ECONOMY OF THE FLESH:

NATURE AND ECONOMY IN DAVID HUME AND ADAM SMITH

A DISSERTATION
Submitted to the faculty
of
The Lutheran School of Theology at
Chicago

In Partial
Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of
Philosophy

By

Jonathan Pimentel Chacón
May 2014

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

He tenido que escribir estas páginas para llegar a la conclusión de que los gestos invisibles y perecederos hacen posible la concreta aparición de las palabras y los espacios. Por los múltiples e incontables gestos intangibles y fundamentales que han hecho crecer mi vida, nuestras vidas, agradezco a Tricia, Isabel, Craig y Amaya. Ellas y él hicieron posible que dedicara ideas y noches que ahora está condensadas parcialmente en este documento. De todas sus páginas lo más importante de esta disertación es el testimonio no escrito, e imposible de escribir, que cohesiona puntos y sangrías con comprensión y amistad. Ojalá que en sus vidas, improbables lectores, encuentren personas que hagan de sus vidas una oportunidad para apreciar lo que nos hace más, mucho más una letra en el estante.

INTRODUCTION

The Joke and the Bare Wall: Taking Seriously the Insult

Karl Marx (1818-1883) pointed to a convergence that he did not completely develop. He expanded upon the Hegelian *dictum*: "Pure light is pure darkness," by foreseeing an intimate connection, a form of affective link between political economy and theology. Yet he treated it as an expression of something else, as a symptom of what political economy and theology cannot think about. Political economy and theology ignore their negative knowledge; through their explanations they express the radical anguish produced by ignorance. The treatment of the relationship between political economy and theology becomes an exploration of something that has to be clarified from the outside.

For Marx, linking theology and political economy was a way to show the inconsistencies or shortcomings of political economy. In introducing this subterranean relationship he was not proposing a metonymy but creating a gap through a joke. Indeed, for Marx the relationship between political economy and theology were laughable. Political economy and theology are ridiculous to him for one reason: their origins or, more precisely the problem of their origin, remains hidden from them and they cannot recognize its weakness. Accordingly they insist on prolonging the practice of theology and political economy without understanding their limits and viciousness. The question of the unknown origins does not leave space for the truth of the joke:

> We have seen how money is changed into capital; how through capital surplus-value is made, and from surplus-value more capital. But the accumulation of capital presupposes surplus-value; surplus-value presupposes capitalistic production; capitalistic production presupposes the pre-existence of considerable masses of capital and of labour power in the hands of producers of commodities.

> The whole movement, therefore, seems to turn in a vicious circle, out of which we can only get by supposing a primitive accumulation (previous accumulation of Adam Smith) preceding capitalistic accumulation; an accumulation not the result of the capitalistic mode of production, but its starting point.[1]

Henceforth, what has to be resolved is the "vicious circle" expressed in the ignorance about the origins. There is a break in the chain: what are the origins of Capital? In order to reconstruct capital's entire movement it becomes necessary to interrogate its suppositions. Marx's judgment is that one of fundamental tasks of the critique of political economy is to reveal its madness, fissures, and irredeemable ridiculousness. For Marx, the farce is a moment that must be overcome through analytical procedures. He indeed proceeds to enter into the realms of the farce. Nevertheless, his assumption is that there is a distinction or abyss between the truth of political economy and its own mechanisms of functioning. Therefore the farce of political economy and theology only creates emptiness. Through his comparison Marx creates a vacuum that has to be explored.

The farce is horrendous because it condenses and expresses truth in such a way that cannot be believed. In order to emphasize the farce of political economy Marx has to turn to theology: "This primitive accumulation plays in Political Economy about the same part as original sin in theology. Adam bit the apple, and thereupon sin fell on the human race. Its origin is supposed to be explained when it is told as an anecdote of the past."[2] Since political economy cannot reasonably explain the historical conditions through which capital is produced, it is located instead within the ambit of theological explanations. Marx's joke does not have to be dismissed, neither do its antecedents. The

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Vintage Books, 1977 [1867]), 873.

[2] Ibid.

joke persists for the satire wants to demolish false assumptions and bring light. Adam's apple and the primitive accumulation of wealth are shadows that share ways of proceeding:

> Economists have a singular method of procedure. There are only two kinds of institutions for them, artificial and natural. The institutions of feudalism are artificial institutions, those of the bourgeoisie are natural institutions. In this they resemble theologians, who likewise establish two kinds of religion. Every religion which is not theirs is an invention of men, while their own is an emanation from God.[3]

Once again the simplifications of the "economists" are explained as fundamentally theological. In this case, Marx refers to similar procedures and differentiations. Both economists and theologians achieve their political objectives through an identical process of naturalization and virtualization. Then Marx continues deploying notions, notions such as that invention and emanation appear to be the antipodes of a practical comprehension of historical dynamics. The purpose of the joke is to affirm and extend his distance from these procedures. Marx's joke expresses a contention with naturalization, invention and, emanation in order to suggest a different order of explanation.

There is a secret that has to be revealed in order to fully access history, economy, and nature. Marx looks at political economy and theology as a torment that threatens to destroy their limits. In a letter to Will Grohmann (1887-1968), Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) wrote, "I want people to see finally what lies *behind* my paintings."[4] Marx had a similar desire. He assumed that there was something behind what was being introduced

[3] Karl Marx, "The Poverty of Philosophy," in *Karl Marx/Frederick Engels Collected Works,* Vol. 6: 1845-1848 (New York: International Publishers, 1976 [1847]), 174.

[4] *Kandinsky Complete Writings on Art,* ed. Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo (Boston: Da Capo Press, 1982), v. Emphasis in the original.

by the similitudes of political economy with theology. The evident commonalities between their procedures did not explain anything fundamental about political economy and theology with the exception of their epistemic weaknesses. The notion of there being something behind or occluded by normal sight introduces the need for a different kind of knowledge or, more precisely, some sort of meta-theoretical position or, to the contrary, the rehabilitation of an unavoidable relation.[5]

The relationship between political economy and theology required, according to Marx, the creation of a method capable of undermining its futility. Kandinsky's essay "Bare Wall" points to Marx's understanding of the common ground of political economy and theology: "The bare wall!...That ideal wall, where nothing stands, against which nothing leans on which no picture hangs, where nothing is to be seen. The egocentric wall, living "in and for itself", self-assertive, chaste."[6] Indeed, for Marx nothing stands in the relationship between political theology and economy; there is nothing to be seen but the manifestation of a presence without walls. Even more a disfiguration of a nucleus that his trying to grasp. Yet the bare wall stands and something exists because of its pure physicality. Marx presents theology and political economy as egocentric practices that are incapable of understanding their lacks. The bare wall expresses its self, not ideas or arguments about something beyond it. As Andrey Tarkovsky (1932-1986) says about the image, "It does not signify life or symbolize it, but embodies it, expressing its

[5] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn, ed. Hanna Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 2007 [1955]), 253.

[6] *Kandinsky Complete Writings on Art,* 732.

uniqueness."[7] The bare-wall accumulates life. However, Marx laughs and promises a destruction that can give us access to what is behind the wall.

> In times long gone by there were two sorts of people; one, the diligent, intelligent, and, above all, frugal elite; the other, lazy rascals, spending their substance, and more, in riotous living. The legend of theological original sin tells us certainly how man came to be condemned to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow; but the history of economic original sin reveals to us that there are people to whom this is by no means essential. Never mind! Thus it came to pass that the former sort accumulated wealth, and the latter sort had at last nothing to sell except their own skins. And from this original sin dates the poverty of the great majority that, despite all its labour, has up to now nothing to sell but itself, and the wealth of the few that increases constantly although they have long ceased to work. Such insipid childishness is every day preached to us in the defence of property.[8]

The original sin of theology and economics' original sin tell us about the metabolism between theology and political economy. There is a direct and ridiculous connection between these two forms of explanation. This type of direct connection cannot be reserved for the metaphorical[9] use of theology within political economy or vice versa. The fact that people have to sell "their own skins" can be properly though not completely explained from within theology and economic theory. Strictly put, political economy theorizes from within theology. It is not its extension or "secular actualization" because theology itself carries economic positions. When reflecting about the capacity of Greek arts and epic, Marx says that their capacity to still give us artistic pleasure can be explained by affirming that in certain respects to say that "they count as [the] norm and as

[7] Andrey Tarkovsky, *Sculpting Time: The Great Russian Filmmaker Discusses His Art*, trans. Kitty Hunter-Blair (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 111.

[8] Karl Marx, *Capital,* 873-874.

[9] Enrique Dussel, *Las metáforas teológicas de Marx* (Estella: Verbo Divino, 1993), 163-170.

an unattainable model"[10] is to suggest a path to the relocate the relationship between political economy and theology.

Yet, I argue that we have to follow his first approach. We have to return to his humor and sarcasm. Thus, we have to pay attention to the ridiculous bare wall. Marx's jokes about the theological character of political economy are in fact serious insights. In this case, there is nothing more serious than the joke and nothing more suggestive than the disfigured suspires of theology. The obscurities of theology are no less than the shadows of political economy. Frederick Engels (1820-1895) coined an insult that is one of his basic insights. For him, Adam Smith (1723-1790)[11] was an *economic Luther*[12] by which Engels anticipated Marx's jokes. Nonetheless, Engel's insult is the angle from which the humor of the critique of political economy has to be taken. Marx demonstrated an early agreement with Engels: "Engels was therefore right to call *Adam Smith* the *Luther of Political Economy.*"[13] I would like to insist that we should take very seriously all these jokes, insults, and ridicule.

A Serious Joke: Theology/Economy/Flesh

Several studies from the first decades of the last century to the present make more than plausible the thesis that there are internal commonalities between theological economy and political economy. These commonalities are condensed and expressed not

[10] Karl Marx, *Grundisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (Rough Draft), trans. Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin Books, 1993 [1857-58]), 111.

[11] Ian Simpson Ross, *The Life of Adam Smith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Nicholas Phillipson, *Adam Smith: An Enlightened Life* (New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 2010).

[12] Frederick Engels, "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy," in *Karl Marx/Frederick Engels Collected Works,* Vol. 3: 1843-1844 (New York: International Publishers, 1975 [1843]), 422.

[13] Ibid., 290.

as forms of explicit legitimation or vulgar instrumentation of theological notions or imaginary. These commonalities and metabolism are both diachronic and synchronic, and thus are part of a trajectory that manifests itself specifically and with variations in response to contextual particularities. Moreover, the transformation of modes of production does not eradicate the theological which provides political economy with a context of argumentation and imagination.[14] Also political economy means either expanding or suppressing certain themes, modes of operation, and language of theological economy. What occurs is a tense metabolism or interaction that disseminates and is reinforced by practices that occur in everyday life. The debates about the nature of flesh, from Arius (c. 256-336) to the Council of Chalcedon (451), have distinguished between the natures of Christ and have focused on Christ's immune flesh.[15] Even from theopaschism[16] to recent interpretations[17] the question of the reaches and implications of the notion of flesh are still debatable. The various antecedents of these theological debates also show the importance and viscosity of the question of flesh.[18] These debates are intrinsically political[19] and their implications must not be overlooked as they shape

[14] Jacob Taubes, *Occidental Eschatology*, trans. David Ratmoko (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009 [1947]).

[15] "The letter of Pope Leo to Flavian, bishop of Constantinople, about Eutyches," in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, Vol. 1 (Nicaea I – Lateran V, ed. Norman P. Tanner, S.J (London and Washington, D.C: Georgetown/Sheed & Ward, 1990), 77-82.

[16] I am thinking particularly of Gregory of Nazianzus (330-390) *Five Theological Orations.* See *The Five Theological Orations of Gregory of Nazianzus*, ed. Arthur James Mason (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1899).

[17] Virginia Burrus, *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Jennifer Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge: Early Christian Bodies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[18] Hanneke Reuling, *After Eden: Church Fathers and Rabbis on Genesis 3:16-21* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006); Lorenzo Scornaienchi, *Sarx und Soma bei Paulus: Der Mensch zwischen Destruktivität und Konstructivität* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008).

and give reason to forms of organization, distribution of power, and knowledge. There are traditions within Christianity that have affirmed that the human body is constructed like the world itself,[20] and that study of the human body constitutes one of the basic questions of theology. At the core of this understanding is one idea: *carcer est totum corpus tenebroso inhorrens situ; nisi oculorum iluminetur aspectu*.[21] Thus, the theological reflection on the body and flesh is understood as a way to overcome its horrendousness and to secure oneself against the arbitrariness of flesh.[22] Theology wants to be a light that illuminates the dark and filthy prison that we are. Nonetheless, there are other traditions in which fragility and fall are thought of as opportunities for the development of human arts and science. Even the most basic activities of human economy are also explained based on our physical indigence;[23] this indigence creates the possibility for an economy of cooperation:

> Because of the arts and sciences and the useful things to which they lead, we have mutual need for one another. And because we need one another, we come together into one place in large numbers, and share with each other the necessities of our life, in common intercourse. To this human assemblage and cohabitation we have given the name of city […] For man is a naturally sociable animal, and made for citizenship. No single person is in all ways self-sufficient.[24]

---

[19] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* VII, 5. For the concept political see Helio Gallardo, *Elementos de política en América Latina* (San José: DEI, 1986); *Fundamentos de formación política: análisis de coyuntura* (San José: DEI, 1988).

[20] Ambrose, *Hexaemeron,* VI, 9

[21] Ibid., IX, 55.

[22] Augustine, *Sermones,* 163, 6; *Sermones,* 344, 1; *Enarrationes in Psalmos,* 136, 1.

[23] Nemesius of Emesa, "On the Nature of Man," in *Cyril of Jerusalen and Nemesius of Emesa*, ed. William Telfer (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), 238-257.

[24] Ibid., 243.

Theological anthropology is thought to be the foundation of economic exchange and sociability. Economic theory thus belongs to theological reflection after the fall. In this case economy combines gift and labor. Economy is also presented as a permanent struggle within and against the limits of our nature and our natural environment. The connection between flesh and economic activities hence is considered to be at the heart of theology.

The question of the unity of the spiritual body as an economic problem has been a central problematic for theology since the epoch of the "Church Fathers".[25] Moreover, the comprehension and development of the notion of an economic body constituted one of the central elements of the complex of practices that were oriented to constitute both a personal and a common body at the time that these bodies were imagined as a part of the Body of Christ. This discussion introduced interrogations and norms about the constitution and distribution of authority, government, wealth, and belonging as well as its origins. Along with the discussion about authority and power came a detailed analysis of flesh, bodies, and dreams. Although the notion of the Body of Christ has evident cosmological implications, it was typically restricted to an understanding of economy and specifically of wealth since the fourth century of the Common Era.[26] The remarkable importance of materiality, in Late Medieval European types of Christianity,[27] is also an important aspect used to understand a concept of economy that certainly surpassed

[25] Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: l'eucharistie et l'Église au Moyen âge. Étude historique 2 éd., rev. et augm* (Paris: Aubier, 1948).

[26] Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012).

[27] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 2011).

another fundamentally related to wealth or labor especially in the context of the expansion of imperialism and colonialism.[28] The important studies of Jacques Le Goff[29] (b.1924), Giacomo Todeschini[30] (b.1950), and more recently Eduardo Grüner[31] have shown through detailed lexicographical, philosophical and historical investigations the theological provenance of modern occidental economic thinking as well as its particular transformations within regions and schools. Le Goff's and Todeschini's studies have also prompted recent important developments like the study by Valentina Toneatto about the origins of the theological-economical[32] lexicon. In her book, Toneatto demonstrates that in order to comprehend the theology/economy conundrum one has to establish an approach that is capable of going through a merely genealogical approximation. The alternative to this approach is made explicit when Toneatto explains how some of the most important Christian motifs and problems were rendered using economic language

[28] Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham and London: 2011), 8; 184; 262.

[29] *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages* trans. Patricia Ranum. (New York : Zone Books, 1988 [1986]); *Marchands et banquiers du Moyen Âge* (Paris : PUF, 2001).

[30] *Un trattato francescano di economia politica: il De emptionibus et venditionibus, De usuris, De restitutionibus di Pietro di Giovanni Olivi* (Roma: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1980.); *La ricchezza degli ebrei. Merci e denaro nella riflessione ebraica e nella definizione cristiana dell'usura alla fine del Medioevo* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1989); *Il prezzo della salvezza. Lessici medievali del pensiero economico* (Roma: La Nuova Italia Scientifica, 1994); *I mercanti e il tempio. La società cristiana e il circolo virtuoso della ricchezza fra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna: il Mulino, 2002).

[31] Eduardo Grüner, *La oscuridad y las luces: Capitalismo, cultura y revolución* (Buenos Aires: Edhasa, 2010).

[32] Valentina Toneatto, *Les banquiers du seigneur, évêques et moines face à la richesse (IVe-début IXe siècle)* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2012) ; Élites et rationalité économique. Les lexiques de l'administration monastique du Haut Moyen Âge», dans *Les élites et la richesse au haut Moyen Âge*, Actes du Colloque International de Bruxelles (13-15 mars 2008), Turnhout, 2010) ,71-96.

and imagery (theological economy). This use was not merely metaphorical, rhetorical[33] or instrumental; on the contrary, it had constitutive implications. What her argument affirms is that there is a mutual interpenetration that resulted in creating language, procedures, and argumentative foundations. It is not that "economy" spawns a theology or that "theology" provided economy with its substratum. The growing importance of the relationship between theology and economy highlights internal aspects of them that are not strictly ethical or of secondary order. One of the most important aspects of Toneatto's investigation for my own research is her discussion of the relationship between how certain monastic traditions understood the language of *carnalitas*.[34] The carnal level of existence in the reduced economy of monasticism required a series of precise and quotidian practices of economization. Flesh was clearly not just a metaphysical notion but referred both to an aspect of the human constitution and also to a criterion for the creation of political and economic bodies. Besides the political power of the institutional Church, often referred to in order to explain the interlacing of theology and the political economy, there is the elasticity of its modes of communication as they were expressed within economic activities; even more, they themselves form part of specific forms of economy.

Theology/economy must be adequately comprehended as a relationship that expresses mutual tensions and interferences: theology was a form of practice composed by a certain economical lexicon and problems. In the development and establishment of a theological language orientated to resolve problems of administration, government, and

[33] James A. Harris, "Hume's Use of the Rhetoric of Calvinism," in *Impressions of Hume* ed. M. Frasca-Spada and P. J. E. Kail (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 141-160.

