

Desire and the Enrapture of Capitalist Consumption: Product Red, Africa, and the Crisis of Sustainability

by

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Abstract

This chapter examines the Vanity Fair special edition dedicated to Product Red as exemplar of colonial rationality sedimented in the project of globalization. The unabashed purpose of the Product Red campaign is revealed as demand creation aimed at the sophisticated consumers of the Global North. Africa in this regard appeases profligate consumption while offering up to the modern sophisticate the unlimited sexual pleasures of the jungle in its naked freedom, bereft of the staid heteronormativity of Victorian-like sensibilities. The narrative of the campaign for Product Red, by such deployment, is the embodiment of the "Age of Aquarius" with Africa's redemption as its signifying event, ushering in an era of universal "peace, unity, and love." The continent's progeny, now steeped in abjection, will assume its natural place in the space of civilization. Global capital is sustained in the Product Red campaign by the offering up of Africa as solution through the promise of its redemption. For the sophisticated, self-liberation can be realized through consumption at the same time that global crisis of production is resolved by Africa's "natural" entrepreneurship. All becomes well with the world as desire for the black body is freed from the trope of transgression.

In his “Guest Editor’s Letter,” penned for the special edition of *Vanity Fair*ⁱ dedicated to Product Red, Bono, the lead singer of the Irish band U2, outlines the purpose of the campaign which he heads. The purpose of the Product Red campaign is to provide the Global Fund with money to fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. He explains its rationale thus: “We needed help in describing the continent of Africa as an opportunity, as an adventure, not a burden. Our habit – and we have to kick it – is to reduce this mesmerizing, entrepreneurial, dynamic continent of fifty-three diverse countries to a hopeless deathbed of war, disease, and corruption.”ⁱⁱ On the facing page of the letter there is an advertisement for Dolce & Gabbana, a producer of men’s and women’s fashionwear for a “modern hedonist” (as described on its web page). The advertisement features a photograph of a nude woman with her torso covered by a large upscale leather or crocodile bag (a signature feature of the company) hooked around her left shoulder. She is straddling a nude man with her naked legs around his naked thighs. His eyes are closed while she stares, with a sultry gaze, into the camera. A second, equally nude, man is straddling her back, upside down. The woman’s head appears to be resting slightly on his naked thighs. The man’s upper arm hides her nude buttocks. His elbow rests on the bag, and his lower arm touches almost the entire length of her leg. The man’s face is seemingly positioned between her legs in a pose that suggests cunnilingus. Her arms are wrapped around the neck of the other male in the photograph. Both men are muscular with light brown bodies indicating racial ambiguity. The woman’s eyes are blue and her body tanned.

I was struck, but certainly not surprised, by the seamlessness with which all the tropes and figurative representations of white supremacy, (cross)racial desire, sexism, developmental historicism, and materialism combined in the juxtaposition of the two-sentence Bono quotation and the advertisement. Franz Fanon, the black French psychiatrist and scholar of race, who was born in Martinique, has analyzed the unconscious association between black maleness and white female desire. The black man, he claims, is generative of anxious fear – with “phobogenetic” roots (a term he uses) – because black men in the white imaginary “might do all kinds of things to the white woman, but not commonplace cruelties: sexual abuses – in other words, immoral and shameful things.”ⁱⁱⁱ Such fear is derived from a profound sexual desire.^{iv}

Fanon’s intervention relies upon the analysis of psychiatrist Angélo Hesnard who interrogated the relationship between contact and anxiety: “Contact alone is enough to evoke anxiety. For contact is at the same time the basic schematic type of initiating sexual action (touching, caresses – sexuality).”^v In this regard, *Vanity Fair*’s Mission Statement on the web page of *Condé Nast*, the magazine’s parent company, is worth quoting in its entirety:

