smith developed a four-staged theory of human development, identifying the age of hunters as the first stage, followed by the age of shepherds, then the age of agriculture, and finally the age of commerce (Blaney and Inayatullah, 2010: 37).

undo historical injustices to a local population and minorities. Similarly, for Shannon Speed "multiculturalism is a characteristic of the neoliberal state" (Speed et al., 2006: 217) that promotes freedom by infusing market capitalism as a paramount of all social relations. She adds: "Neoliberal multiculturalism thus cedes rights to indigenous people but with the effect of remaking them as subjects less resistant to neoliberal economic and political policies" (*ibid*.: 218). Today's global capitalism produces such new myths aimed to deliver freedom and prosperity to all. But behind this liberating narrative, we have been witnessing the worst enslavement in human history led by the invisible grasping hand of multinational corporations in a synergy with national and local governments, elites, and subcontractors who have all organized their sinister model of modern slavery on the matrix of racial capitalism, resulting in forced and slave labor, and the demeaning working conditions for local population.[9]

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[9] The concept of modern slavery, although not a legal concept, "it refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power" as outlined in the International Labour Office's document entitled *Global estimates of modern slavery: forced labour and forced marriage* (ILO, 2017: 9). It is estimated that in 2016 about 40.3 million people were victims of modern slavery (25% children) while this number estimates up to 89 million people over the period from 2012 to 2016 (*ibid*.: 25). Forced labour exploitation imposed by private actors, namely the type of forced labour excluding "commercial sexual exploitation" accounted for 16 million people (total 25 million if sexual exploitation is included), and according to the document, the victims of this type of modern slavery are mostly women (57%) (*ibid*.: 32). In addition to known examples from the clothing and fashion industry, one of the worrisome examples is the cashew nuts industry that, according to the 2011 Human Rights Watch report, in Vietnam, the world's largest producer, exploits captured drug addicts forcing them "to work as part of their ongoing rehabilitation programmes" as part of their "labour therapy". The same pattern of exploitation includes forced women labour in India and elsewhere, but the most controversial issue of the cashew industry is that they are, in their raw form in which they are processed by bare hands for the best efficiency, "highly poisonous and can cause significant damage if exposed to the skin", hence "putting workers at risk of sustaining damage from the product's corrosive juices" (http://twistedfood.co.uk/the-uncomfortable-truth-behind-how-cashew-nuts-are-made/, accessed Aug. 2nd 2019).

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