[34] Valentina Toneatto, *Les banquiers du seigneur, évêques et moines face à la richesse*, 129-135.

authority within religious movements, theological practices return and are a presence that heightens the language and mechanisms of expression and foundation of political economy. Some of these mechanisms and returns have been recently discussed by Patricia Ranft. Her investigation is valuable above all because of one her hypotheses: she affirms that the doctrine of incarnation has had a decisive role in the constitution of "modern Western culture."[35] Such an argument requires several refinements: first, incarnation is not a doctrine what can shape a given society but the social processes of exchange, reception, and distribution of such a doctrine within the various fields that compose society; second, the doctrine does not shape a society. Instead it is part of the various forces that dispute the hegemony of reality; third, the relationship between Christian doctrines and political and economic practices has to be studied on different levels. For a deeper explanation, it is not sufficient to concentrate on the relationship between doctrines or what can be called the history of intellectual reception.

The Ugly Theology: Theoretical Antecedents

One of the most important contributions of Latin American Liberation Theologies has been the development of the question of the connection between theology and economy. Although there are several and recognized antecedents to them,[36] the importance of these liberation theologies for this question is fundamental and they are thus also a central aspect of my own research. Economic dependence and, more widely the Theology/Economy relationship, did not stop these theologies from considering the socio-existential upheaval that produced mechanized relationships or awkwardly

[35] Patricia Ranft, *How the Doctrine of the Incarnation Shaped Western Culture* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013).

[36] See Hugo Assmann, *La idolatría del mercado* (San José: DEI, 1997), 30-76.

oligarchical, militaristic, racist, heterosexist and clerical.[37] The practices of desegregation and ethnic brutality such theologies understood as both economic and theologically informed. Latin American Liberation Theologies did not consider "economic dependence" as if it were exterior to everyday life production.[38] This allows us to rediscover the centrality of the carnal being as the criteria by which to assess every socio-historical practice. Also, this re-encounter implies we must re-read the Semite and Judeo-Christian traditions according to the importance that these traditions assign to the flesh,[39] its needs, tensions, and dreams. The concept of economy employed is not reductively economic;[40] instead, Latin American Liberation theologies understand economy as human activity that allows the production and reproduction of structural and situational life and also the distribution of death. These theologies understood that the regimes of National Security,[41] formalization of democracy, neoliberalism[42], and surplus-repression were an integral part of political economy and theological economy. Within Latin American dependent capitalism, its brutal militarism, paramilitarism, and the importance of the emotive and utopic load of the massive media, the program could not

[37] Franz Hinkelammert, *Democracia y totalitarismo* (San José: DEI, 1987); *Sacrificios humanos y sociedad occidental: Lucifer y la bestia* (San José: DEI, 1991).

[38] José Porfirio Miranda, *El Ser y el Mesías* (Salamanca: Sígueme, 1973), 98-100.

[39] María Clara Bingemer, "La trinidad a partir de la perspectiva de la mujer. Algunas pautas para la reflexión," en *El rostro femenino de la teología.* San José: DEI, 1986; Franz Hinkelammert, *La fe de Abraham y el Edipo occidental* (San José: DEI, 1991); Marcella Althaus-Reid, *The Queer God* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003).

[40] See Diego Soto, "Cartografías del poder en las Teologías Latinoamericanas de la Liberación (I): Amar la Delación. Seguridad Nacional y Biopoder" in press.

[41] José Comblin, *La Doctrina de la Seguridad Nacional* (Santiago de Chile: Arzobispado de Santiago-Vicaría de la Solidaridad, 1979). Also Equipo Seladoc, *Panorama de la teología latinoamericana* IV Iglesia y Seguridad Nacional (Salamanca: Sígueme, 1980).

[42] Elsa Tamez, "Libertad Neoliberal y libertad paulina," *Pasos* (1997); "El Dios de la gracia versus el "dios" del mercado," *Concilium* 287 (2000): 139-48.

be exclusively *economic,* that is to say, reductively economic or political.[43] It could not be, and it is not. At the same time, this reflection supposed the necessity of beginning a critique of the concept of violence and also of peace. From these roots has been developed a theology of life, as *form of life*. This is, a theology that does not allow the separation between form and way of life; which instead affirms that in every way of life the same possibility of life is played out, and that precisely for that reason, it is understood as a practice of caring for flesh.

Unfolding this characteristic supposes a consideration of democracy, and of diverse forms of life, that include a semiotic or economy of the signs in the cultural industry and new technologies. Within this thematic field it has to be explained the relationship between neoliberalism, the reversion of human rights, and the weakening and/or rupture of world consensus that impede the permanent recurrence of the state of exception. Liberation theologies had signaled that, with the association between neoliberalism and restrictive democracies, we suffer a permanent rupture of juridical or constitutional order.[44] This is developed as a critique of the law. Also of as affirmation of social and cultural mobilizations that confront the irrationality of law. In the same way are developed the psychic and affective foundations of political economy.[45] This has

---

[43] Raúl Vidales, *Cristianismo anti-burgués* (San José: DEI, 1978). Important for his focus, "Position of Women in the Popular Class" in *Voices from the Third World* Vol. 8, no. 3 (1985): 38-45. Also Diego Soto, *El Espejo encantado: mito, fatalidad y carnalidad* (Heredia: Escuela Ecuménica de Ciencias de la Religión, 2010).

[44] José Míguez Bonino, "Los derechos humanos, ¿de quiénes?" y Juan Luis Segundo, "Derechos humanos, evangelización e ideología," Hugo Assmann, editor, *Carter y la lógica del imperialismo* (San José: EDUCA, 1978), 333-354; Franz Hinkelammert, editor, *El huracán de la globalización* (San José: DEI, 1999); Helio Gallardo, *Crítica social del evangelio que mata. Introducción al pensamiento de Juan Luis Segundo* (Heredia, C.R.: EUNA, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, 2009); *América Latina/Honduras: Golpe de Estado y aparatos clericales* (Bogotá: desde abajo, 2010).

[45] Rubem Alves, *Tomorrow's Child: Imagination, Creativity, and the Rebirth of Culture* (Wipf & Stock: 2011 [1972]); Jung Mo Sung, *Desejo, Mercado e Religião* (Petropolis: Vozes, 1997).

taken the shape of different analysis of the social institutions, which includes the critique of health, and the repression and formation institutions.

Within this type of analysis are unfolded approaches towards biotechnologies, natural, and computational sciences since these are central, and will become even more so, in the epistemological and political structuring of the world. These discussions are connected to the colonial womb from where our present is gestated. All of that is not to deny the effective and worthy contributions of these sciences for a good life on our planet, but rather to insert them in an economy based upon the care of flesh. One aspect that is also central is the limits of the gift and along with that, the ambivalence and the contradictions of every human project.[46] This reflection on the gift has allowed the ability to outline the option for the impoverished as a start or wager that signals that whoever opts has also noticed his or her own impoverishment. Opting for the impoverished and that they opt for themselves does not guarantee more than the event of mutual recognition that authorizes us not to become deprived of space and time. It is about bringing out the option for the impoverished from the moral demands or that which diverts it from a divine foundation and welcomes it as an excess, something that, because of its radicalism, breaks all expectations: a messianic irruption.

That is why the concept of praxis does not refer exclusively to the betterment of *economic* dependence but instead also to the interrogation of political economy's understanding of life and death and its mythic frameworks.[47] Then, the analysis of Latin

---

[46] Elsa Tamez, *Contra toda condena*. La justificación por la fe desde los excluidos (San José: DEI-SEBILA, 1991).

[47] Franz Hinkelammert, *El grito del sujeto*. Del teatro mundo del evangelio de Juan al perro mundo de la globalización (San. José, DEI, 1998).

American Liberation theologies is social and economic because there are no analyses that are not social and do not possess economic ideals. That is to say, every theology expresses social traumas and enjoyments and tries to transform or reproduce them. What is central, then, is the discernment of theological economy and political economy from the criteria of carnal life and not simply the possession of the means of production or the rise of productivity, even though these discussions are also offered and important. I offer my discussion on the economy of the flesh as both specification and deepening of the practical space instituted by Latin American Liberation Theologies. My investigation has an *ex post facto* position with these theologies: I offer a reading that supposes their contributions in order to develop a response to the theological weight that we carry in our skin.

There are other discussions and debates that can be considered complementary or parallel to those offered by Latin American Liberation Theologies. Some of those other debates introduce suggestive questions[48] that were made possible by important contributions[49] that concentrated on historical and epistemological problems. The discussion of such topics has usually continued to clarify the epistemic nature of theology and economics.[50] Also, there have been attempts to trace the historical trajectories of political economy from the perspective of its theological character.[51] More recently there

[48] *Religion, Economics, and Social Thought:* Proceedings of an International Symposium ed. Walter Block and Irving Hexham (Vancouver: The Fraser Institute, 1982).

[49] Jacob Viner, *The Role of Providence in the Social Order: An Essay in Intellectual History* (Princeton: American Philosophical Association, 1972); *Religious Thought and Economic Society* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1978).

[50] Max L. Stackhouse, *Public Theology and Political Economy: Christian Stewardship in Modern Society* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1991 [1978]); *Economics and Religion: Are they Distinct?* ed. H. Geoffrey and A.M.C. Waterman (Boston/Dordrecht/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994).

have been attempts to reposition the question of the relationship between theology and economics through a wider understanding of economy[52] that nevertheless does not develop fully the implications of the metabolism of political economy and theology. Where there is an attempt to embrace the contributions of Latin American Liberation Theologies the discussion is better situated and has important insight for the local discussions in United States.[53] There are studies[54] that have focused on the relationship between theology, class, race, land, and colonialism that should be considered fundamental to the consideration of the economy of the flesh. These studies show an adequate comprehension of the constitutive links that give form to the "all-encompassing" process through which God, the market, and the nation-state devour flesh in order to satisfy their desire for death and wealth.

The Joke's Space: David Hume and Adam Smith

This investigation is a study of the relationship between theories of nature and

---

[51] A.M.C. Waterman, *Political Economy and Christian Theology since the Enlightenment: Essays in Intellectual History* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004).

[52] Kathryn Tanner, *Economy of Grace* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005).

[53] M. Douglas Meeks, *God the Economist: The Doctrine of God and Political* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989); Economy Joerg Rieger, *No Rising Tide: Theology, Economics, and the Future* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009); *Globalization and Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010); Gary Dorrien, *Economy, Difference, Empire: Social Ethics for Social Justice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Mark Lewis Taylor, *The Theological and the Political: On the Weight of the World* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).

[54] Benjamin Valentin, *Mapping Public Theology: Beyond Culture, Identity, and Difference* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002); George E. Tinker, *Spirit and Resistance: Political Theology and American Indian Liberation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004); Emilie Townes, *Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006); *Breaking the Fine Rain of Death: African American Health Issues and a Womanist Ethic of Care* (Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2006); Willie James Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2010).

political economy[55] in the philosophies of David Hume (1711-1776)[56] and Adam Smith. In the context of their philosophies there appear modes of creation of truth and re-characterization of power and humanity that condense and express the result of long historical transitions, and which make possible the emergence of specific ideals of fidelity, modes of individuation, and civilization. For theology this study has importance on a fundamental level. This investigation requires us to ask a set of questions: What is the theological? What and how is it possible to become incorporated into a collectivity? What are the relationships between flesh and economy? From these questions a fundamental theological question arises: from which positions is it possible to interrogate the notion of flesh? My study attempts to understand how these questions were directly and indirectly addressed. The study shows the immanent functioning of the philosophical device that configures sets of responses with its distinctions, methods, and aims.

The relationship of nature and economy delineates and reinforces modes of production of a world whose density and dissemination require a pause in our thinking. The exploration of how the concept of nature and economy are established as a

[55] The importance of these thematic fields has been widely recognized and developed see Andrew Skinner, "Economics and History – The Scottish Enlightenment," *Scottish Journal of Political Economy* 12, no. 1 (1965); Jane Rendall, *The Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment* (London: Macmillan, 1978); Fania Oz-Salzberg, *Translating the Enlightenment: Scottish Civic Discourse in Eighteenth Century Germany* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995); *Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains*, eds. Christopher Fox, Roy Porter, and Robert Wokler (Berkeley: University of California, 1995); Ter Ellingson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage* (Berkeley: University of California, 2001); Josep Básques Quesada, "La Ilustración escocesa: Un depósito de intuiciones para el neoconservadurismo?," *Revista de Estudios Políticos* 118 (2002): 143-180; *Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Alexander Broadie (Cambridge University Press, 2003); David B. Wilson, *Seeking Nature's Logic: Natural Philosophy in the Scottish Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: Penn State UP, 2009).

[56] For biographical and bibliographical information see E.C. Mossner, *The life of David Hume* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980 [1954]); Gerhard Streminger, David Hume. *Sein Leben und sein Werk* (Paderborn: Schoeningh 1994); *David Hume. Der Philosoph und sein Zeitalter* (München: C.H.Beck, 2011)

theoretical configuration of an epoch and its heterogeneous components allows us to think about the descent or spirit of the ways in which we inscribe our activities in the world. Thus, what is presented here is a double confrontation: first with the particularity that that relationship acquired in the eighteenth century, and second with a field of notions that exceed the specificity of that historical period. It has to be said that the development of the economy of the flesh is part of a process in which the invisible God reveals itself:

> The beginning and end of the paradox that is gnostic religion is the unknown God himself who, unknowable on principle, because the "other" to everything Known, is yet the object of a Knowledge and even asks to be known. He as much invites as he thwarts the quest for knowing him; in the failure of reason and speech becomes revealed; and the very account of the failure yields the language for naming him.[57]

Hume and Smith effectively developed their philosophies from within the space opened by this God who completely reveals itself to become an object of knowledge. Hume and Smith understood that God was fully present in the social dynamics and historical trajectories of their societies. Their God was entirely subsumed by the epistemic, political, and economic mechanisms that made possible commercial society. They requested entire faith in this God, a faith that cannot be accessed or negated through reason. As part of this faith they required obedience and the willingness to die. Their philosophy was understood as a form through which to secure society and God. They argued that any attempt to transform society was a direct offense against God. The reverse is also true: embracing the given organization of life implied a full relationship with God. Knowing society and "the human nature" thus was understood as the study of

[57] Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion: The Message of the Alien God and the Beginning of Christianity* (Boston: Bacon Press, 1958), 288. See also Ioan P. Couliano, *I miti dei Dualismi Occidentali: Dai sistemi Gnostici al mondo moderno* (Milano: Jaca Book, 1989), 309.

general and particular providence[58] and the manifestation of eternity within history. Then, with Hume and Smith the *dictum*: "*Sed mortem carnis homo timet, mortem animae pauci*"[59] transforms into its opposite: no one has to be particularly concerned with the death of flesh. Nevertheless, Hume's and Smith's philosophy is not merely a rejection of flesh and embracing of spirit. Their project consists of incorporating flesh within the multiplicity of spirited bodies that constitute commercial society. Hence, instead of an absolute dualism Hume and Smith propose a subsumed duality in which flesh wants to be assumed and not simply wasted or left behind.

1. **Economy of the Flesh. The Economic Object:** The field of notions mentioned above must be revisited as a part of the intention to interrupt and/ or prolong the gestures, dispositions, and techniques that for us mark divisions, limits, and, in the end, the general area of the possible and impossible. If this investigation is dedicated to the elaboration of this discussion, it is because I consider that, within the relationship of nature and economy in David Hume and Adam Smith, a notion and procedure exists which is partially unnoticed or unattended and that must be investigated as a part of the theological activity. I am referring to the notion and procedure of the economy of the flesh. Throughout this study I present the economy of flesh as notion and as procedure. By notion I am referring to the fact that in spite of its dense presence within the discussions offered here, economy of the flesh remains diluted and not completely exposed. The notional use of economy of the flesh shows that it is possible to approach written devices and apparatus from it. My claim is that economy and flesh is presented as

---

[58] Alexander Crombie, *Natural Theology, or Essays on the Existence of Deity*, Vol. 2, (Bristol: Thoemmes, 2001 [1829]), 262ff.

[59] Augustine, *In Joannis Evangelium tractatus,* XLIX, Cap XI, 2.

a set of categories that, in their articulation, can help me to grasp some of the densest aspects of political economy and theology. The context that is discussed here presents an important moment in which flesh is integrated, even if not completely, within economy. As procedure economy of the flesh refers to social, cultural, and political practices that have flesh as their economic object.

2. **Economy of the Flesh. The Economization of Dispersion and Chaos:** The conjunction of a theory of understanding and a theory of human sentiments that includes aspects of "sciences of life" and of economic theory produces an unstable figure. While heterogeneous in its composition it is certainly still recognizable and graspable. For the administration of that which is considered human as a producer of value, more precisely the creation of humans themselves, an economy with a more precise and more radical focus is fundamental. This foundational economy is an economy of the flesh; that is to say an economy of the dispersion, chaos, and abyss that is imagined to be at the root of the constitution of humans. This imaginary is related to theological proposals[60] that identified human nature and social government and thus identified rebellion or discomfort with "civil government" with carnal hybris. That imagined root is what is explored by and through the relationship between nature and economy in David Hume and Adam Smith. Economy of the flesh is expressed through theological gestures. Those which are more significant are exposed within the interstices of the relationship between nature and economy.

3. **Economy of the Flesh. Happiness and Enjoyment:** Through the notion economy of the flesh it is possible to grasp a sui generis presentation of the plasticity and

[60] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 1541 French Edition, trans. Elsie Anne McKee (Grand Rapids, Michigan / Cambridge, U.K: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 656-680.

hardness of social relationships. I shall mention two interrelated components of this figure. First, this economy implies the contention of the State as a power that directly intervenes in common life. I argue that in the economy of flesh what is primordial for the commonwealth or enjoyment of social life is a permanent process of self-knowledge or personal introspection in order to adjust oneself to the traditions that structure and make common and personal existence possible. The agent, spectator, or producer has to create itself in community and through the traditions of its community and its only possibility to achieve it is through the acceptance of its nature. With that the intervention of the State--its naked power--is contained. While the subject is open to and actually does take care of herself, to subsume her flesh into her body, it establishes limits to "direct politics" of control. Second, the care that I referred to before is in itself a form of government and individuation.