From entertainment to world affairs, business to style, design to society, Vanity Fair is a cultural catalyst – a magazine that provokes and drives the popular dialogue. With its unique mix of stunning photography, in-depth reportage, and social commentary, Vanity Fair accelerates ideas and images to center stage. Each month, Vanity Fair is an unrivaled media event that reaches millions of modern, sophisticated consumers who create demand for your brand.^{vi}

To the right of the mission statement, along its entire length from above the heading to below its last line, is a photograph of a blonde white woman partly clad in a white shawl with one side of her white bra exposed. The shawl is positioned between her wide-open bare legs, one of which is curled up, resting on the ground. Her other leg is extended, flat footed on the ground, positioned as far back as possible, with her lower right arm resting on her knee. What is being suggested by the photograph is that the targeted “modern sophisticated consumer” is to be enticed by sexual desire produced by “stunning photography” to create “demand.” This is to be accomplished through “popular dialogue” and “social commentary.” It is the very (stunning but unsurprising) template evident in the juxtaposition of Bono’s plea for Africa with the “stunning photography” of sexual desire.

Here, the unabashed purpose of the Product Red campaign is revealed as demand creation aimed at the sophisticated consumers of Dolce & Gabbana fashion products. Africa, in this regard, appeases profligate consumption while offering up to the modern sophisticate the unlimited sexual pleasures of the jungle in its naked freedom, bereft of the staid heteronormativity of Victorian-like sensibilities. The narrative of the campaign for Product Red becomes, by such deployment, the embodiment of the “Age of Aquarius.” And what does this age portend?

With all the problems we have, it's hard to believe our future is bright. Inflation and recession, environmental deterioration, diminishing resources, unrest and oppression in developing countries, and apathy, loneliness and lack of direction in developed ones all combine to severely cloud the horizon...It wasn't too long ago that we heard about the dawning of the Age of Aquarius, and about the revival of spirit among the new generation. We can still hear the echoes of John Kennedy's call to action and see the vision of Martin Luther King's dream. Before he and his dream were shot down in 1968, he said we as a people “would get to the promised land.” The promise seems empty now, yet the planetary cycles support his prophecy. For what we discover when we examine these cycles is compelling evidence that a renaissance and a golden age is right around the corner. This is the era of peace, of unity, of love.^{vii}

Africa's redemption is the signifying event of the Age of Aquarius. It will usher in an era of universal "peace, unity, and love." The continent's progeny, now steeped in abjection, will assume its natural place in the space of civilization.

In Bono's universe, the African is the embodiment of the goodness of Jean Jacques Rousseau's "natural man," rent asunder by the corrupting influence of "society." We (society) have reduced the continent to a "hopeless deathbed of war, disease, and corruption." And it is our responsibility to restore the "mesmerizing, entrepreneurial" dynamism of a continent "where every street corner boasts an entrepreneur."^{viii} And we must do so by culling its redemption from our own mesmerizing, entrepreneurial, dynamism. Such dynamism is at the foundation of African being. When combined with the power of reason, the African becomes transformed into unquestioned proof of the morality of enlightened sophistication. And who best to help than the "corporate partners" of American Express, Apple, Emporio Armani, Converse, Gap? "These companies are heroic (and – shock, horror – we want them to make money for their shareholders because that will make (Red) sustainable."^{ix} Already, "in the project's first nine months, \$25 million has gone directly from (Red) partners to the Global Fund." Undoubtedly, the ranks of these "shareholders" include the very sophisticated consumers to be engaged in Africa's redemption through Product Red. Africa, as "opportunity" and "adventure," is transformed into the locus of salvation for these sophisticates. Profligate consumption, corporate growth, and shareholder profit become the means to Africa's redemption and to the personal salvation of these sophisticates.