4. **Economy of the Flesh. Terror and Prisons:** The lack or absence of will and desire to practice this form of care (development of life) permits or justifies the operation of institutions whose purpose is to protect and immunize the general economy of society from madmen, bare man, and savages. In this case these direct operations are not considered an abnormality, but rather are understood as a fundamental component of civilization. Hence, the Imperial expansion toward "uncivilized" territories follows, at least to some extent, under the pretext of human protection. That is to say that expansion, in its broadest sense, is a constitutive feature of the economy of flesh. In order to radically limit this expansion, at least in territories constituted by beings considered humans, focal webs were created that prepared and made possible the execution of the techniques and regulations that conform the nature of humanity. These webs or networks

could be discontinued or affected in important ways, but their essence, expressed in and throughout the most elemental everyday practices, is disseminated and established in such a way that, even when ruptures happen, its scars or dense residuum remain.

5. **Economy of the Flesh. The Fabric of Life:** Thus, it is in the production of oneself where the sedimentation of the relationship between nature and economy is expressed with most intensity. More precisely, and in the case of David Hume and Adam Smith, the privileged ambit to discuss this relationship is inside the ambiguities and paradoxes that are implied in notions like agent, woman, or human. Furthermore, what is implied is an interrogation about what can be considered as a life, as well as the possibilities of internally and externally modifying that life.

6. **Economy of the Flesh. The Knit:** The path followed in this investigation makes it possible to emphasize, create, or recreate problems for theological activity. This is an exercise that requires theology to interrogate itself. It is clear that what is necessary is to call into question the categories, modes of creation, sedimentation, and semiotic communication within which theology is developed and expressed. It is necessary to examine hegemonic uses of language and categories, their processes of formation and expansion, in order at the very least to locate the conditions of possibility to reopen the world. What is important in the discussion proposed here is to locate the form in which those social processes from the eighteenth century were thought and exposed; hence this investigation concentrates on the elucidation of the basic characters of the theoretical form through which those processes were thought. The investigation shows that for a radical comprehension of eighteenth-century economic theory it becomes necessary to go through a configuration formed by the notions nature and economy. Economic theory

expresses its most elemental consequences when it is studied as an epistemic formulation of experiences composed by different catalysts.

For Hume and Smith, although it has specific characteristics economic theory is not a discrete area within their inquiries on human understanding and sentiments, for instance. Both, Hume and Smith produced interventions in which understanding, morality, critique of religion, passions, and market commerce, are assumed to be relatively continuous. By relative continuity is meant that their institution is radically related and that their functionality requires each other, that these "differentiated practices" form part of a unity. My research traces how, in Hume and Smith, this configuration operates, how problems are created and resolved within it, and what are their strategies or procedures of sedimentation. Regarding the latter, I ask: How do these authors understand transitions between nature and economy? What are the bridges that allow them to move between the elements of this configuration in spite of the contentions that each element implies for the other? In this configuration each element confers to the other expansive possibilities as well as contentions or interruptions.

The Humean critique of metaphysics and Smith's theory of moral sentiments has a tense relationship with their economic theory; they try to resolve this tension in different ways over the course of their writings. I show here the motives of these tensions, the ways in which they are expressed, and their provisional resolutions. The rise of the political economy corresponds or belongs to a larger context and movement in which one of its most important features is the creation of that which is considered human and the production of criteria to give death. If humans are also an epistemic presentation, then it is important to trace its location within the *longue durée* through which this presentation

becomes intelligible and acquires the status of tradition. How is a relationship possible between Hume´s philosophy of identity and Smith´s thought on human affectivity given their respective theories of commerce? Moreover, in their philosophies, how do they approach the constrictions that the "division of labor" causes in humans?

For the discussion of the two previous questions it is of fundamental importance to think about the trajectory and internal articulation of three notions that delineate the philosophical context of the political economy of Hume and Smith. I am referring to the notions of spirit, the wretched, and suicide. From the consideration of these notions and other notions one can notice that there are several theoretical connections that make possible the transition from a radically affective imaginary, in which instability predominates, to a form of organization that requires constancy, rhythm, and permanent intensity. The division of labor, as Smith presents it, is possible just through the recognition of implicit agreements or covenants in which "things," spaces, and times are considered as inert or disposable.

The notions of common life and agent are the philosophical counterparts of the notions of division and thing. This question delimits a problem: if division and thing are in relative contradiction with fluidity and affection, it is necessary to think about in which ways they are philosophically inserted or subsumed in order to coexist. Is it perhaps that Hume's and Smith's understandings of happiness and commonwealth allow them to create an alternative to resolve the contradiction between radical affection, ranks and division of labor?

If for Hume and Smith "subjectivity" is fundamentally the condition of being sensually affected by the permanent flux of phenomena over which one does not possess

control, it is necessary to investigate which is the philosophical gesture from where both authors bring the idea of a subject that participates in the market economy as producer, seller, and consumer. This question is related to a specific problematic: if freedom is, for Hume and Smith, above all related to movement it is necessary to think about to what extent the market's subject is able to move. Hume had developed intense metaphors to express his comprehension of freedom as disclosure or openness. Moreover, for Hume freedom of necessity implies the idea of expansion without direction. The legal figure of the prisoner and the economic figure of the market's subject if read together bring together elements to elucidate the relationship between the critique of epistemic predominance of the subject and the affirmation of the subject that is necessary within the division of labor.

Hume and Smith specify repeatedly that the human or agent lacks intrinsic possibilities that allow it to control itself. Hence, it is also unable to take possession of the world which permanently affects it. The human agent must, if it aspires to have a basic level of stability, acknowledge its precariousness and criticize its epistemic representations. What is important here is not the epistemological contradiction implied in this explanation but rather the question of how these authors put aside this abysmal human agent? What I see as a problem in this question are the elemental assumptions that fulfill the vacuum between a weak comprehension of subjectivity and the other's (the market's subject) incandescence.

From the previous question I estimate that it is possible to: 1) reconstruct the internal scheme in which these figures of “subjectivity” are mobilized, 2) relate them with their context of elaboration in order to show their historical productivity, 3) establish

criteria that make connections between thematic fields in order to demonstrate the contours of the economy of the flesh. In Hume and Smith the activity of thinking presupposes a set of conditions that are intimately related to "sentimental education:" literacy, sobriety, worldly asceticism, and elegance. These conditions are, at the same time, connected to the division of labor, slavery, and commercial society. What is the reverse (residuum that is philosophically canceled) in this education? This question points to a new problematic: if the thinking activity arises from the "sentimental education," then it is fundamentally a form of cleaning of a "soil" that has been partially pulverized. It is necessary to think how and under what conditions that thinking can become a sort of cleaning or immunizing device. Which other forms of thinking are present even in Hume and Smith? I suggest that in both authors there are mechanisms of tempering that are never fully developed. Within the relationship of nature and economy, these mechanisms offer analytical insights to think about the economy of the flesh.

Organization of Chapters

The first chapter reconstructs the basic contents of the economic theory, theory of nature, and theological proposals of the eighteenth century. Thus, it highlights the disputes, agreements, and programs that constitute the "economic field" and, at the same time, points to the aspects that remain within its limits. What is important to show is how this field was established, what were its rules, and its functioning as a field of knowledge. Next I discuss the argument that affirms that in the eighteenth century, economy was a form of knowledge dedicated to the clarification of the conditions of possibility for the production and reproduction of life. That is the reason why its most important variables are health/disease, population/fertility, and desire/passions and death. The center of these

variables is the concept of life.

Thus, economic theory was established as knowledge about and for life. It is precisely this understanding that eighteenth-century economic theory and theories of nature. The investigations of Hume and Smith are contextualized within this understanding of economy; they modify and expand it. The second part of the chapter presents the debates that surrounded and gave shape to the notion of nature at the end of the seventeenth century (Boyle) and during the eighteenth century. Three fundamental tendencies are discussed. First, the tendency that criticizes the presentation of nature as an independent agent, capable of controlling itself, and being self-explanatory. This tendency affirms, at the same time, that laws structure nature but that these laws are independent from nature's phenomenology. The second tendency, which can be synthesized under the notion "animal oeconomy," presented and analyzed the composition of bodies, the relationship between its components, and its proper care. Finally, the notion of nature is considered as it was expressed within theological interventions. In this case nature designates more than a thematic content, a history of nature. Within theological discussions nature was thought of as an effect whose consequences could be known and judged.

The last part of the chapter offers a contextualization of some literary and theological motifs that were of great influence throughout the eighteenth century. I am referring specifically to the motif of the pilgrim and its reverse in Hume's biography. I argue that Hume's autobiography and its reception by Adam Smith is a key to understanding their philosophical ideals and its economy of the flesh.

The second chapter concentrates on discussing three notions: spirit, woman, and

flesh. I read Hume's and Smith's philosophy in continuity with the concepts of "Spiritual Police" and "Spiritual Empire." Thus, I suggest that their philosophies are guardians of the Spirit's condensations and actualizations. At its deepest level their philosophies belong to the struggle between spirit and flesh. The notions of woman and spirit I read within the analytical space opened by Hume's and Smith's understanding of their epoch as culmination of all historical possibilities. Through the discussion of these notions it will be possible to understand the stages of development of the notion of nature and economy in David Hume and Adam Smith. Nature does not refer uniquely to human nature but to the entire realm of biological life as it is also an actualization of the spirit. Regarding the notion of women, the chapter follows a strategy of explanation that could be called genetic. The strategy consists of showing how this notion appears as a counterpoint to discussions on, for instance, security, law, and manners. In this way the term woman is grasped both as a political, economic, and a biological concept that expresses the danger of disorder, non-productivity, and unregulated imagination. Nature, in this context, is equivalent to constancy and organization. Woman has different levels of significance. This chapter focuses on the imaginary that presents the woman as a producer of operations that are necessary for the survival of society.

The third chapter is divided into three parts. The first part presents a methodological discussion in which I propose a way to read Hume. I show how there is a fundamental tension within Hume's philosophy, particularly in his considerations of selfhood and the conditions that make sociability possible. Hume's philosophical tension introduces the conditions that made economy of the flesh necessary. Those conditions are eminently practical and oriented to the protection and security of common

life. My reading emphasizes that, although it is important to understand political economy, it is insufficient to understand Hume as proposing an ethical or an economic theory with hidden metaphysical components. Instead, Hume's philosophy is constitutively theological. Following this thesis, the second part of the chapter reviews and discusses the importance of Christian practices in Hume's thinking. I argue that Hume did not try to depart from Christianity in order to construct his philosophy. Moreover, his philosophical project remained within the ambit opened by certain Christian motifs and questions. In order to present Hume's economy of the flesh, in the third part of the chapter I offer a reading of the question of suicide. Hume's treatment of the question of suicide reinforces and develops his theological discussions as well as connects them to his economic thinking.

Furthermore, his entire philosophical enterprise is possible because of the internal connections that he makes between subjects such as suicide and true philosophy. This is so because Hume's science of man has the pretention of incorporating every aspect of human existence within a matrix, including commercial society and its division of labor and ranks. Hume believes and longs for a type of universality that does not negate the participation of an Almighty creator.

Throughout Chapter Four, I demonstrate that there is no contradiction between moral and economic theory. Furthermore, I show that the continuity of morality and economy is possible due to Smith's understanding of God. Smith's project effectively has as its center the assumption of God's immanent participation in history. From this assumption comes his proposal of an economy of the flesh. I argue that Smith's understanding of flesh presents a fundamental interpenetration of theology and economic

theory. For him, flesh is a vicious element that must be incarnated within the human body and the social and political body.

One of Smith's basic ideas is that human beings naturally tend to surpass or overcome the limits of their nature. Although this can appear at first sight to be a contradiction, for Smith nature is in permanent digression with itself. The eccentricity of human nature, its rebellion against itself, is what makes it possible even for the "greatest ruffian" to experience a discomfort within himself. This natural discomfort is the result of a "clash:" while trying to affirm and preserve its own life, human nature also at the same time manifests "sorrow from the sorrow of others." Human nature splits itself, tries to affirm its individuality but, at the same time, moves itself towards the other by attempting to carry itself beyond its "own person." Thus this clash and division is experienced by the person as a manifestation of the tendencies of his or her nature. The person does not have control of these movements that modify his or her existence from its core.

In the last chapter I reflect on a theology of the flesh, which, I maintain, continues to have a primary role in the constitution and development of economic, political, and social practices. One of the objectives of this chapter is to offer a thorough discussion of the most basic elements of a theology of the flesh. The concept that organizes and guides my presentation is birth, a presentation that departs from and is a response to Hume's and Smith's economy of the flesh. My response takes into account a complex of questions that come from their philosophy. First, Hume's and Smith's economy of the flesh expresses a judgment about the value of live. Throughout their philosophies Hume and Smith distinguish between forms of life in order to create the conditions and limits of recognizability. Thus, at the heart of their theories is not just the question of nature and

wealth but the instauration of a frame to determine whether or not something can become life or, more precisely, when something can be recognized as another being both equal and different. Both of them insist that barbarians, savages, madmen, criminals, and "hysterics" should not be recognized as fully human but nevertheless economically important sometimes.

Second, within this question of the institution of humanity and civilization there is a moment of positive affirmation: both Hume and Smith developed their philosophies within the imaginary realm of a theologically grounded and oriented world. Because of this, they sanctioned that the presence of God, its incarnation in their society, functions also as a judgment about social relationships and political projects. As a result of this they tend to equalize God's economy, nature's economy, and humanity. The acceptance or negation of social identifications is understood by Hume and Smith as a theological problem.

Third, in order to be recognized and integrated within civilized society it is indispensable to focus of oneself and economize the surplus life that exceeds the basic and necessary requirements of the productive body. The enemy of a civilized person is within oneself. Therefore, one has to exercise a permanent vigilance over oneself in order to remain within the limits of the theological society. It is important to say that this requirement of keeping watch over oneself is not presented as a purely repressive mechanism. On the contrary, Hume and Smith present this mechanism as one of the conditions of possibility for the achievement of social and personal satisfaction.

Fourth, Hume and Smith do not merely reject or suppress flesh. Both of them acknowledge that a fleshless physicality cannot be fully productive. Therefore, it is

considered to be a damaged and useless life. Hume and Smith propose the empire of the body over the flesh.

Fifth, the economic circuit of production and distribution has to be understood as a relationship between bodies that fully embrace their social identifications and ranks. The affirmation of the body and its materiality are part of Hume's and Smith's idea of the nature of faith. Being a useful, productive, sympathetic, and healthy body is one of the conditions for entering the Kingdom of God.

In Hume and Smith I found a mode of thinking that subsumes theological procedures and categories in order to overcome the uncertainty and mobility of the world. They reemphasize the idea that flesh is a constitutive part of human beings that should be studied, controlled, and put to the service of a transcendence that makes possible the production and reproduction of both biological and social life. Flesh is that moveable force and element that is both universal and particular. It expresses itself in individuals and institutions. Its movements and trajectories are, at their core, opposed to God's will and economy. This position has served as a framework to display theoretical positions that make equivalences between justice and punishment, economic wellness and starvation, and domination and happiness. Nevertheless, Hume and Smith also present their tensions and longings. Their philosophy does not hide its passion and political limits. Throughout their discussions there are several openings and cuts that enable ways to develop their labyrinths. Both of them introduce a struggle in which nature fights against itself. Indeed, flesh is confronted with nature's economy in order to accelerate exchange, self-interest, and courage. Also, one has to encrypt the intensity of one's sentimentality for the sake of being a God's creature. Thus, being a subject presupposes

being under God's punishment and enjoying it.

Hume's and Smith's philosophy introduces the dream of consolation and the desire of retaining the most prominent features of commercial society, the vulnerability and contradictions of the flesh. Even when they affirm their society with is subterranean horrors and bloody wars, there is an explicit questioning about their own fantasies that even if is not completely developed, gives us a glimpse about the interstices and ruptures of their paradise. There are several subtractions that Hume and Smith cannot completely grasp and normalize. Colonization and social domination are partially exposed by them, despite their intentions. There is a sense of terror and comedy in Hume's and Smith's philosophy that informs the present dissertation.

CHAPTER 1

The Subversion of the Pilgrim: Hume's Flesh

The purpose of this chapter is to reconstruct the basic content of economic theory in eighteenth-century European contexts, particularly in England and Scotland. This reconstruction highlights the disputes, agreements, and programs that constitute the "economic field" and, at the same time, points to some of related the aspects that remain outside of its limits. Most important, I show how this field was established, its rules, and its functioning as a field of knowledge. My intention is not to establish the influence of Hume's and Smith's theories but to trace their contexts of development.

Following that, I plan to discuss the argument which affirms that in the eighteenth century economy was a form of knowledge dedicated to the clarification of the conditions of possibility for the production and reproduction of life or, more precisely, particular styles of living life and the requisites of its reproduction. That is the reason why three of its most important variables are soul, spirit, and sin. The heart of one of these variables is the assumption that economy as an organization of the land, population, exchange, industries, time, space, needs, and goods requires a previous economic act whose operation is in part made possible through theological categories. Thus, economic theory was established as knowledge about and for life, a knowledge that was contiguous with theological traditions.[1]

I shall differentiate my argument from one founded in Edmund Burke (1729-

[1] Franz Hinkelammert, *Las armas ideológicas de la muerte* (San José: DEI, 1981); Hugo Assmann, *A idolatria do mercado. Um ensaio sobre economia e teologia*; Giorgio Agamben, *Il regno e la Gloria: Per una genealogia teologica dell´economia e del governo*. Homo Sacer II, 2 (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2009); Nanine Charbonnel, *Comme une seul homme*: Corps Politique & Corps Mystique, 2 Volumes (Lons-Le-Sauner: Aréopage, 2010).

1797) in which religion is described as being necessary in order to settle and develop civil government. His approach has as a basic assumption that religion is merely an instrument of political and economic practices, something that can be used or dismissed according to autonomous volition.[2] It is not just the instrumentation of religion or theological categories that I show and discuss here but an assemblage of categories, practices, and imaginations.

It is precisely this understanding that links economic theory and theories of nature in the eighteenth century. The investigations of Hume and Smith are contextualized within this understanding of economy; they modify and expand it.

The second part of the chapter presents the debates that surrounded and gave shape to the notion of nature from the end of the seventeenth century and during the eighteenth century. The question of nature, its definition, appropriation, and multiple representations[3] was in itself a determinant factor in the shaping of the new worlds that came with the conquest and invention of the Americas.[4]

Three fundamental tendencies will be discussed. First, I discuss the tendency that criticizes the presentation of nature as an independent agent, capable of controlling itself,

---

[2] Edmund Burke, *A Vindication of Natural Society or, A view of the Miseries and Evils arising to Mankind from Every Species of Artificial Society. In a Letter to Lord by a late Noble Writer, The Second Edition with a New Preface* (London: Printed for R. and J. Dodsley, in Pall-Mall; and Sold by M. Cooper, in Pater-noster-row, 1757).

[3] René Sigrist, *La Nature à l' épreuve: Les débuts de l'expérimentation à Genève* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011); David J. Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and Their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005); Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *México profundo: Una civilización negada* (México, D.F: Grijalbo-Conaculta, 1990); Luis Rivera Pagán, *Evangelización y violencia: La conquista de América* (San Juan: Ediciones Cemí, 1990).

[4] Antonello Gerbi, *La nature delle Indie Nova: Da Cristoforo Colombo a Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo* (Milan: Ricardo Ricciardi, 1975); *La disputa del Nuovo Mondo. Storia di una polemica. 1750-1900* (Milano-Napoli: Ricardo Ricciardi, 1955), Edmundo O'Gorman, *La invención de América* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995 [1958]); Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2005).

and being self-explanatory. This tendency affirms, at the same time, that laws structure nature but that these laws are independent of nature's phenomenology.

The second tendency that can be synthesized under the notion “animal oeconomy presented and analyzed the composition of bodies, concentrating on the relationship between their components and their proper care.

Finally, the chapter considers the notion of nature as it was expressed using explicitly theological categories. In this case, nature designates more than content, but also history. That is to say that within theological discussions nature was thought of as an effect whose consequences could be known and judged. This entire section of the chapter is not only informative but also argumentative. In it I demonstrate that an idea such as that of eighteenth-century science, in its multiple expressions, was completely separated from other modes of understanding that do not constitute knowledge about the period nor its dynamics.[5]

I also demonstrate that an adequate understanding of Hume and Smith's theories as well as an understanding of the transition from the previous sections of the chapter requires a consideration of its location within its material conditions of possibility, its relationship with different forms of time, space, body administration, domesticity, and “private life”. These conditions are a permanent and dense presence throughout Hume and Smith's considerations. They offer a horizon and delineate the boundaries of their compromises. In demonstrating this, I affirm that occupation, domination, and certain forms of freedom have been an integral part of observation and reflection, part of the creation of modes of measurement and verification, specifically being instruments or

[5] Perry Anderson, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism* (London-New York: Verso, 2000 [1974]).

cognitive schemata that describe or measure them. To Denis Diderot´s (1713-1784) distinction between two forms or expressions of philosophy, the experimental and the rational,[6] I incorporate a necessity: reason and experiment are processes of experimentation and reasoning, activities linked to larger and more intricate dynamisms and conflicts.[7]

I shall discuss one particular question within this part of the chapter, namely the form in which biographies are arranged to match or fulfill ideals about nature and economy. By this I mean that the biographical accounts offered by Hume and Smith are effectuations of the relationship between nature and economy as will be described in the successive chapters. In their biographical accounts, it is possible to recognize patterns and tensions that are proper to the economic movements that I shall name *economy of the flesh*.

1. Political anatomy, arithmetic, and souls

The gravitational center of William Petty's varied writings (1623-1687)[8] is theological. Thus, in his *Some Essays in Political Arithmetick*[9], as a footnote to Robert

---

[6] Diderot, "L' Interpétration de la nature (1753-1765). Idées III," in *Oeuvres Complètes* Tome IX ed. critique et annotée, présentée par Jean Varloot (Paris: Hermann, 1975), 27ff.

[7] As it is also demonstrated by Domenico Losurdo, *Liberalism: A Counter-History* trans. Gregory Elliot (London-New York: Verso, 2011 [2006]).

[8] For an introduction of Petty's importance for 18th Century political economy see Shigemi Muramatsu, "Andrew Fletcher's criticism of commercial civilization and his plan for European federal union" *The Rise of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment* ed. Tatsuya Sakamoto and Hideo Tanaka (London-New York: Routledge, 2003), 8-21.

[9] *The Economic Writings of Sir William Petty.* Together with the Observations upon the Bills of Mortality more probably by Captain John Graunt. Ed. Charles Henry Hull. Vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899), 466ff. Originally printed for Robert Clavel at the Peacock, and Henry Mortlock at the *Phoenix* in St. Paul's Church Yard. 1699. About Political Arithmetic Adam Smith said, in a letter to George Chalmers, that: "You Know that I have little faith in Political Arithmetic" *The Correspondence of Adam Smith*, ed. Ernest Campbell Mossner and Ian Simpson Ross 2nd Edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 288.

Southwell (1635-1702), an explanation appears of the interconnections between abstract calculation, statistics, and the theological theme of resurrection. Moreover, his understanding of his own activity as a writer is that of service to God. This service has a specific characteristic: it does not include a division between "arithmetic," the study of the history of population, and religious doctrine.

For Petty it is necessary and possible to demonstrate that there is no contradiction between the study of such phenomena as population and "what the *Holy Scriptures* have delivered."[10] Through tables, numbers, and measurements the earth is enlarged to be capable of receiving what is invisible, promised, and incalculable. The resurrection of the dead is inscribed in another economy ("arithmetick"); furthermore political arithmetic becomes a component of the Christian economy: a new economic ambit is created through this procedure; calculus became necessary to embrace resurrection.

Outside the habits of the complex of operations that Petty developed to attack "some *Scepticks,*"[11] the invisible and unreachable appear to lose significance or potency. At the same time however, political arithmetic loses its body without the invisible. It is important to mention another aspect of these operations: economics understood now as the space in which salvation and measurement intercept each other, makes the creation of taxonomies, projections, and comparisons about populations necessary; this focus on population, having as a background the resurrection of the dead, results in a question about the subsistence of the commonwealth.[12] The resurrection of the dead, the

[10] Ibid., 478. Emphasis in the original.

[11] Ibid., 466. Emphasis in the original.

[12] "A Treatise of Ireland, 1687" Ibid., 545ff.

preparation of the earth in order to receive God's promise, creates the necessity for a rigorous and detailed production and administration of lives or, as Petty said, souls. This idea is fully explained in his earlier work *A Treatise of Taxes and Contributions.*[13] This text shows that political economy, since its early development, has acknowledged that money, soul, and territory are intimately connected:

> A third branch of the Publick Charge is, that of the Pastorage of men Souls, and the guidance of their Consciences; which, one would think (because it respects another world, and but the particular interest of each man there) should not be a publick Charge in this: Nevertheless, if we consider how easie it is to elude the Laws of man, to commit unproveable crimes, to corrupt and divert Testimonies, to wrest the sense and meaning of the Laws, etc. there follows a necessity of contributing towards a publick Charge, wherewith to have men instructed in the Laws of God, that take notice of evil thoughts and designs, and much more of secret deeds, and that punisheth eternally in another world, what man can but slightly chastise in this.[14]

What is at stake here is not just a theory of taxation but recognition of the immanent characterof theology that serves a transcendent order: the existent world is understood as having a constitution that requires security, protection, and maintenance. The Christian practices, and not only their theological manifestations are presented as security and productive devices; whose function can depend on the public because they themselves are part of the conditions of possibility for the existence of the public or commonwealth.

The care of human souls must be considered as having two constitutive elements.

---

[13] *A Treatise of Taxes & Contributions, shewing the Nature and Measures of Crown Lands, Assessments, Customs, Poll-Money, Lotteries, Benevolence, Penalties, Monopolies, Offices, Tythes, Raising of Coins, Harth-Money, Excize, etc. With several intersperst Discourses and Digressions concerning Warres, The Church, Universities, Rents & Purchases, Usury & Exchange, Banks & Lombards, Registries for Conveyances, Beggars, Ensurance, Exportation of Money & Wool, Free-ports, Coins, Housing, Liberty of Conscience, etc.* The Same being frequently applied to the present State and Affairs of Ireland (London: Printed for N. Brooke, at the Angel in Cornhill, 1662).

[14] Ibid., 2-3.

First, as I mentioned previously, theological themes have more than a metaphorical place within Petty's work. This implies that the care of the soul is a not just a technique but a field of knowledge,[15] and with him, intrinsically part of discussions about commerce and trade. Here the notion of soul designates both individual and social manners, dispositions, and tendencies that are tangible and measurable (bodies) and at the same time intangible (evil thoughts). In Petty, the Christian guiding and caring of souls and economy share a common economic principle: the providential intervention of God condenses and manifests itself, although not entirely, in the order of laws that organize and sanction the activities of the city.

The expenditure required to produce souls is one of the axes of the tension between immanent and transcendental orders that cannot be resolved through measurements or statistics alone. The mathematical construction necessitates a transcendent or providential impulse. Second, for Petty this impulse is not merely instrumental, it is actually a call that communicates the following message: the government of heaven, allegedly presented in the Scriptures, incarnates itself not as a singular person or institution but in the anatomy of a new type of body[16], a body that originates in the conjunction of the political and the biological bodies. Economy has as one of its most important tasks the increment or betterment of the soul of the body.

---

[15] Fernando Vidal, *Les sciences de l' âme XVIe-XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Champion, 2006).

[16] William Petty, *Political Survey of Ireland with the Eftablifhment of that Kingdom, when the late Duke of Ormond was Lord Lieutenant ; And alfo an exa^ LIST of the prefent Peers, Members of Parliament, and principal Officers of State. To which is addeJ, An Account of the Wealth and expences of England, and the Methodof raifing taxes in the moft equal manner; Shewing likewife that England can bear the Charge offour Millions per Ann. when the occaflons of the Government require it,* The Second Edition, carefully correfted, with Additions (London: Printed for D. Browne, at the Black Swan, W. Mears, at the Lamb; F. Clay, at the Bible and Star, all without Temple- Bar; and F. Hooke at Flower-de- Luce, against St. Dunfants Church in Fleet Freet, 1719). See Preface.

Economy's calculations include the presupposition that the conservation of life, in so far as it does not contradict resurrection, must include the care of the soul.

2. Economy, Spirit, and the Will of Death

If with Petty economy is clearly established as a form of knowledge that must combine mathematics and theology and is understood as an explanatory intervention about the incarnation of God's government in the world, then with James Steuart (1713-1780) political economy[17] becomes fundamentally a method by which to know and produce spirit in order to govern.[18] According to Steuart, the spirit of a people is condensed and manifested in three principal spheres: morals, government, and manners. The explanation of Steuart's political intentions is expressed as follows:

> In turning and working upon the spirit of a people, nothing is impossible to an able statesman. When people can be engaged to murder their wives and children, and to burn themselves, rather than submit to a foreign enemy; when they can be brought to give their most precious effects, their ornaments of gold and silver, for the support of a common cause; when women are brought to give their hair to make ropes, and the most decrepit old men to mount the walls of a town for its defence [sic]; I think I may say, that by properly conducting and managing the spirit of a people, nothing is impossible to be accomplished.[19]

The Christological motif of substitution and redemptive suffering is a consequent movement from Petty's idea of incarnation. The people, considered as children of the statesman,[20] offer themselves without reserve. It is crucially important to understand that

---

[17] In a letter from September 3, 1772 Adam Smith says that "Without once mentioning it [Steuart's *Inquiry into the Principles of Political Oeconomy*], I flatter myself, that every false principle in it, will meet a clear and distinct confutation in mine" *The Correspondence of Adam Smith*, 164.

[18] *The Works, Political, Metaphysical, and Chronological of the Late Sir James Steuart of Coltness, Bart.* Now First Collected by General Sir James Steuart, Bart, his son. In Six Volumes. Vol I (London: Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, Strand, 1805), 1-22. Originally published in 1767.

[19] Ibid., 15.

[20] Ibid., 2.

the statesman or governor is a *figura* more than an individual. This *figura* contrasts with that of God, by only superficially manifesting itself as a governor.[21] Here, the government of the people takes a decisive form: it is a tense reunion of procedures, traditions, and aspirations whose purpose can be achieved only through the ability to make the children be ready always to die or lose themselves in the movement of the people's spirit. This is political economy at its most radical, when it involves expenditure without return or recompense. If with Petty the care of souls is concentrated in the fulfillment of the law and its preoccupation is that of self-preservation, Steuart creates the knowledge and modeling of the spirit as a weapon of death. Spirit refers not only to sentimentality or passions but directly to a pneumatological formula: that the same Spirit, in descending or taking possession of disperse individuals, will be able to create a people. One Spirit, one people, one governor: this is not a mathematical calculation but a dream whose question is: How can we all die together? How can we all, without hesitation, offer ourselves to banishment? Who is worth enough to die for?

The administration of death and not the accumulation of money or prestige is the matrix to this understanding of spirit. In its distinct moments it implies: a) the rupture of the household economy, its most fundamental rules as well as its character of nucleus of primordial relationships. More precisely, the actions of killing wives and children and burning oneself confirm that a major form of sociability and government comes out of the sacrifice of the traditional forms of belonging and affection. The disappearance or annihilation of intimate ties appears to be a productive destruction for the satisfaction of

[21] I do not consider Steuart's political oeconomy as fictional but as theological, this is precisely the main difference between my analysis and that of Mary Poovey, *Genres of the Credit Economy: Mediating Value in Eighteenth-and Nineteenth Century Britain* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2008), 124-143.

"the people". Men, children, women and their different performances are distinguished from the people that, at their core, are presented in the multiple bodies of the governor; b) to the notion of spirit it is necessary to oppose that of enemy; in Steuart's case he specifies or delimits it as foreign enemy. This opposition is based primarily on a clash of spirits. The enemy is the incarnation of and thus communication and expansion of a different spirit; a distinct way to dispose of bodies, memories, and longings. Strictly considered, the spirit of people cannot fully manifest itself without the battle with an enemy; in this battle nonetheless the expression of potency radiates from expenditure, pure losing. The spirit imposes itself in the act of losing its children, the victory is condensed in the passing off of burned bodies and absent treasures; c) the body is literally transformed into an offering to the spirit, and the body is in its most material form possible, the temple of the spirit, its absolute property.

The body becomes a weapon; its beauty is expressed in its decomposition as well as in its mutilation. The old bodies recover their usefulness as they are integrated and incarnated into the circuit of protection and defense; d) without paradox Steuart understood this process of spiritualizing the condition of the possibility of becoming a subject. Hence, it is necessary to expand the following definition of political economy: "In order to communicate an adequate idea of what I understand by political economy, I have explained the term, by pointing out the object of the art; which is, to provide food, other necessities, and employment to every one of the society."[22] This definition contains solely the goal of political economy but obliterates its mechanisms of production: I affirm that it is the relationship between spirit and subject that is actually the origin and goal of

[22]*The Works, Political, Metaphysical, and Chronological of the Late Sir James Steuart of Coltness, Bart.,* 19-20.

political economy. That is to say that without the sedimentation of this relationship it will be impossible, within Steuart's political economy, to be a practice concentrated in the satisfaction of necessities and the coordination of labor. What moves and allows the permanent reproduction of political economy are not the procedures or techniques of the production of goods but the assumption of specific social relationships that manifest themselves constantly and in every quotidian situation. Instead of being just an "art" that attempts to provide the means of subsistence, political economy is a pneumatological practice that achieves the impossible within the ambit of limitations. In this regard what political economy provides is a space of self-identification that creates the hand,[23] that element which makes the appropriation of nature possible. In order to reach this form of appropriation it is necessary to establish a common willingness to die.

3. Bernard Mandeville: Original Sin and Fall

The economic field is established in both Petty and Steuart as a reflection about the conditions that are necessary in order to produce a soul and spirit capable of conducting the production of all that is required to sustain the life of a certain population. For these authors the economic field is an expression and development of a previous economic act: the administration of energies, passions, and interests[24]. This primeval act contains within itself, as one of its artifacts, theological standpoints and catalysts for social cohesiveness. The horizon of these authors was not to create an autonomous agent with the capacities to determine its own existence through the use of reason. Neither was

[23] Karl Marx, *Grundisse,* 85.

[24] For a broader discussion about this see Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph* Twentieth Anniversary Edition (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997).

it to guarantee the expression of everyone's inclinations and dreams, at least not outside society or against the spirit of the people. Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733) introduces a different tone to the economic field. This difference consists basically in a proposal for a relationship with the spirit that pays attention to the productivity of contradictions or so called abnormalities. Mandeville does not negate the necessity of a spirit[25] but understands its dynamic as the permanent disruption of itself; this dynamism is what permits the flourishing of the best characteristics of society. There is a celebration of corruption and fall, in its theological sense, but not because it reveals an autonomous consciousness. What is of importance for him is that the fall supposes a limit that cannot be evaded; at the profundities of vices there is the necessary reserve of richness to expand the commonwealth. The notion of noble sin,[26] used to make reference to prodigality, is not a metaphor or image used to describe actions outside a theological realm. This type of sin, as Mandeville explained, is noble because it calls for permanent action, acceleration, and expenditure, all understood as fundamental features of civilization. In Mandeville there is a realistic interpretation of fall and original sin that is not a mystery:[27] by biting the apple the "human race" becomes possible:

> One of the greatest reasons why so few people understand themselves, is, that most writers are always teaching men what they should be, and hardly ever trouble their heads with telling them what they really are. As for my part, without any compliment to the courteous reader, or my self, I believe man (besides skin, flesh, bones, etc that are obvious to the eye) to be a compound of various passions, that all of them, as they are provoked and come uppermost, govern him

[25] Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees* ed. Phillip Hart (London: Penguin Books, 1989[1714, 1723, 1724]), 53.

[26] Ibid., 133.

[27] Christian Laval, *L' Homme Économique: Essai sur les racines du néoliberalisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), 107-126.

by turns, whether he will or not.[28]

The procedure followed by Mandeville starts with the assumption that there is a self that can be accessed through a taxonomy of passions. Now, at the opening of his text he establishes a connection with knowledge: the economic field depends on a relationship with oneself to the point that understanding is turned into an exercise of introspection. The ability to know oneself is located at the core of a chain of operations that includes a social and political consideration of morals and also a theological assertion. *An Inquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue*[29] is a theological enterprise in a delimited form: it does not acknowledge theology or religion to have the productive capacity to create civilization; humans, virtue. When Mandeville writes about knowledge of the self he is not creating or trying to create a theology of human nature; moreover according to his position the invention of moral determination strictly obeys political practices and not theological exigencies.