Notwithstanding its "New Age" narratology, Product Red is steeped in what African scholar Achille Mbembe terms the colonial rationality of "commandment." Such rationality finds itself sedimented in the "globalization project."^x Quoting A. Sarraut,^{xi} Mbembe identifies one aspect of such commandment as "the right of the stronger to aid the weaker"^{xii} with the former representing itself as "a free gift, proposing to relieve its object of poverty and free it from debased condition by raising it to the level of a human being."^{xiii} Mbembe continues:

Raising the native to where he/she can contemplate the recovery of his/her rights requires moral education. The chief means of achieving this is kindness, and its main aim is labor. Kindness is supposed to soften command. As for labor, it is supposed to make possible the creation of utilities, and to produce value and wealth by putting an end to scarcity and poverty. In addition it is supposed to ensure the satisfaction of needs and the enhancement of enjoyments.^{xiv}

The Product Red campaign uses the proceeds derived from a percentage of the profits earned by participating companies through the sale of targeted products to fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria in Africa. But a quotation on the cover of the magazine's special issue proclaims the power of western education, with a clear reference to its moralizing force: "If you are a girl in Africa, your chances of getting H.I.V. fall by half if you go to primary school." A burdened Maya Angelou (a poster child for the saving grace of education) is photographed with her head bowed and her eyes closed while Madonna (a poster child for liberated sexuality), with eyes closed and lips in a pouted expression of a whisper reminds Angelou, as a prelude (seemingly) to a kiss, that education is nothing without sexual desire. AFRICA is emblazoned in big white block letters across Angelou's chest. Here the morality of education, so the suggestion goes, must not sunder the appeal of Africa to erotic desire. The scourge of HIV can be eviscerated by an education that does not negate Africa's pervasive sexuality. This accounts for Angelou's longevity, notwithstanding the power of a black sexuality that renders her irresistible to Madonna's sexual appetite. Here, sex, education, and survival are integrally mapped onto Africa's renewal in the Age of Aquarius.

Thinking through this growing universal concern with Africa's redemption, I recalled a meeting that I attended in the wake of my recent appointment as Chair of the Center for African Studies at Berkeley. The meeting was held during a period when media reports were circulating, raising concerns about South Asia as a cheap location for computer programming and software development. The fall of US dollar value in international currency markets was having a negative effect on the location of these endeavors in South Asia. Increasingly the region was being rendered non-competitive relative to the United States. In response, there was a considerable shift of these endeavors back to the United States, generating increasing demand for programmers and computer engineers in the country. With increasing US demand came rising salaries and compensation packages driving costs in an upward spiral. The solution, it appeared, was to shift computer programming and software engineering functions to Africa – the last bastion of cheap production in an increasingly competitive globalized economy.

But to do so, Africa needs to be redeemed from the narrative of abjection, destitution, and chaos. Its natural savagery needs to be turned into attraction. Erotic desire for the black body needs to be transformed from transgression through the trope of liberation. The world needs to return to its fundamental "roots" in Africa, the originary source of natural liberated sexuality and pristine pure entrepreneurship. The transgression of boundaries, eroticism, and spirituality is revealed in this narrative as possibilities for self-liberation in a "struggle for autonomy" from civilization's repressions. Such possibilities, emanating from the crossing of boundaries, are the subject of the work of "womanist" black Trinidadian scholar, Jacqui Alexander in a volume with the revealing title: *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on feminism, sexual politics, memory, and the sacred*.^{xv}

To Alexander, self-knowledge requires rejection, and a reversal (almost) of the Cartesian privileging of the “mind.” To the mind/body dyad must be added the force of the spirit in a triad of self-realization. Alexander elaborates:

Since body is not body alone but rather one element in the triad of mind, body, and spirit, what we need to understand is how such embodiment provides the moorings for a subjectivity that knits together these very elements. How is a Sacred interior cultivated, and how does it assist practitioners in the task of making themselves intelligible to themselves? How does spiritual work produce the conditions that bring about the realignment of self with self, which is simultaneously a realignment of oneself with the Divine through a collectivity? These questions lead us to foreground practice (which is why I choose the term work) through which the Sacred becomes a way of embodying the remembering of self, if you will, a self that is neither habitually individuated nor unwittingly secularized.^{xvi}