Nevertheless, this dismissal of the capacities of theology and religion does not imply a rupture with a theological disposition in Mandeville's theory: evil, a result of the fall, refers to a theology of history that recognizes that the world is conducted by humanity since it still has a "tincture"[30] of the perfect knowledge that belongs to the divinity. Hence, Mandeville espouses an understanding of history as human production that, because of sin, is contradictory. Allowing contradictions and noble sin to arise is how the movement of history is able to continue and even to increase.

---

[28] Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees,* 79.

[29] Ibid., 80-259.

[30] Ibid., 92.

Human beings are sinners that have to create and give themselves a world in the midst of their constitutive damage. It is not just medicine[31] that constitutes the distinction between skin and passions; neither a mere concentration on the ability of politicians[32] to separate and unite, but rather an act of God. In this case, the understanding of passions as somehow independent forces or energies has economic importance in itself. This position also has a restriction or, more exactly, specifications regarding what to do with the passions and energies of the "multitude of laborious poor."[33] For them, regarded as an amorphous mass, it is enough to understand one important economic rule: "To make the society happy and people easy under the meanest circumstances, it is required that a great numbers of them should be ignorant as well as poor. Knowledge both enlarges and multiplies our desires, and the fewer things a man wishes for, the more easily his necessities may be supplied"[34] Mandeville continues to specify that the working poor should know just the necessary to reproduce themselves in order to perform their occupations and never extend themselves beyond their calling. The main and sole concern for the working poor must be their physical subsistence.

In short what Mandeville proposes is that economy arises as a practice to administrate the fallen world. Part of this administration means developing and economizing the energies, dreams, desires, and brains of the working poor, as Mandeville

---

[31] Neil de Marchi, "Exposure to strangers and superfluities: Mandeville's regimen for great wealth and foreign treasure," in *Physicians and Political Economy*, ed. Peter Groenewegen (London-New York: Routledge, 2001), 48-66.

[32] Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment II. Shaftesbury to Hume* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 245.

[33] Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees,* 294.

[34] Ibid.

clarifies in his essay *An Essay on Charity and Charity Schools*. For them a rigorous and non-negotiable effect of sin is established: they must work till they drop for the welfare and felicity for the State. Neither vice nor enthusiasm is permitted the working poor,[35] not even self-recognition or the right to organize themselves as workers.[36]

From Petty to Mandeville the constitution of the economic field is understood as a moral science[37] and politic of life[38] but also as an arrangement of categories that have as a focal interest the creation of the conditions of possibility that necessitate a theological impulse of life. Categories such as soul, spirit, and sin are treated as economic categories because they satisfy the need for spirit[39]--a space to deal with human nature, one without which the most elemental goals of economy could not occur. The working poor require, in order to perform their work, a system of intelligibility, an organization that these authors found within the theological tradition. Notwithstanding, what they did was not just to extrapolate or accommodate theology; those categories were productive for them due to the fact that they were, according to their interpretation, in themselves economic: soul, spirit, sin refer all of them, to both the character and administration of the different yet integrated components of the human. These categories are primarily related to what

---

[35] Hont and Ignatieff completely overlooked this strict morality see Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff, "Needs and justice in the *Wealth of Nations*: an introductory essay," in *The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 10-11.

[36] Domenico Losurdo, *Liberalism: A Counter-History,* 210.

[37]Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844" *Karl Marx-Frederick Engels. Collected Works.* Volume 3: Marx and Engels 1843-1844 (New York: International Publishers, 1974), 309.

[38] Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la biopolitique. Cours au Collège de France 1978-1979* (Paris: Seuil/Gallimard, 2004).

[39] For the case of Scotland see Gordon Marshall, *Presbyteries and Profits: Calvinism and the Development of Capitalism in Scotland 1560-1707* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

was considered as the most interior and intimate. In this regard it is possible to consider the economic field as a series of intersections or procedures that try to model the most intricate vestiges of human nature at the same time as they create it.

4. Nature and the Omnipotent Hand

With his inquiry about the vulgarly received notion of nature, Robert Boyle (1627-1691) announces a project that reveals tension and eagerness. It was necessary to precisely locate the common use of language. This ambit was also part of a theological enterprise;[40] Boyle, by suspending what he calls "mere revelation,"[41] introduces a critique of the idea of nature's paternity that opens space for God's agency along with the interrogation about spirits and alchemy.[42] If nature is not a parent it becomes a thing; certainly not an ordinary one but one that expresses the wisdom of God. Nature is an organized whole whose activities always express aspects of God's intelligence and purposes. This has, nevertheless, a limit or context of interpretation: "I must freely observe that, to speak properly, a law being but a notional rule of acting according to the declared will of a superior, it is plain that nothing but an intellectual being can be properly capable of receiving and acting by law."[43] In short, God's action is not intended to be an absolute regulation of the intellectual being but the provision of the capability to act according to law.

---

[40] Stephen Gaukroger, *The Collapse of Mechanism and the Rise of Sensibility: Science and the Shaping of Modernity 1680-1760* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 30-40.

[41] Robert Boyle, *A Free Inquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature* ed. Edward B. Davis and Michael Hunter (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996 [1686]), 4.

[42] Paul Kréber Monod, *Solomon's Secret Arts.* The Occult in the Age of Enlightenment (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), 99-101.

[43] Robert Boyle, *A Free Inquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature*, 25.

External stimulants and impulses are necessary to achieve certain behaviors in intellectual beings. Nature and economy are part of a tension that must be resolved solely by "the light of reason;"[44] a notion of reason whose definition that has to be found within a theological clarification that says that the world is an act of pure of freedom, an act of pure expenditure from God. Nature is a donation that does not limit God's own reality. Nature's economy is not pure donation but also concealment and refraction. There are secrets of nature that are not accessible to human reason; therein nature appears as both the disclosure and closure of rational patrons that instigate human activity. The explicit elicitation of rational structures and constant laws has the social function of prefigured uses and ends for the different bodies that populate the world. This is to say that according to this scheme contingencies are rare or, more precisely, extraordinary:

> Upon these grounds, if we set aside the consideration of miracles as things supernatural, and of those instances wherein the providence of the great rector of the universe and human affairs is pleased peculiarly to interpose, it may be rationally said that God […] did, by virtue of it, clearly discern what would happen in consequence of the laws by him established in all the possible combinations of them and in all junctures of circumstances wherein concerned in them may be found.[45]

Boyle refers to laws established by God as even including social, political, and economic ends[46] which are part of the complex of actions of intellectual beings. Through human reason, which is just a residuum of God's, it is possible to understand that economy, and its different components, levels, and modes of expression, expresses nature in one fundamental way: every human activity is imbued with God's wisdom and

[44] Ibid., 38.

[45] Ibid., 161.

[46] Ibid., 162.

legislation. Boyle's understanding of nature affirms the intrinsic rationality of human works. Although incomplete, social, economic, and political forms of organization are, in principle, a condensation and expression of laws that are beyond one's own complete control or understanding,[47] he would say. Nature refers to both bodies and also to practices, institutions, rational activities, and their multiple relationships. Without constituting an interruption or detour from his discussion about the "vulgar notions of nature" Boyle's intervention should be regarded as an argument about providence that admits the existence of incompleteness mainly associated with the composition of the human body. This, for Boyle, was not a "watch or hand mill,"[48] but a combination of stable and fluid parts, the latter being what incorporates complexity to the task of extending God's work in the world. Boyle had elaborated a notion of nature in which social processes had to be ultimately recognized as has bearing traces or footprints of God. This is so because Boyle's rejection of nature's own will does not cancel it out; on the contrary, it solidifies both the tension between creator and creature and human agency. What can be called the gradual process of human appropriation of nature, particularly its own, is, although precarious, also a manifestation of God's omnipotent hand.

> For when it pleases God to overrule or control the established course of things in the world by his omnipotent hand, what is thus performed may be much easier discerned and acknowledged to be miraculous, by them admit in the ordinary course of corporeal things nothing but matter and motion, whose powers men may judge of, than by those who think there is besides a certain semi-deity which they call nature, whose skill and power they acknowledge to be exceeding great, and

---

[47] J. W. Wojcik, *Robert Boyle and the Limits of Reason* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[48] Robert Boyle, *A Free Inquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature,* 127.

yet no sure way of estimating how great they are and how far they may extend.[49]

Boyle understands nature as being capable of being altered by God; in this case this intervention guarantees the rationality of everything that happens. There is an immanent order that can be grasped through experimentation but this rationality can also be interrupted. What is important for the present discussion is to make clear that this notion of nature has "imperial"[50] specifications within its theological and physical implications. In recognizing nature as God's creature it becomes possible to remove, overcome, struggle against the limits to control it and, moreover, to recreate it, and to excel its products. This notion of nature, acknowledging its multiple components, serves to remove the scruples to create the necessary conditions to control, conquer, organize, in a word, to economize nature under the shadow of a disruptive God.

5. Animal Oeconomy

Thus far, I have demonstrated that in the constitution of economy it was of decisive importance to embrace theological categories and, for Boyle, it was necessary to affirm God as creator in order to develop a notion of nature that allows its knowledge and dominion. Although it has been often considered part of the relationship between natural science and economy,[51] the importance of animal oeconomy for the constitution of economy should be considered as a particular sphere of investigation.[52] The text by John

[49] Ibid., 14.

[50] Ibid., 15.

[51] *Oeconomies in the Age of Newton.* Annual Supplement to Volume 35: History of Political Economy, ed. Margaret Schabas and Neil De Marchi (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003); Margaret Schabas, *The Natural Origins of Economics* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

[52] *Vital Matters: Eighteenth-Century Conception of Conception, Life, and Death*, ed. Helen Deutsch and Mary Terrall (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2012); Gerhard Streminger, *Der natürliche*

Hunter[53] (1728 – 1793) entitled *Observations of Certain Parts of the Animal Oeconomy*[54] provides important elements to access another influential understanding of nature. My presentation focuses particularly on methodological components of animal economy.[55] The first question that has to be pointed out about Hunter's work is his idea of art (science) as a process permanently developing itself. Add to that self-comprehension as a cure that is founded on a notion of nature as an original form and structure.

> Every deviation from that original form and structure which gives the distinguished character to the productions of nature, may not improperly be called monstrous. According to this acceptation of the term, the variety of monsters will be almost infinite; and, as far as my knowledge as extended, there is not a species of animals, nay, there is not a single part of animal body, which is not subject to an extraordinary formation.[56]

The monstrous, the abnormality that interrupts or damages the original structure of, in this case the reproductive organs, was not strictly related to anatomy[57] but also to observations about behavior and social dispositions. For Hunter the use of anatomical parts becomes an indication of sex's natural duties as well as positions within circuits of occupations. So, like economy, animal oeconomy is interested in the anatomical whole.

Lauf der Dinge. Essays zu Adam Smith und David Hume (Marburg: Metropolis, 1995), 9-32.

[53] About the relationship between John Hunter and David Hume see Simon Chaplin, "The Divine Touch, or Touching Divines: John Hunter, David Hume, and Bishop of Durham's Rectum," in *Vital Matters: Eighteenth-Century Conception of Conception, Life, and Death,* 222-245.

[54] John Hunter, *Observations on Certain Parts of the Animal Oeconomy* (London: Printed and Sold at N.13, Castle-Street, Leicester-Square; and by Mr. G. Nicol, Pall Mall; and Mr. J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1792 [1786]).

[55] For a detailed discussion see William F. Bynum, "The Anatomical Method, Natural Theology, and the Functions of the Brain," *Isis* 64, no. 4 (December, 1973): 444-468

[56] John Hunter, *Observations on Certain Parts of the Animal Oeconomy,* 75.

[57] Zakiya Hanafi, *The Monster in the Machine: Magic, Medicine, and the Marvelous in the Time of the Scientific Revolution* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000); Anita Guerrini, *Obesity & Depression in the Enlightenment: The Life and Times of George Cheyne* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000).

Hunter proposes a methodology whose aim is to establish the existing connections, arrangements, and modes of action, and uses of the whole, or of particular organs.[58] This methodology is based on two distinctive habits: observation and inquiry. Nature, in this case considered by an anatomist, appears as a phenomenon that can be observed and, at the same time, whose understanding implies the necessity of a technique that makes it possible to go beyond the mere looking at the parts of the body. This is so because animal oeconomy was a practice for the preservation of the individual; therefore it was an intervention in nature. The practice of animal oeconomy itself has economic requisites: it requires leisure, disposable time to return repeatedly to one's own observations and experiments. In this regard, Hunter's methodological remarks contain a proposal about the necessary relationship between time, science, and nature in which he maintains that a form of social organization in which not just the "men of the church"[59] can have the time for inquiry must support knowledge of nature.

This economy of time is not, by any means, secondary to animal oeconomy or any other science; furthermore it is an epistemic feature. It is a type of administration that does not assume immediate utility as its criterion of time used can allow the repetition and perfection of a science of the whole. Hunter's explicit definition of nature is consistent with his own premises: "It should be remembered, that nothing in nature stands alone; that every art and science has a relation to some other art or science, and that it requires a knowledge of those others as far as this connection takes place, to enable us to

[58] John Hunter, *Observations on Certain Parts of the Animal Oeconomy,* 187.

[59] Ibid., 189.

become perfect in that which engages our particular attention;"[60] this definition openly integrates perfection as a goal or objective of scientific inquiry. Perfection demands procedures of self-interrogation, a suspension of one's opinions to provide space to explore nature.

The stomach itself,[61] for instance, does not reveal itself unless there is a combination of experiments and its practical application. The animal bodies should be subjected to comparisons based on instruments, axioms, and multiple sciences in order to create an accurate knowledge of them. From this standpoint, even diseased and dead bodies should be closely examined; Hunter understands death and degeneration as bodies' states that are, if not controllable, understandable. Nothing remains hidden from animal oeconomy so far as it is a proceeding for the institution of nature. Animal oeconomy determines the monstrous not just in the abnormalities on the body's organs or structures but also in the forms through which one attempts to know nature. It functions as a boundary that divides ignorance from knowledge.

The operations of animal oeconomy were also common for the study of disorders[62] as they used as a starting point the premise that there was a tension between normal functioning and the possible disclosure of the monstrous. In this case the curative goal and its scientific character are expressed up front. This approach claims to focus exclusively on the sensitive nature of the human nerves to distinguish themselves from

---

[60] Ibid., 189- 190.

[61] Ibid., 187-234. "Observations on Digestion".

[62] Robert Whytt, *Observations on the Nature, Causes, and Cure of those Disorders which have been commonly called Nervous, Hypochondriac, or Hysteric, to which are prefixed some remarks on the Sympathy of the Nerves* (Edinburgh: Printed for T. Becket, and P. Du Hondt, London; and J. Balfour, Edinburgh, 1765). Robert Whytt (1714 – 1766).

"futile speculations concerning matters that are involved in the greatest obscurity"[63] and to explore the suggestions that come from experience. The notion of experience, in its multivariate renderings, is again strictly associated with its practical consequences: avoiding speculations and rigorously following experience is a part of the will to cure, to be effective. Knowledge, to be practical in the sense of transforming, has to recuse itself within the limits of experience and the "rational oeconomy of humane bodies."[64] Nature therefore is understood as manifested to us, in us, and for us.

6. Self, Society, and Nature

Bishop Joseph Butler (1692-1752)[65] postulates, from a direct reference to the letter to the *Romans* XII: 4-5, that human nature is social at its core. What is of importance for Butler is the metaphors of the body that depict the ideal of unity within Christ that are presented in the passage from *Romans.* If with Hunter the animal bodies are a whole unceasingly interacting with its own parts, for Butler human nature manifests itself precisely in its belonging, as an organ or member, to a larger body. This understanding of the social character of human nature is preceded by Butler's bold affirmation about "man as respecting self." In differentiating between these two modes of nature Butler incorporates a tension: as self the human being procures its own preservation and happiness and as a naturally social being it promotes the public good.

---

[63] Ibid., vi.

[64] Thomas Nevett, *The Rational Oeconomy of Humane Bodies, wherein the nature of the chyle, blood, lymph, and other juices, is discove'd...* (London: Printed, and sold by T. Parkhurst and J. Robinson, 1704). Thomas Nevett (1685-1749).

[65] For treatments or indications about the relationship between Butler, Hume, and Smith see for instance Terence Penelhum, "Butler and Hume," *Hume Studies* 14, no. 2 (November, 1988): 251-276; Fonna Forman-Barzilai, *Adam Smith and the Circles of Sympathy: Cosmopolitanism and Moral Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 78.

The realization or full development of the self is achieved through public activity. The public good, as a sum of multiple selves interacting with each other, is the sum and manifestation of the self. Nature is dual but tends to its unification through human practice.

Passions and affections tend to public good although some of them are intimately related to self-love, whose primary use and intention clarifies Butler, is the security and good of the individual. The passionate and affective being inclines itself to society not from the autonomous movement of its volition but rather from the natural disposition of its constitution. Naturally any human being should procure its self-preservation through the satisfaction of the necessities presented in society.

Hoping to satisfy this interpenetration between self-satisfaction and public good, Butler elaborates on what he calls "principle of reflection." This principle has two functions: first, to differentiate between what should be approved or disapproved in human actions; second, more broadly, the principle of reflection constitutes a reflection upon humans' own nature. The first function refers to actions while the second to the conditions of possibility and goals of the whole human being.

> This principle in man, by which he approves or disapproves his heart, temper, and action, is conscience; for this is the strict sense of the word, though sometimes it is used so as to take in more. And that this faculty tends to restrain men from doing mischief to each other, and leads them to good, is too manifest to need being insisted upon.[66]

For Butler the expression of tensions produced by the inclinations of the self and the call from the social body are natural. Although important, this tension is not irresolvable as nature itself provides humans with a conscience that has the ability and

[66] *The Works of Bishop Butler* ed. and int. David E. White (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 50.

duty to regulate the tension and allow the health of the body. Conscience is what makes society possible as long as it requires interactions that express confidence, care, and respect. Following out this argument leads us to question of illness, abnormalities, monstrosities, and, as Butler explains, also the unnatural, which, in its most decisive presentation, he describes as passion's excess. The notion of excess must be distinguished from "cool self-love"; the former indicates a state of incapability to be part of the body or, more precisely, an ill organ of society.

"Cool self-love" expresses, more than an image, an actual state of the body. Temperatures, movements, shame, and colors he all considered to be manifestations of nature. Society is a living organism that feeds itself of human passions; Butler's theology is the intermediary between self and society. His discussions about nature have an internal regimentation, and all lead to the question, like that of Steuart, of how can we live together? Through which mechanisms is it possible to guarantee the increase of happiness? To respond to these questions, Butler draws up a theological economy of human nature. This theological economy is an inventory of parts, organs, and passions. The economic principle is considered sacred.

> This gives us a further view of the nature of man; shows us what course of life we were made for: not only that our real nature leads us to be influenced in some degree by reflection and conscience; but likewise in what degree we are to be influenced by it, if we will fall in with, and act agreeably to the constitution of our nature: that this faculty was placed within to be our proper governor; to direct and regulate all under principles, passions, and motives of action. This is its right and office: thus sacred is its authority.[67]

This is economy operating its most central activities: dividing components, establishing principles of authority, and becoming nature. What Butler does is to puts the

[67] Ibid., 60.

entire discussion about conviviality and sociability to the relationship that "man" has with himself. There is not an authority more basic than that of something's nature. The forms in which humans relate to themselves, to their entire constitution, manifest both the sacred and nature just to integrate them in a more detailed functioning, which I have called economy of the flesh. Butler goes beyond the exposition about the necessity of the care of souls, creation of spirit, or courage to sin to propose exercises to economize one's flesh in order to satisfy nature; that is to say to contribute to commonwealth at the same time as to the fulfillment of the self. His *Sermon IV: Upon the Government of the Tongue*,[68] an interpretation of James 1:26, offers an immanent, concentrated way in and through which it becomes possible to economize flesh. Butler's version of the text reads as follows: "*If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.*"[69]

First, I shall say that for him the tongue is not a part of the body but an expression of the whole. Second, Butler considers that the problem treated in the biblical text refers to the question of government as the basic problematic of religious life. The government of the tongue is considered as a mark for an authentic religious experience; however its effects are not restricted to religion.

Butler argues that an ungoverned tongue is the one that talks without restriction, one that incessantly makes references, judgments, and leads an autonomous life. The problem of the tongue consists in its broadmindedness, lack of organization, and purpose. He makes no moral judgment over the contents of what the tongue says, but does critique

[68] Ibid., 65-71.

[69] Ibid., 65. Emphasis in the original.

the lost time and energy associated with an uncontrollable organ, that serves no other goal than that of its own satisfaction.

For Butler the rupture between action and utility is the center of the tongue's government. Accordingly, his understanding of natural activity or activity adequate to the rationality of nature is that which, in its dissemination, produces social benefits. The problem is the preference over silence when there is nothing useful to express. Even secrets become material to the ungoverned tongue; people abandon the most elementary reserve and politeness for the pleasure of employing their tongue. This use of the tongue goes even beyond personal leisure as it engages the attention of others, distracting them from what is assumed to be their natural relations and preoccupations; the ungoverned tongue breaks the natural course of time. It has, just by itself, a destructive character.

As a result of this contention about what he considers an unruly use of the tongue Butler introduces a reflection about the faculty of speech[70] and the madman, the latter being the expression of the counter-natural use of human faculties, as a merely carnal disposition. The madman is understood as a tongue without control (fully a fleshy corporeality), as pure activity or extension of a damaged self: "[The madman] does a world of mischief; and implies not only great folly, and a trifling spirit, but great viciousness of mind, great indifference to truth and falsity, and to the reputation, welfare, and good of others."[71] Thus, the madman is an chaotic economic being. Incapable of contributing to society, its life becomes a subject not just of scrutiny and translation but also of regret.

---

[70] About this question see Alain Cabantous, *Blasphemy: Impious Speech in the West from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century* trans. Eric Rauth (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

[71] *The Works of Bishop Butler,* 67.

For Butler, the faculty of speech is to be used to communicate purposes in a clear and plain form; language is an instrument among others. Its potency resides in organized beneficial actions. There are exercises to economize oneself that consists in learning how to hear, to see, to feel, to talk, and to wait.[72] These exercises are meticulous but not simply repressive for their promise is to build a healthy self. Economy of the flesh is both regulation of existing energies, organs, structures, and forms and also the creation or assemblage of those components to form the natural human. What Butler proposes is not a sort of inner-wordily asceticism nor merely repression for the sake of civilization but the possibility and necessity of happiness through constant material practices. The project embedded in a rational felicity and virtuous enjoyment synthesizes an attempt to achieve what Anne Conway (1631-1679) explained as the desire "which spirits or souls have for bodies;"[73] that is to say a form of existence that does not renounce itself to attain its possibilities. Rationality and enjoyment do not require, for Butler, the ascetic ideal, but rather economy of the flesh.

7. Biography, Economy, and Nature

Within the aforementioned context it is imperative to approach Hume's and Smith's interventions by considering their most fundamental levels of developing and communication. From Petty to Butler, economic theory and theory of nature have concentrated on what I have called the economy of the flesh. That is to say, they are concentrated in the center of the production of life, in life itself, in what makes possible the existence of a civilized form of organizing life. Hence what is required to introduce us

[72] These exercises are contained in Sermons V-XV.

[73] Anne Conway, *The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy* ed. Allison Coudert and Taylor Corse (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1690]), 46.

to the understanding of Hume's and Smith's project is precisely the form in which they both treat and create a form of ideally economized and natural life. As with Butler's exercises the act of writing is itself a condensation and expression of these authors' understanding of nature and economy. Writing is an exercise that both economizes one's flesh at the same time that it proposes a horizon and parameter for a worthy life. In what follows I establish the criteria and basic elements for a reading of Hume and Smith. In doing so I also delineate the contours of how the concept of flesh plays an important role in their thinking. I propose that the notion of flesh appears in Hume and Smith as sickness or excess within the social and political body. Therefore most of their project consists in the reinsertion of the flesh within the body through a process of spiritualization that I shall discuss in the next chapter.

Writing, Freedom, and Privilege

I shall locate Hume's and Smith's thinking within their context of production; hence I shall discuss the way in which they created their own life as a literary and economic product. I concentrate on the question of literary creation as it is a form of relationship which questions issues such as the slave trade, intimate relationships, and death. In order to do this, it is not sufficient to comment on those interventions in which both of them directly discuss the question of slavery or working people's conditions; those explicit texts present only one of the levels in which those political and social situations were presented. There are other levels, other forms in and through which that relationship takes place.

Furthermore, in reading Hume's and Smith's correspondence, lectures, and non-technical texts we can access the level of a division internally united: the colonial world

is divided but its division also unites or is united by scenes of time, intimacy, and domesticity. There is a co-presence of slavery and philosophy that is expressed in their letters as celebration, debate, and intimacy. Sometimes the letters even combine timid references to slavery with casual greetings. While the time of the slave, servant, and worker was beset by the multiple impositions and restrictions of the master, the time of the philosopher is personal; it is fundamentally related to his taste, inclinations, and projects.

The activity of thinking, besides leisure time also requires mobility, and the possession of one's own body as the massive control of other bodies is extended and deepened. The written texts themselves, their actual physicality, are a scene of time. Their content is the manifestation of a type of expenditure that was not universal: what was considered to be non-productive time. In this context the production of philosophy is rooted in the possibility of using time without constraints at the same time that the modes of inhabiting the world with millions of other people are radically interrupted or destroyed. It is not just division that characterizes the philosophical time; it is also signed and marked by a plethora of corpses floating in the sea.[74]

There is an intimate connection between amusement and violence, writing and loss, and physical extenuation and saloons. The following sections will comment on slavery, friendship, family ties, and the representation of Hume's life. I consider that this representation, in the different versions considered here, synthesized an ideal of life that will be transversal and elemental for what follows in the next chapter. Let me state what I do with the relationship between biography, economy, and nature. First, I point to those

[74] Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005).

elements of Hume's and Smith's biographies that they just mention without giving them particular importance for the conformation of their lives. I maintain that those mentions, particularly the ones referring to slavery and intimate relationships, bring to the surface aspects of their biographies that were of fundamental importance as well as an ignored privilege. In this regard, I affirm that the most obvious or quotidian characteristics of a life are by themselves conditions of possibility for the practice of philosophy. While ignoring or dismissing certain aspects of their actual histories, both Hume and Smith try to recreate their lives through biographical accounts. In these representations we encounter some of the most relevant forces to have shaped their understanding of economy and nature.

In a letter from 1753 written to Robert Wallace (1697–1771), a minister of the Church of Scotland, David Hume mentions that "I was told by Captain Rutherford, that in New York, they seldom raise black Children in their Cities […] They give them away to the People in the Country, who raise them."[75] This throw away comment comes at the end of the letter, and does not include any commentary. The giving away of black children appears to be for Hume another element of the world, something that happens following its historical course.[76] By the time that Hume wrote his letter, as Eric Williams has demonstrated, slavery and colonial trade were one of the main components of the accumulation of capital in England.[77] This brief mention of slavery in the letter is an

[75] *New Letters of David Hume* ed. Raymond Klibansky and Ernest C. Mossner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011 [1954]), 31.

[76] For an apologetic discussion of this thematic see Robert Palter, "Hume and Prejudice," *Hume Studies* 21, no. 1 (April, 1995): 3-24

[77] Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* int. Colin A. Palmer (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1994 [1944]), 51ff. Robin Blackburn confirms the "Williams' thesis" saying that: "While it needs to be refined and reformulated, it did quite correctly identify the very great intimacy

actual recognition of one of the foundations of industrial economy by Hume.[78]

But since 1707 what was happening in New York with black children was not strange to Hume's and Smith's context in Scotland.[79] The slave trade was a common practice in Glasgow; it was profitable and extensive.[80] In a lecture from 1766, Smith makes what can be considered at least a polemic remark: "We are apt to imagine that slavery is quite extirpated because we know nothing of it in this part of the world, but even at present it is almost universal."[81] Later, in the same lecture, he will emphasize that "there is no such a thing as slavery among us."[82] Though slavery is a permanent presence in their lives, it is one that is often overlooked or ignored. In another letter of November 5, 1765, this time addressed to Adam Smith, Hume writes: "I have now Opulence & Liberty: The last formerly rendered me content: Both together must do so, as far as the Encrease [sic] of years will permit;"[83] opulence and liberty Hume considers necessary conditions for the activity of thinking as well as for health. It is clear that comfort,

---

between the surge of slave produce and slave trading, on the one hand, and British capitalist development and industrialization on the other" see Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation, and Human Rights* (London and New York: Verso, 2011), 101.

[78] The contrary position is presented by Iain Whyte, *Scotland and the Abolition of Black Slavery, 1756-1838* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, Press, 2006). Whyte's presentation just presents fragmentary interventions but does not analyze those within Hume's and Smith's philosophies. Therefore, his study has a very limited explicative capacity.

[79] Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 64.

[80] See Marvin T. Brown, *Civilizing the Economy: A New Economics of Provision* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 17-33.

[81] Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, ed. R.L Meek, D.D Raphael, and L.G Stein (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 452. Smith stated this at the University of Glasgow while occupying the Chair of Logic.

[82] Ibid., 457.

[83] *The Letters of David Hume: Vol I: 1727-1765*, ed. J.Y.T Greig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011 [1932]), 521.

availability of one's own body, and time were for Hume of decisive importance for a fully human life.

The same occurs with Smith, as he makes evident in an extended letter to William Cullen (1710-1790) dedicated to explaining the situation of Scottish universities. There he defends that instruction and expertise do not have to be equalized with formal university training. People can learn and became experts in such areas like medicine without having an institutional accreditation. He concludes: "The monopoly of medical education which this regulation would establish in favour of Universities would, I apprehended, be hurtful to the lasting prosperity of such bodies-corporate."[84] From this perspective it is possible to conclude that Smith understood that any kind of interference between oneself and one's own projects or enterprises necessarily implied a diminishing of humanity. To pursue one's interest, without arbitrary limitations, was the crux of Smith's defense of the individuality of his class. In a letter to William Strahan (1715-1785) of 1776, to which I will return, Smith makes what can be considered as a purely incidental reference: "If my mother's health will permit me to leave her, I shall be in London by the beginning of November."[85] But intimacy, family relationships, caring, and loving one's mother were not universal experiences; moreover they were, in several cases, extraordinary, as confirmed by the following testimony:

> They also stopped my sister's mouth, and tied her hands; and in this manner we proceeded till we were out of the sight of these people. When we went to rest the following night they offered us some victuals; but we refused it; and the only comfort we had was in being in one another's arms all that night, and bathing each other with our tears. But alas! we were soon deprived of even the small comfort of weeping together. The next day proved a day of greater sorrow than I had yet

[84] *The Correspondence of Adam Smith,* 174.

[85] Ibid., 210-212.

> experienced; for my sister and I were then separated, while we lay clasped in each other's arms. It was in vain that we besought them not to part us; she was torn from me, and immediately carried away, while I was left in a state of distraction not to be described. I cried and grieved continually; and for several days I did not eat any thing but what they forced into my mouth.[86]

The former account, written by Olaudah Equiano (1745-1797), shows how the most intimate and significant ties and belongings were not guaranteed for every person. It was a privilege to decide whether to stay with one's mother or to travel. For Equiano there was no autonomous decision involved in his loss and sorrow. Every one of his and his sister's tears was the result of social and political relationships over which they did not have control. Smith's letter, on the contrary, though presented as a normal situation, shows a form of caring that was not within the possibilities of the kidnapped Equiano. He cares for him and his family by building a narrative about his own life; he is not a victim. Yet his intimate conditions were depicted as different or they were simply vanished. Biographies are selections of experiences, modes of political intervention whose pretension, in Hume and Smith, is not to tell one's life but to give life to one's life. If for Equiano everything, including tears and forgetfulness, has to be told, for Hume and Smith there are things that have to be repeated in order to avoid telling everything.

8. Hume and the Pilgrim

In his autobiographical text "My Own Life"[87] Hume tells that most of his life has been spent in literary pursuits and occupations. This form of living his life was not separated from those black children in New York; by mentioning them Hume

[86] Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African written by himself* (London: Printed and Sold by the Author, NO 10, Union-Street, Middlesex Hospital, 1789), 50-51.

[87] *The Letters of David Hume: Vol I: 1727-1765*, 1-7.

acknowledges their presence in his biography. Even a volatile or cursory presence expresses a historical phenomenon. While most of the sold children in New York were taken away from their families, Hume's biography begins with an account of close family relationships. Losing one's mother was not an unusual experience,[88] neither was the tearing asunder of family connections. In the secret of the night Hume dedicated himself to reading literature and philosophy; he was using his time to embrace a particular cultural tradition, its institutions, value-systems, and ideas.[89] His enjoyment was social and belonged to social relationships that make it possible as well as impel it. For Hume his biography is well expressed in the reception that was reached by his books; but the production and circulation of books has is own biography, its own social development, its own economy.

Nevertheless, Hume insists that he had to struggle against certain bodily limitations in order to continue with his ardent application. His physical weakness was both an impediment and also an opportunity to mature his spirit (not to obey a statesman but his own rational pursuits) and faculties. The maturity of his spirit had a primordial manifestation: he decided to "make a very rigid frugality,"[90] by which he meant he would restrict himself from everything except from study. According to this self-representation Hume reached a form of control and administration of his passions that permit him to produce his life from himself: "Even if one cannot escape death, one can literally make up how one imagines it. Nothing about it being "un-representable"; death does not undo

[88] Saidiya Hartman, *Lose your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2007).

[89] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon House, 1964), 10.

[90] *The Letters of David Hume: Vol I: 1727-1765*, 2.

humanity but provide the opportunity for free play. Death and dead body are up for grabs."[91] The question considered by Hume in his auto-biography is how present his own development as a process in which the limitation of flesh and death are overcome by the force of composure and propriety and expressed in constancy and regularity.[92]

In his autobiographical text, Hume condenses a nature economized at its core. Reading is the exercise that provides equilibrium and sense to this radical administration of himself. Its tangible result, when Hume was twenty-seven years old, was the publication in 1738 of his *Treatise of Human Nature.* Nonetheless, the book, according to his account, was received poorly. The question of the reception of the book has two interrelated constituents: social recognition and self-affirmation. As Butler explained, for Hume self and society correspond to each other; they mutually look for each other in order to complete themselves in the production of a major figure: the agreeable social self. In his writing, Hume is trying to produce benefit to society even if it implies disappointments. From 1745 to 1747 he was able to became fully a master because he saved "near thousand Pound;"[93] this criterion to determine mastery was not definitive or, at least, exclusive. Mastery for him would be shown by the eagerness for public recognition or, more exactly, for the recognition of his writing as it expressed his own self. Once again in this context self has to be understood as made possible by flesh. Hume does not reject flesh in his writing, but gives a detailed explanation of how to relate to it.

There is a procedure in this autobiography: the book is equated with the self and

[91] Thomas Laqueur, "The Dead and Dying Body from Hume to Now," in *The Future of Flesh: A Cultural Survey of the Body*, ed. Zoe Detsi-Diamanti, Katerina Kitsi-Mitakou, and Effie Yiannopoulou (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 44.

[92] Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason* (New York: Norton, 2005), 342-343.

[93] *The Letters of David Hume: Vol I: 1727-1765*, 3.

if the book is sold an increase in the self occurs. But even this has to have a boundary: "However, I had fixed a Resolution, which I inflexibly maintained, never to reply to any body; and not being very irascible in my Temper, I have easily kept myself clear of all literary Squabbles."[94] The emphasis in this statement is on the relationship between success and temper or, one more time, on the economization of oneself. This manifests a virtuosity that goes beyond the pure printed text, reaching the other's soul.[95] Hume's creation of his life is above all an uncontainable succession of disappointments: "I thought, that, I was the only Historian, that had at once neglected present Power, Interest, and Authority, and the Cry of popular Prejudices; and as the Subject was suited to every Capacity, I expected proportional Applause: But miserable was my Disappointment [...] I resolved to pick up Courage and to persevere."[96] In this description of his new failure, Hume introduces a methodological reasoning: to think for oneself, to judge tradition, powers, institutions, and conventions with autonomy implies rejection. Reason and popularity are presented as mutually exclusive. Hume presents himself as an historian who is able to surpass both the limits of a centralized power that demands the surrendering of reason and popular prejudice which requires its oblivion.