Such a triad appears in the Product Red narrative to create the “opportunity” and “adventure” offered up by Africa’s redemption. However, contrary to Alexander’s theorization, self-realization in the “Age of Aquarius” is to be accomplished through the unification of “the powerful forces of sex and the spirit that belong together.”^{xvii} And it is here where the enrapturing powers of sexual desire are abducted in the service of global capital. In the juxtaposition of Bono’s letter with the photographic display on its opposing page, the rapture of African sexuality, as “opportunity and adventure,” is integrally linked to African entrepreneurship, posed as a natural condition of humanity. This integral linkage has been “distorted” by (to appropriate Alexander’s words for application to Africa): “an ideology that has steeped sex and sexuality in sin, shame and a general disavowal of the sacred.”^{xviii} In this manner, entrepreneurship becomes a sacred act, mediated by African sexual and spiritual liberation. The penalty to be paid by those responsible for this rupture is the penance of demand creation through consumption. The reward is self-liberation.

It is instructive to examine the violence of abduction and the role that it played at different phases of capitalism’s development if only to understand the central role such violence plays in the Product Red campaign. The idea of abduction has come into recent currency as a specification of a technology deployed for the silencing and erasure of the integral contribution of the colonized and racialised Other in the production of the modern capitalist-world system.^{xix} It refers to the process of capturing and entrapping the bodies, cultures, ideas, territories, etc. of the colonized through subjection to serve the dehumanizing colonial capitalist agenda of accumulation.^{xx} Through abduction, the rationality (modernity) of the enslaved was transferred and attributed to, and authoritatively claimed by the slave holding plantocracy, thus legitimizing and normalizing colonial forms of capitalist surplus accumulation. In other words, as a technology, abduction is integral to global capitalist formation. It is extraordinarily responsive to capitalism’s changing demands.

Abduction has been the instrumentality through which both naturalism and historicism have been deployed for the erasure of the humanity of the racialized other. It is accomplished through the violence of the commandment, discussed earlier with reference to Mbembe. The idea of a natural, ineluctable, division among the races legitimized and naturalized the violence of the commandment around which colonial rationality was organized. Such rationality was instantiated through “three sorts of violence” that according to Mbembe provided colonial sovereignty with the “right to dispose.”^{xxi} The first was the “founding violence” that underpinned “the right of conquest (and) all the prerogatives flowing from that right.” The second was the violence of “legitimation” that converted “the founding violence into authorizing authority.” The third was the violence that ensured “the maintenance, spread, and permanence” of the very specific “colonial imaginary” providing it with “an authenticating and reiterating” function.^{xxii}

The Product Red campaign sustains intact the “right to dispose” that is reiterated and authenticated in what Mbembe identified as a third form of violence. Its role is the maintenance, spread, and permanence of colonial forms of rationality (albeit under different guises). It is to be sustained even against the “right to truth” that emerges even when the humanity of the African is acknowledged.^{xxiii} Abduction is the project’s handmaiden. Here the Foucauldian notion of the “speaker’s benefit” becomes relevant as an analytic. It pertains to the means through which “universal intellectuals” make legitimate claims “to speak for humanity and to base their assertions of privilege on appeals to their ability to create a future that is unquestionably better.”^{xxiv} The “speaker’s benefit” legitimizes intellectual domination. It does so in the Product Red campaign through the agency of the “popular, public, and political intellectual.” The group of contributors to the *Vanity Fair* Special Issue includes Maya Angelou, Bill Clinton, Dr. Spencer Wells (population geneticist), Barak Obama, Muhammad Ali, Condoleeza Rice, George W. Bush, Desmond Tutu, Warren Buffett, Bill and Melinda Gates, and Oprah Winfrey among many others). They all speak to the saving grace of Africa and to the continent’s possibilities for humanity’s redemption. These contributors become transformed into the voices of Africa. They use their “standing”^{xxv} to appeal on behalf of the continent to the sophisticated consumer, the latter cast as both redeemer and in need of self-redemption. These “intellectual” contributors have abducted Africa’s “right to truth” in a reiteration of erasure.

By acknowledging Africa’s humanity, “naturalist” claims of an ineluctable racial division become unsustainable, because such claims render the African not merely uncivilized but incapable of civilization. They cast Africa as devoid of Enlightenment’s attributes of reason and rationality. This is incompatible with the assertion of the continent’s new humanity that is at the heart of Product Red’s appeal. Postcolonial claims to sovereignty posed an identical dilemma that required a new “postcolonial” rationality, shorn of naturalism’s claims.

Post-colonial intellectuals demanding sovereignty were faced with a fundamental challenge because their claim rested on arguments for the location of liberatory possibilities among the abject. Their assumption of post-colonial power (their true motivation) rested on the maintenance of colonial order and rationality (through commandment) and on the conditions that sustained it. Historicism took root in the effort to resolve the post-colonial dilemma.

The logic and rationality of these intellectuals in justifying and legitimizing the shift from naturalist to historicist claims are evident in narratives of progress that positioned the colonized and their post-colonial progeny firmly in the space of the modern human subject.^{xxvi} Intellectuals from the Global South set out to challenge claims of their own “uncivilized” pre-modernity by turning to economics to explain post-colonial failure. While history posited a natural developmental order, the discipline of economics saw state intervention as an impediment to the rational choices made by individuals and firms. The rationality of the subaltern became the prerequisite for maximum efficiency in the functioning of the marketplace.^{xxvii} In these narratives, material crises and poor economies are attributed to inappropriate state intervention, including the intervention of the colonial and postcolonial state. Scholars from the Global South and their Global North sympathizers embraced the logic of historical materialism in their analytics in order to explain the anomaly of an underdevelopment constituted by modern subjects. Many turned to Marxist analysis, attracted by its argument that economic crisis was an inevitable outcome of modern capitalism.

Marxism severed the association between the modern individual and conditions of economic plenitude or affluence. It supported claims for the existence of a universal modern abstract individual even when freedom to participate in the arenas of political and economic authority was severely restricted. The relationship between colonialism and modernity became irrelevant to the determination of the modern subjecthood of the colonized.^{xxviii} Thus, Raul Prebisch and others at the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America proposed that underdevelopment in the global south was the product of relations of exploitation imposed by and for the benefit of the global metropolitan north.

This new “dependency theory” was taken up by Marxists such as Andre Gunde Frank who saw such “relations (to be) an essential part of the capitalist system on a world scale as a whole.”^{xxix} Dependency theorists, along with World Systems theorists, located colonial and post-colonial formations firmly in the arena of modern capitalism.^{xxx} Accordingly, an integral link was established between colonialism and modern capitalism. These new formulations positioned the colonial subject squarely in the domain of the modern, imbued with a modern subjectivity.

Modern capitalist formations (and thus colonialism and post-colonialism) came to be understood as a “totalizing unity” fashioned out of the “dissolution of the hierarchies of birth (and by) sovereignty of the individual.”^{xxxii} Given such dissolution, the claims of the historical immaturity of the colonized could no longer be sustained. It eviscerates the division between the civilized and the uncivilized.

Notwithstanding the fundamental differences in the ideological underpinnings of the two claims for the humanity of “uncivilized” (one rooted in Marxism and the other in capitalism), the similarities in the narratives of the “intellectuals” in the campaigns for anti-colonialism and those advocating for Product Red is startling. Such similarities speak profoundly to the legitimizing and normalizing power of abduction. Through the “speaker’s benefit,” both campaigns succeed in abducting the “right to truth” from the abject. And the claims of both rest with the redemptive humanity of the abject racial Other.