Hume presents himself as a third alternative to these exigencies; his path is that of free judgment, autonomy, and individual discovery of truth through rational inquiry. This includes, in a manner close to animal oeconomy, a total disregard of fables and religious

---

[94] Ibid.

[95] See *Early Responses to Hume's Life and Reputation I,* Volume 9, ed. James Fieser (London: Thoemmes, 2005), 274-275.

[96] *The Letters of David Hume: Vol I: 1727-1765,* 4.

superstition.[97] At the center of this solitary project of a counter-history there is a longing for social acknowledgment. So what then is the relationship between reason and acceptance? Reason alone, without company, conversation, and enjoyment is an arid solitude; recognition is one of the practical ends of reason, and, for Hume, acknowledgment without reason is unfounded and lacks transcendence. The development of social attachments provokes a fissure in the self; Hume's self appears damaged by the absence of public praise. The self ceases to be unified and well structured and becomes, in his narrative, desolate and despairing. The experience of this obscurity with all its eccentricities is nonetheless luminous: "Obscurity, indeed, is painful to the mind as well as to the eye; but to bring light from obscurity, by whatever labor, must be delightful and rejoicing."[98] The self restores itself in the process of struggling to be recognized. Courage and perseverance are, as literary artifacts, expressions of a full embracing of the contractual ties of the self.

The next years of his life were a continuation of his perseverance for recognition based on the use of his faculties without negotiating with anyone. Such a life is a solitary and virtuous existence; perseverance though does not go without a reward, at least not in Hume's case. The persona created in "My Own Life" in assuming a firm economy of his nature reaches what seem to be the gates of paradise.

> I was become not only independent, but opulent. I retired to my native Country of Scotland, determined never more to set my Foot out of it; and retaining the Satisfaction of never having preferred a Request to one great Man or even making Advances of Friendship to any of them […] I returned to Edinburgh in 1769,

[97] David Hume, *The History of England from The Invasion of Julius Cesar to the Abdication of James the Second, 1688* A New Edition with the authors last corrections and improvements Vol. I (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1778), 1-3.

[98] David Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* ed. Stephen Buckle (Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 2007 [1748]) I, 10.

> very opulent […] healthy, and though somewhat stricken in Years, with the Prospect of enjoying long my Ease and of seeing the Encrease of my Reputation.[99]

It is important to note that the opulence appears once again as a mark of a successful life and linked to money ("for I possessed a Revenue of 1000 pounds a year"[100]), so he was fully separated from the physical extenuation and irrational exigencies of the working poor. Independence makes reference to a type of occupation that allows him to develop his own projects even if he had to face the most shameful non-recognition. After passing through the luminous obscurity that is an integral part of being a social self, Hume can entirely reveal his dream: to have more reputation. It was a dream that came true in Paris, a place that satisfies the necessity of good company and conversation. Then, once he reached his dreams and found a place in which he could meet his fantasies he had a disorder that became mortal and incurable.

The autobiography concentrates most intensely on the abrupt transit between the fulfillment of a dream and mortality. It is in the face of death that the self reveals the consistency of its spirits; that is the reason why Hume can affirm: "Insomuch, that were I to name the Period of my Life which I should most choose to pass over again I might be tempted to point [to] this later period."[101] The finishing of his dreams and the weakening of his body were for Hume the real achievement of his Reputation.

> To conclude historically with my own Character--I am, or rather was (for that is the Style, I must now use in speaking of myself; which emboldens me the more to speak my Sentiments) I was, I say, a man of mild Dispositions, of Command of Temper, of an open, social, and cheerful Humour, capable of Attachment, but little susceptible of Enmity, and for great Moderation in all my Passions. Even my

---

[99] *The Letters of David Hume: Vol I: 1727-1765,* 6.

[100] Ibid., 6.

[101] Ibid., 7.

> Love of literary Fame, my ruling Passion, never soured my humour, notwithstanding my frequent Disappointments.[102]

At the end what we have is a narration from Death itself; a message from posterity that closes a life that was able to defeat itself, to go beyond the limits of its own nature. What we see is an exemplary management of the soul, a spirit that accepts death or, more exactly, full control of death and fear. Hume incarnates a spirit of contention, frugality, gaiety that was so praised by Shaftesbury (1671-1713)[103] and Butler and the coldness that we see throughout the methodology of the animal oeconomy.

Although is possible to read Hume's autobiography as an aesthetic attempt to create a literary self[104] through a writing practice that "exploited, facilitated, and epitomized the operations of the commercial society which it persuasively represented,"[105] I would like to offer a different approach. My approach is also different from Baier's understanding of Hume's autobiography as fundamentally an inter-textual piece or a case through which to understand Hume's and Smith's sources and influences.[106] My meta-theoretical proposal is to read Hume's autobiography within the biographical narrative genre begun by *The Pilgrim's Progress* written by John Bunyan (1628-1688) as it reinforces the idea that the personal life is the fundamental message that anyone can give to another.

---

[102] Ibid.

[103] Anthony, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* Vol. I (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001 [1732, 6th Edition]).

[104] Jerome Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment: Hume and the Formation of a Literary Career* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

[105] Ibid., 4.

[106] Annette C. Baier, *Death and Character: Further Reflections on Hume* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2008), 100-113.

> Besides treasuring personal experience for its evidences of election and its disclosures of the kind of rational whole their lives were elaborating, Puritans valued their life histories as texts inscribing divine doctrine and imperatives […] they understood their "interpreted" life experience to be a secondary scripture or *logos*, a de facto authority by contrast with de jure authority of the biblical Word.[107]

Hume follows this way of presentation. His experiences are transformed into signs of election and his writing becomes the condensation and expression of the rationality of the spirit. Hume's own body is indeed considered as an incarnation of the divine in which other persons could and should recognized the *logos* of the World. His authority comes directly from the display or portrait of his life as the encounter of body, flesh, and God. Hume's life history pertains to this specific mode of presentation in which a self-narrative acquires the status of proof and sign. Nonetheless, contrary to Bunyan's self-narrative Hume's does not long for a different city or spiritual community.

The Pilgrim's Progress is, from the start, a reflection on the conditions of writing. Its first assertion is that its content does not belong entirely to the memory and clear-sightedness of the author. It is a product of shadows, dreams, and voices that call from an unknown place. The book appears to be an interruption of the author's intentions and projects. It happens to the author as he was planning to write something different. Therefore the act of writing is divided into two different modes: one in which writing is thought to express and affirm the virility and exceptional character of an author and the other in which writing disrupts the intentionality of the author. Bunyan's book comes out of an intensive and dreamlike struggle against himself. Nevertheless, this struggle does not pretend to control the fogginess and dark clouds that enable the full embracing of

[107] Kathleen M. Swain, *Pilgrim's Progress, Puritan Progress* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 135.

oneself. Bunyan attempts to expose himself as he writes. Every word locates his life outside the limits of respectability and propriety that were requisite for a man of letters. He enables the fuzziness and pursues it without knowing an exit. For this reason, at the center of his book there is the question of method and travel.[108] Throughout the book, both method and travel are clearly and permanently connected as forms by which to express the complexity of an experience that cannot be regarded as unified and self-organized.

After the introduction to his book Bunyan continues his text with the description of a diffuse and elusive dream. In this dream appears a desperate man. While crying, he asks about his future and his place in the world. Then the man explains:

> *O my dear Wife,* said he, *and you the Children of my bowels, I your dear friend am in my self undone, by reason of a burden that lieth hard upon me: moreover, I am for certain informed, that this our City will be burned with fire from Heaven, in which fearful overthrow, both my self, with thee, my Wife, and you my sweet babes, shall miserably come to ruine; except (the which, yet I see not) some way of escape can be found whereby we may be delivered.*[109]

The fundamental motif of this dream is the relationship between displacement, catastrophe, and self-exile. The City is under siege and everything that has been known is passing away. The closest relationships as well as the commerce of society appear to be at the limits of their existence. The catastrophe is experienced as an imminent event. Because of this the dreamer opens himself to the unknown and procures a new place within the space of the world. The city is not conceived as containing all the possibilities of his life—but then again he is not completely aware of his possibilities. Hume's

---

[108] John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, ed. W.R. Owens (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2003 [1678]), 8.

[109] Ibid., 10. Emphasis in the original.

autobiography reverses this basic and initial idea of *The Pilgrim's Progress:* an exemplary and joyful life cannot be achieved except within the rules and requirements of the city, the commercial society as "the Immutable within time".[110] At the conclusion of the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan reinserts his text within the realm of dreams, thus transforming the text into an interrogation: "Now reader, I have told my Dream to thee; See if thou canst Interpret it to me."[111] The text/dream is open to dispute and cannot but wait for clarification. Thus, the text/dream is a mélange of images, metaphors, and jokes that offer a path by which to fulfill God's will rather than a labyrinth in which the routes by which to exit are not visible. The reader has to deal with dreams and to speculate (investigate) the "Gold wrapped in Ore."[112] The self-narrative of *The Pilgrim's Progress* requires the reader to pass through the horrendous and catastrophic ambit of dreams and does not promise clarity or security. It invites the reader into exile rather than to Heaven.

Hume and Smith use the attempt to exile oneself from the city or to overcome the limits of interpretation as a criterion to distinguish between categories of beings, as I shall explore further in the next chapters. Thus the city does not refer solely to a specific complex of institutions, monuments, and separations but to a mode of organization of dreams and desires. Here, economic theory finds its condition of possibility and also a formulation about the frontiers of time and the infinitude of Hume's life. This is the

---

[110] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), 8.

[111] John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress,* 155.

[112] Ibid.

properly utopic[113] notion within Hume's and Smith's thinking: for both of them Hume's life was an expression of the possibilities inherent in their society. Even the most intimate and specific characteristics of Hume's life are considered as immanent realizations (incarnation) of the highest components of a proper life. From this utopia appears also an anti-utopia: any type of social ideal or dream that openly or implicitly contradicts the general circuit that has made Hume's life possible is understood as a deviation from nature susceptible of separation, waste, and punishment. From this anti-utopia appears an understanding of flesh that has been adequately explained by Roberto Esposito.

> But perhaps a more meaningful term is that of *flesh,* because it is intrinsic to the same body from which it seems to escape (and which therefore expels it). Existence without life is flesh that does not coincide with the body; it is that part or zone of the body, the body's membrane, that isn't one with the body, that exceeds its boundaries or is subtracted from the body's enclosing.[114]

The problem of the non-coinciding of individuals with the different and yet interconnected bodies that constituted the social is one of the primordial questions Hume and Smith address. Flesh appears precisely as that which exceeds bodies and has to be incorporated. The catastrophic dreams or the ardent desires of individuals have to be damaged and prevented if they are a subversion against the body and spirit. Flesh is both a necessary condition for life as well as a possible sickness. The economization of flesh is a central principle for the preservation and reproduction of life. Hume's biography was also a theme of reflection for Smith. It became an important object for philosophical discussions about identity, perfection, and history. In this regard Hume's autobiography

---

[113] For a detailed discussion of this theological, political and economic concept see Franz Hinkelammert, *Crítica a la razón utópica* (San José: DEI, 1984).

[114] Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. Timothy Campbell (Minnesota and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 159.

has to be considered a condensed piece of Hume's and Smith's philosophy.

Smith and Hume's Life

"My Own Life" has itself a biography, a circuit of relationships that make possible its existence. From the letter to Joseph Black (1728-1799) to Adam Smith to a letter from him to John Home (1722-1808), that is to say from August to October of 1776, the life of David Hume was a subject of different stages of production and remembrance. It was not his character as an individual that saved Hume from eternal death[115] but his friends and their narratives about his acceptance of death that did so. They, especially Smith, created an intimate Hume and also created a way to read him. Hume's own autobiographical account inaugurated this form of reading:[116]: Joseph Black,[117] informing Smith of Hume's death (letter from Monday 26 Aug. 1776) affirms that: "He [Hume] never dropped the smallest expression of impatience but when he had occasion to speak to people about him he always did it with affection and tenderness."[118] The same diagnostic, with more precision and detail, appears in Smith's letter to Strahan.[119] Smith's narrative about Hume's last days focuses on resignation and perfect complacency, both components of their economy of the flesh.

These characteristics go so far as to make it appear that Hume controls his own

[115] In reference to David Hume, William Agutter (1758-1835) said: "Let us then consider the DIFFERENCE *between the deaths of him who feareth God, and of him who feareth him not"* The difference is condemnation. See William Agutter, "Sermon. Job xxi" *Early Responses to Hume's Life and Reputation II* Volume 10, ed. James Fieser (London: Thoemmes, 2005), 169.

[116] For an insightful discussion of "My Own Life" see Liz Stanley, "The Writing of David Hume's My Own Life: The Persona of the Philosopher and the Philosopher Manqué," *Auto/Biography* 14 (2006): 1–19

[117] *The Correspondence of Adam Smith,* 168.

[118] Ibid., 169.

[119] Ibid., 217-221.

death by his cheerfulness. To enjoy until the end is an aptitude, a disposition that is at the edge of the possible. For this reason Hume's words, as rendered by Smith, have a halo of reverence.

> He answered:
> Your hopes are groundless. An habitual diarrhoea of more than a year's standing, would be a very bad disease at any age it is a mortal one. When I lie down in the evening, I feel myself weaker than when I rose in the morning; and when I rise in the morning, weaker than when I lying down in the evening. I am sensible, besides, that some of my vital parts are affected, so that I must soon die.[120]

Hume's physical decay and filthiness are secondary or almost unimportant due to one fact: he had been socially productive. His circles of affection and friendship had received everything they could receive from him. His own damaged body was already passing away in front of his eyes and he could not scream in pain. From inside death and destruction his self remained impassible. Hume himself thus exemplifies the reach of the economy of the flesh. He does not dream with a reality other than his sick body, in order to demonstrate that he embraces death or, more precisely, that he transforms death into a central political and economic concept. Merely the existence of superstition created in him a certain despair and discomfort.

Smith's narration introduces at this point the notion of what must be considered a useful life: one that expects to continue for the benefit of the Public. Talking until the destruction of his own body, affirms Smith, was Hume's way of showing perfection and dominion over his flesh. Thereafter, Smith establishes a distinction between philosophy and character that instead of dissolving philosophy locates it within the relationship between economy and nature. While affected by a terrible illness Hume never renounced frugality and pushing against his animal oeconomy he maintained the “firmness of his

[120] Ibid., 218-219.

mind."[121] In the context of the relationship of the tense connections between economy and nature, Smith represents Hume as the manifestation of the maximum possibilities of human nature, as the realization of an economy that permits both the satisfaction of the self and society. The literary and theological representations of Hume's life are not just a requiem for a friend but a condensed presentation of a type of economic process applied to the self in order to enjoy life beyond the restrictions of the body and against the agony of the flesh. Hume showed a form of incarnation in society whose objective is to produce social happiness through the best administration of one's life and death.

The following chapters discuss the procedures in and through which Hume and Smith attempt to economize flesh. I will focus particularly on their politics of spirit and its implications for the contention and modeling of the flesh. I argue that for both authors the economy of flesh was fundamental in order to conserve and deepen what they considered natural.

[121] Ibid., 221.

CHAPTER 2

Spirit, Economy, and Flesh

This is the historical Age, and this is the Historical Nation
David Hume letter to William Strahan.

This chapter focuses on the characteristics and implications of Hume's and Smith's philosophy of spirit. In order to do that I propose an approach that shows how both of these authors belong to a theological and political tradition whose understanding of spirit is primordially related to the economization of flesh. This discussion has both an historical and conceptual importance as the question of the relationship between spirit, economy, and social domination is still being debated.[1] My contribution to this debate is to offer a detailed explanation of how the notion of spirit shapes the thinking of Hume and Smith and occupies a fundamental role in the economy of flesh. Nonetheless, my contribution does not remain on the descriptive level. I also argue that Hume's and Smith's understanding of spirit can express itself politically as empire.[2]

As I demonstrated in the previous chapter, economizing oneself is a primordial component of economy. The representation of Hume's life condenses characteristics that were part of the development of an economic theory that did not separate sentiments from trade or labor.[3] Moreover, such theory refers to the entire dynamism of everyday life and

[1] See Tim Murphy, *The Politics of Spirit: Phenomenology, Genealogy, Religion* (New York: SUNY Press, 2012); Javier Elguea, *Razón y Desarrollo: El crecimiento económico, las instituciones y la distribución de la riqueza espiritual* (México, D.F: El Colegio de México, 2008); Luc Boltanski & Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Gregory Elliot (London – New York: Verso, 2007 [1999]); Frédéric Lordon, *Capitalisme, désir et servitude: Marx et Spinoza* (Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2010).

[2] Rosa Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital*, trans. Agnes Schwarzschild (London and New York: Routledge, 2003 [1913]), 434-447.

[3] Emma Rothschild, *Economic Sentiments.* Adam Smith, Condorcet, and the Enlightenment (Cambridge, MA/ London: Harvard University Press, 2002).

it was understood as a quotidian relationship with oneself that derives from the construction of modes of social intercourse and its institutions.

We also saw in that chapter that from Petty to Mandeville there was an elective affinity between theological notions and economic discussions; a similar affinity occurs with Hume and Smith with the notion of spirit. This chapter develops my reading of Hume's and Smith's theory of spirit by emphasizing that it refers to the necessary relationship between public and private spheres, the manifestation of a crucial moment of history, and to an active impulse in the conformation of individuals.

Precisely because Hume and Smith recognized the contradictions that were creating a crisis in their societies, they decided to pursue those contradictions to their conclusion and try to provide a rational explanation of them. In so doing they depicted an all-encompassing society that is condensed in its modes of organizing history and nature. Their thinking holds together descriptions and prescriptions by a principle of totality: the spirit. They both believe that unless there is a full recognition of spirit's truth and authority, the whole will collapse. Therefore they propose universal rules presented as expressions of spirit of the last moment of history as it was experienced in civilized societies.