The Product Red campaign may easily be interpreted as justification for and legitimation of the consumptive behavior of the “sophisticated” by providing it with an “ethical label” attached to the “Red” goods.^{xxxiii} However, this argument would be both superficial and misleading. The problem addressed by the campaign goes to the heart of capitalism itself: its dependence on the enrapturing of production, consumption, and material accumulation by the ruses of (sexual) desire. This is at the root of capitalism’s governmentality, understood here as constituted by relations of power that enlist subjects in the project of their own rule.^{xxxiii} The result is a fetishizing of consumption, production, and accumulation through displacement, regulation, and disciplining of erotic desire.

The “will to truth” becomes more strident under conditions of chaos and crisis.^{xxxiv} The current crisis of global capital is that of sustainability. It is productive of a deep anxiety observed by political economist Phillip McMichael:

These days we talk of globalization as a mater of fact, and often with approval...While over three-quarters of the world’s population can access television images of the global consumer, not much more than a quarter have access to sufficient cash or credit to participate in the consumer economy. We are at a critical threshold: Whether consumer-based development remains a minority activity or becomes a majority activity among the earth’s inhabitants, either way is unacceptable for social (divided planet) or environmental (unsustainable planet) reasons, or both. Development as we know it is in question.^{xxxv}

So the crisis is already upon us. It is productive of an even more profound anxiety among the “sophisticated consumers” who stand to lose the most, if only because of their inability to manage the chaos of capitalism. The three-quarters without “access to sufficient cash or credit to participate in the consumer economy” have been forced to develop strategies to deal with this chaos that come with possibilities for resolution. For the sophisticate consumer, the “will to truth” can lead, dangerously, to a rejection of capitalism’s ruses and to an embrace of the ways of being of these “uncivilized” three-quarters of humanity. Forms of regulation and disciplining that harness the “opportunities” and “adventure” offered up by Africa to consumption, production, and accumulation become imperative to forestall such a rejection. This is where phobogenesis, anxiety, and contact become entangled. Global capital is sustained in the Product Red campaign by the offering up of Africa as solution through the promise of its redemption. For the sophisticated, self-liberation can be realized through consumption at the same time that the global crisis of production is resolved by Africa’s “natural” entrepreneurship. All becomes well with the world as desire for the black body is freed from the trope of transgression.

Notes

ⁱ Bono, 2007 “Message 2U.” Vanity Fair, July.

ⁱⁱ Bono, 2007: 36.

ⁱⁱⁱ Fanon, F. 1967. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press. p. 156.

^{iv} For Fanon (1967:156-157), the white Negrophobic woman, in the white unconscious “is in fact nothing but a putative sexual partner – just as the (white) Negrophobic man is a repressed homosexual. In relation to the Negro, everything takes place on the genital level...they have tremendous sexual powers. What do you expect, with all the freedom they have in their jungles! They copulate at all times and in all places. They are really genital. They have so many children that they cannot even count them. Be careful, or they will flood us with little mulattoes.”

^v Hesnard, A. 1949. *L’univers morbide de la faute*. Paris, Presses Universitaires de France). pp. 38. Cited by Fanon 1967: pp. 156.

^{vi} Condé Nast Publications, 2007. Vanity Fair. Condé Nest Media Kit.

^{vii} Shri Adi Shakti: The Kingdom of God. <http://adishakti.org/index.htm>

^{viii} Bono 2007: 32

^{ix} Ibid.

^x By the globalization project, I refer to the privileging of the rights of corporations “through an emerging vision of the world and its resources as a globally organized and managed free/trade/free enterprise economy” which has” redefined development as a private undertaking.” McMichael, P. 2008. *Development and Social Change* (4th edition). Thousand Oaks, CA. Pine Forge Press. p. 21 and 338.

^{xi} Sarraut, A. 1923. *La mise en valeur des colonies Françaises*. Paris : Payot et Cie. p. 113.

^{xii} Sarraut, 1923: 113.

^{xiii} Mbembe, A. 2001. *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. p. 34-5

^{xiv} Mbembe, 2001: 35.

^{xv} Alexander, M. Jacqui. 2005. *Pedagogies of Crossing*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

^{xvi} Alexander, 2005: 298.

^{xvii} Alexander, 2005: 281.

^{xviii} Ibid.

^{xix} For a conceptual elaboration of “abduction” see Kamugisha, Aaron. 2006 “Abducting Western Civilization: Coloniality, citizenship and liberation in the Caribbean Intellectual Tradition.” Ph.D. Dissertation, York University: Ch. 1. See also Wynter, Sylvia. 1992 “Beyond the Categories of the Master Conception: The Counterdoctrine of the Jamesian Poiesis,” in Paget, Henry & Buhle, Paul. (Eds.) *C.L.R. James’s Caribbean*. Durham, NC, Duke University Press.

^{xx} See Wynter. 1992.

^{xxi} Mbembe, 2001:25.

^{xxii} Ibid.

^{xxiii} See Alexander's (2005:121-125) discussion of the idea of Margaret Urban Walker's notion of "right to truth" as a moral imperative. See Walker, M. 2001 "'Rights to Truth.'" Paper presented at the Women's Rights as Human Rights conference, South-Eastern Women's Studies Association: Boca Raton. March.

^{xxiv} Dreyfus, H. L. and Rabinow, P. 1983. *Michael Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2nd ed. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press. p. 130-31. See also Foucault, M. 1980. *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley. New York:

^{xxv} This is used to refer to a basic recognized authority "as a teller of truth... structurally where both truth and credibility are not antagonistic". Alexander. 2005: 123.

^{xxvi} See Guha, R. and Spivak, G. eds. 1988. *Selected Subaltern Studies*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press. and Prakash, G. 1994 "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism," *American Historical Review* 99 (December) p. 1475-1490. For example.

^{xxvii} Adam Smith (Smith, A. 1937. *The Wealth of Nations*. New York: Modern Library) proposed the "invisible hand" of the marketplace as the basis for economic efficiency manifest in the maximization of value. David Ricardo (Ricardo, D. 1821. *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*. 3rd ed. London: John Murray) challenged mercantilist practices by positing comparative advantage as an argument for trade that is free from state regulation and intervention. These 'economic' arguments may be viewed against arguments for a natural historical progress proposed initially by scholars such as Hegel (Hegel, G. W. F. 2004. Preface to the "Phenomenology of Spirit", translated by Yirmiyahu Yovel. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), for example, and particularly for this argument in Herbert Spencer's social Darwinist formulation (1882-1898) which saw the fittest, indicated by the exercise of power and the acquisition of wealth, to emerge out of historical competition. Thus, the weakness and poverty was an indication of their inferiority. (See Spencer, H. 1882-1898 *The Principles of Sociology*. 3 vols. London : Williams and Norgate.)

^{xxviii} History ascribed the colonized to the "traditional" space occupied by the uncivilized. The modern European either imposed order on this "state of nature", or provided the conditions for the native's transition to modern subjecthood.

^{xxix} Frank, A. G. 1972. "The Development of Underdevelopment," in James D. Cockcroft, Andre Gunder Frank, and Dale Johnson, (Eds). *Dependence and Underdevelopment*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books.

^{xxx} Wallerstein, E. 1997. *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. London: Academic Press.

^{xxxi} Chakrabarty, D. 2000. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. p 49.

^{xxxii} This is the argument of Daniel Ben-Ami. 2006. "Why the new Amex cards makes me see RED", Spiked. Thursday 28 September.

<http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?/site/printable/1723/>

^{xxxiii} See Foucault, M. 1979. "Governmentality" in *Ideology and Consciousness*, Special Issue on Governing the Present. Autumn 1979. p. 5-21.

^{xxxiv} See Alexander's (2005:121-122) discussion of Rae Langston's schems relating to will, means, and opportunity (Langston.R. 1992. "Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts." *Philosophy and Public Affairs*. 20. No. 2. Spring. p. 293-30)

^{xxxv} McMichael 2008: 1.

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