The authority of the facts, as contradictory as they can be, corresponds not just to its mere apparition but also to its nature of spirit's expressions. Hume and Smith understood that differences were a fundamental part of their societies, particularly the division of labor. However, they also supposed that unity was possible by the spirit. The effective antagonisms are reconciled or, more precisely, subsumed by the truth of the spirit's unity, which is manifested in certain customs and traditions. There are also breaks

within the spirit's activity; these social interruptions of the spirit's movement are understood as non-natural--although they are the truth of the spirit. The equivalence between spirit and nature, as I will discuss in other chapters, is one pivotal assumption displayed by the idea of the economy of the flesh. As thinkers of an existing whole that is constituted by multiple differences, Hume and Smith focused on how to achieve in and through each individual a communication in their most singular actions of the spirit.

Accordingly, for Hume and Smith it was of decisive importance to intervene even in gender performances, which they understood as expressions of economic dispositions and naturalization, carriers of cultural distinctiveness, the possibility and expression of civilization,[4] and the sustainability of the division of labor. The notion of women was for Hume and Smith a location in which to incarnate their ideals and to depict the contradictions of commercial society and the spirit of the age: "In the eighteenth century, the image of women became the symbol of commercial society, embodying the ethos of transaction and conversation."[5] Both of these authors were part of a large dispute about the formation of identities and the distribution of identifications that was central for the construction of an image of nationhood and tradition.[6] As in the previous interpretation of Hume's life representation, the notion of women allows me to present the depth of their economic theory. I argue that as a derivation or component of their notion of spirit these authors have developed an understanding of women that specifies what the spiritual necessities of the whole (society) were and at the same time specifies its products.

---

[4] Silvia Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, Gender, and the Limits of Progress*, trans. Jeremy Carden (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[5] Ibid., 133.

[6] Deborah A. Symonds, *Weep Not for Me: Women, Ballads, and Infanticide in Early Modern Scotland* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).

The chapter follows a strategy of explanation of the notion of women that could be called genetic. The strategy consists of showing how this notion appears as a counterpart to discussions on, for instance, security, law, and manners. In this way, women are grasped as a political and epistemic concept, which expresses the danger of disorder, non-productivity, and unregulated imagination. Nature, in this context, is equivalent to constancy, hierarchical organization, and structural asymmetry understood as rational. I highlight two basic aspects in this section. First, I clarify what is the understanding of reason and self that sustains Hume and Smith's understanding of women. Second, I identify the strategies, exercises, and modes through which it was possible, according to Hume and Smith, to normalize oneself. Both of these authors practiced a way of thinking that focused on agency and practice; theirs was a philosophy of activity. Being able to adequately direct one's life was a fundamental problem for them because of the multiple intersections of public and private life. Third, I focus on the perception of women's constitutive state as a producer of operations that are brute and lack intelligence and so require instruction and guidance.

In the following section I demonstrate that Hume and Smith's theory of spirit and its explicit appearance within their discussions about women share a common inner logic with strictly theological texts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By inner logic I mean continuity in the regulatory notions that permit the display of nature, spiritual authority[7] and spirit. I argue that there is a fundamental interrelation or conceptual familiarity between the mode in which theology argues about the relationship between spirit and authority and how Hume and Smith relate their understanding of spirit with

[7] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1541 French Edition,* 656-712; *The Works of John Knox* Vol. 4, ed. David Laing (Edinburgh: Printed for the Bannatyne Club, 1855 [1556-1558]).

economy and nature.

1. Spiritual Police and Nature's Empire

The Forms of Prayers written by John Knox (1514-1572)[8] is a large treatise concerning the administration of sacraments. One of the basic questions Knox addresses in his text is the question of the spirit and authority. How to preserve God's government is the objective of the book. In the section dedicated to the "Order of the Ecclesiastical Discipline" Knox affirms that the fundamental method by which a city, town, house, or family exists is policy/ governance. Nevertheless, while explaining the specific form of governance of Church Knox introduces the notion of "Spirituall Policie."[9] Besides being the foundation of government, this notion includes the idea of the organizing bodies conforming to a decent order; that is to say that spirit concentrates its activities in the specificity of everybody's differences to create members. Spirit is what unites, frames, and models the different bodies within a major unity. Then Knox introduces an analogy between the activity of the spirit and the father's natural position in the family as the one who castigates and teaches. The "Spiritual Policie" of the father is directly linked to God. Spirit's aim is to correct rebellions and to create the same. If the bodies manifest themselves as different the spiritual police have to act as a disciplinary force. However, Spirit's first and most important task is to extinguish the manifestation of evil differences.

John Calvin's (1509-1564) discussion about the relationship between the two kingdoms is an introduction to the spiritual and natural foundation of political authority.

---

[8] *Works of John Knox*, 141-216. The complete title of the book is *The Form of Prayers and Ministration of the Sacraments Used in the English Congregation at Geneva: and approved by the famous and godly learned man, Ion Caluyn.*

[9] Ibid., 203.

God is the source of every political authority and the spirit of God is what grounds human relationships. Calvin's characterization of man as a social animal that fully expresses itself as a civil animal permits him to introduce his understanding of government as the set of practices whose aim is to protect the common good. Spirit and law are understood as aspects of the same thing: part of God's plan to unify albeit with tension, through its spirit, the natural and political law: "But although, as we have just warned, this civil kingdom is different for the spiritual and inward kingdom of Christ, we must know that the former does not contradict the latter."[10] Calvin does not subordinate the kingdom of "civil justice and reforming of morals" to the spiritual kingdom because "already here on earth the spiritual kingdom gives us some taste of the heavenly kingdom."[11]

Calvin presents the dominion of the spirit of the institutions and its laws as equal to human nature. The dominion of the spirit or, more precisely, the kingdom of earth is what makes possible life and the expansion of the commonwealth. Spirit is the principle of light that is not subjected to any authority. Calvin concludes that being fully human requires the conjoining of spirit and flesh or heaven and earth. Following on that idea he develops a theology of the subject that reappears later with Hume and Smith:

> The first duty of subjects toward their superiors is to have a great and high regard for their state, recognizing it as a commission given by God, and therefore to honor and revere their superiors as those who are God's lieutenants and deputies. For we see some who are obedient to their magistrates and would not want there not to be some superior to whom they were subject, since they know that it is necessary for the public good.[12]

God's presence is manifested in its "lieutenants and deputies" and from that

[10] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1541 French Edition,* 656.

[11] Ibid., 657.

[12] Ibid., 673.

follows, according to Calvin, an unrestricted subjection to the spirit of kingdom of the earth. Calvin's theology of the subject supposes that the so called two kingdoms are united within the logics of law and obedience. In order to prevent rebellion he introduces the invisible hand: "First I exhort my readers to consider carefully God's providence and the special way he uses to arrange kingdoms and establish such kings as He pleases."[13] Thus, human nature fully manifests itself through obedience without discernment.

The terms "Spirituall Policie" and Nature's Empire refer to four aspects:

a) It is the self-established principle of organization, discipline, and differentiation that allows the body to economize its own parts and defend itself from "differences." The regime of the spirit is indeed based on the assumption of belief and practical truth. The members of spirit's dominion cannot dispute spirit's authority.

b) Spirit precedes the body and functions as its condition of possibility. Spiritual policy as well as spirit's dominion is generative and creative of life. Thus spirit is what links, at the same time that it subordinates, the social, civil, and religious spheres making them part of the same historical narrative.

c) Therefore its actions traverse every single part of its members and, at the same time create them. The function of a spirited body is to permanently create its members through exercises of self-creation such as prayer and sacraments.

d) Discipline, understood as punishment, is not the unique or even fundamental activity of the spirit. Even punishment has as its intention to maintain the body as a whole. It is not understood as destruction but as the reestablishment of the dominion of

[13] Ibid., 675.

spirit over flesh which has both retentive or conservative and also expansive consequences.

In the text *The First Blast, To a Wake Women Degenerate*[14] Knox demonstrates the operation of the Spirit. This text intends to defend the forms in which God's ordinances manifest themselves in nature and more specifically to expand one particular affirmation: "I affirme the empire of Woman to be a thing repugnant to Nature."[15] For Knox women are bodies without spiritual capacities, unable to conduct themselves because they are "foolishe, madde, and phrenetike,"[16] this is to say unequivocally affected by a constitutional degeneration. They lack the "spirit of counsel and regiment,"[17] which is the natural property of men.

At a first literal level Knox writes the history of the distance between spirit and women and as a subtext the history of the advance of the spirit. Because of their monstrous desires, says Knox, women have to be subjected to men or be under their empire;[18] their presence itself represents a danger for the commonwealth, order, and policy established by God's word. Then, at a second level, the one in which the text inscribes itself, the spirit, in its own movement, writes history. In its movement it divides and creates life. Its truth is manifested in the "weaker" bodies of women.

The creation of life, not circumscribed to the biological realm, depends on the discipline of the degenerate. Just by respecting the spirit's organization of history it is

---

[14] *Works of John Knox*, 372-422.

[15] Ibid., 373.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., 374.

[18] Ibid., 417.

possible to secure God's precepts. Because of this an economy of flesh becomes necessary: “I am not ignorant that the subtill wittes of carnall men (which can never be broght under the obedience of Goddes simple preceptes) to maintein this monstruous empire has yet two vaine shiftes.”[19] It is, at its core, a carnal principle that attempts a rebellion against the spirit, a contrary principle of organization that must be “repressed.”[20] For Knox the political institutions, always animated by the spirit, have the responsibility to intervene to secure the natural course of history. Those institutions must reorient women in such ways that they will be able to obey nature. Spiritless women are “monstres” because they contaminate the world.

> He [God] hath set before our eyes two other Mirrors and glasses, in whiche he will that we shulde behold the ordre which he hath appointed and established in nature: The one is the naturall bodie of man; the other is the politik or civile body of that common wealth, in which God by his own Word hath apointed an ordre.[21]

Knox distinguishes this order from the “monstre” in which the organs and parts are not naturally placed. What is important here are not just the references to women but also the functioning of the spirit's policy and dominion as this will reappear in Hume and Smith. In tracing the “march of the spirit” it becomes clearer how it is, at its roots, an activity oriented to the economy of flesh. Economy administrates, expends and saves flesh while increasing or opening space for the spirit's movement. Hume and Smith aggregate to this mutually productive relationship an understanding of nature that reaches its limits in the civilized society. Spirit enlightens nature showing its internal potentialities and also its necessary forms of surviving. Both of them understand society

[19] Ibid., 414.

[20] Ibid., 415.

[21] Ibid., 390.

as an articulated whole with historical ascendency but this does not interfere with how they related spirit and their own history: naturalizing its contradictions and declaring them impossible to transform.

2. Spirit and Economy: Hume

The question of the Spirit, as demonstrated in my discussion of Steuart, was not an unusual theme of economic discussions. Hume's economic essays also contain important references to the question of the spirit. The essay "Of Commerce"[22] contains various thematic fields and includes a historical presentation about the progress of commerce. For Hume, in order to be intelligible, the discussion about commerce has to concentrate on what he calls principles. His own philosophical position is that he has to provide insights regarding the totality of the conditions that can make a better relationship possible between the public sphere and private man. Without the achievement of these principles the entire existence of a commonwealth disappears. Hume acknowledges that these principles are susceptible to being changed and transformed thanks to human constitution: "Man is a variable being,"[23] he writes, but principles remain imperative. In Hume's historical account about the division of labor, he does not explicitly discuss the various sets of exigencies that the organization of labor requires for every member of a society. Commerce, for Hume, designates variables such as moral contention, use of time, recreation, and imagination. A commercial society is therefore that in which the most intimate characteristics of individuals are united by common orientations and everyone is able to dominate themselves in order to develop

[22] David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987 [1754]), 253-267.

[23] Ibid., 257.

their intrinsic capacities and historical possibilities.

These individuals are divided into different sectors in which their situational and structural concatenation together contributes to their happiness. Hume presents their division into different occupations and duties as a manifestation of history's last stage. Hence, their fundamental purpose should not be to transform its actual conditions, but instead to promote the sharing of wealth that is allowed by industry, trade, and luxury. Therefore there is, for Hume, continuity between the household economy and the general economy of society. The channel of communication between these two economic ambits is the incarnation of the "spirit of the age" in everyone's body. Commerce is a dynamism that involves the "whole" but that derives its most decisive impulse from the strict acquisition of humanity. Thus the spirit has to be actualized, embodied, incarnated, and made present. Hume's understanding of economy tends to concentrate on those aspects that guarantee the control of what Burke explained as a state of unproductive relaxation.[24] That state, the opposite of labor, affects not only the corporeal constitution of the individual but also of the social body.

At this point my interest is not to discuss Hume's history of the division of labor but to discuss what the principles of that division are. First, the anthropological principle,[25] which orientates Hume's presentation, is the distinction between savage state and a state in which it is possible to have, for particular social groups, relatively autonomous time. Second, regarding the question of spirit, Hume recognizes that, for

[24] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Inquiry*, ed. Adam Phillips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 [1757]), 122.

[25] Mario Bürmann, *Das Labor des Anthropologen: Anthropologie und Kultur bei David Hume* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2008), 41-84.

small states, it is necessary to create and permanently reinforce among the population their will to serve and remain loyal to their states. Then he separates himself from the idea of public or people's spirit to promote a direct encounter with mankind.

> Sovereigns must take mankind as they find them, and cannot pretend to introduce any violent change in their principles and ways of thinking. A long course of time, with a variety of accidents and circumstances, are requisite to produce those great revolutions, which so much diversify the face of human affairs. And the less natural any set of principles are, which support a particular society, the more difficulty will a legislator meet with in raising and cultivating them […] Now according to the most natural course of things, industry and arts and trade encrease the power of the sovereign as well as the happiness of the subjects.[26]

By negating the imposition of a certain spirit, Hume recognizes and affirms the existence of natural dispositions that are associated with the division of labor. Nature, for Hume, expresses certain trends that, if followed, will guarantee the betterment of society. Everyone has to obey their own position within the general organization of labor in order to satisfy their most elemental passions. Acceptance of spirit is the ultimate historical possibility for happiness. Yet accepting one's natural position within the division of labor also presupposes various consequences in social relationships.

For the worker it implies an increased concentration in becoming more skilful in the performance of his duty. Workers have to accommodate themselves to the acceleration of time as well as the reduction of their space; from the land they have to migrate to the incipient cities to contribute to the public service, to put their bodies entirely at the service of the public good: "Could we convert a city into a kind of fortified camp, and infuse into each breast so martial a genius, and such passion of public good, as to make every one willing to undergo the greatest hardships for the sake of the public"—

[26] David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary,* 260.

that is the dream.[27] Yet this disposition, according to Hume, is difficult to create and apply. The problem of regulating the "whole" is that these passions do not promote self-interest. So instead Hume offers another group of passions by which to govern men, whom he proposes to "animate […] with a spirit of avarice and industry, art and luxury."[28]

Hume moves from understanding spirit as self-negation to spirit as the affirmation of the self. This notion of the self is strictly connected with commodities. The commodity is its foundation, and is what provides its flourishing and progress. Hume's individuals express their entire development through the appreciation and enjoyment of commodities; in and through commodities' fluxing, individuals explicitly show their more delicate capacities. In order to create commodities, it is necessary to assure that extended sectors of the population dedicate themselves to their production. Increasing the production of such commodities requires of the worker a concentrated time of labor each day, while the "gayer and most opulent part of the nation"[29] become acquainted with objects of luxury and their desire of more and newer commodities is awakened. While the workers have to accommodate themselves to labor constrictions and exigencies, the rich, the merchants, and the adventurers create innovative forms of acquiring more commodities. This division, which is fundamental to understanding Hume's idea of commerce and sociability, has commonalities that are important to mention. An industrious society or nation displays a spirit that combines self-interest and restriction within the

[27] Ibid., 262.

[28] Ibid., 263.

[29] Ibid., 264.

acknowledgment of the division of labor and production of commodities as its foundation. The different social groups have to act in such a way that their necessities can be fully achieved without transforming or deteriorating nature.

> Human happiness, according to the most received notions, seems to consist in three ingredients; action, pleasure, and indolence: And though these ingredients ought to be mixed in different proportions, according to the particular disposition of the person; yet one ingredient can be entirely wanting, without destroying, in some measure, the relish of the whole composition.[30]

Hume's ideal for happiness requires perpetual occupation or work because, according to his understanding, in doing their natural duties everyone can acquire pleasure and enjoyment. Being industrious protects individuals from unnatural appetites. Industry, commerce, and activity are accelerators of transformation even for the aspects that might result in non-economic importance. Hume presents commerce as an "encrease of humanity"[31] that extends itself throughout public relationships. "The spirit of the age," as Hume calls his displaying of the conditions of possibility of sociability based upon a strict separation and division between social sectors, embodies itself in techniques of government. In Hume's understanding, action incorporates a process of self-modeling that tends to construct equivalence between individual's freedom and aspirations and the constituted society. For the unsophisticated, the aim is to make the horizon of their expectations and labor coincide. Action is in this case a repetition of tasks that are not entirely controllable. Pleasure is connected with labor, martial spirit, and discipline; it is not separated from the realm of productivity, but emerges from the physical pain associated with the production of commodities and the need of subsistence that makes the

[30] Ibid., 270. "Of Refinement in the Arts".

[31] Ibid., 271.

worker sell his body for labor and his flesh for the mere subsistence of his body. For Hume, nevertheless, there is no plausible historical option for a mode of organization that requires for its reproduction the closure of the world. Although Hume separates himself from Mandeville's understanding of noble sin, [32] he explains that the proper functioning of society necessitates the allowance of vicious luxury.

> Luxury, when excessive, is the source of many ills; but is in general preferable to sloth and idleness, which would commonly succeed in its place, and are more harmful both to private persons and to the public. When sloth reigns, a mean uncultivated way of life prevails amongst individuals without society, without enjoyment.[33]

Hence the spirit that manifests itself throughout social relationships but acquires different presentations without being divided supports the dynamism of society. For "labourers," this spirit manifests its strength in the disposition to produce the conditions of possibility for physical existence and luxury that is necessary for the development of fine arts and refinement. What condenses Hume's understanding of spirit of the age is the idea of permanent activity oriented to public utility. Being useful and active in the affairs of society expresses a spirited individual. It is only in and through individuals that it is possible to establish and extend the political society and the division of labor. The constitution of individuals is a condition without which "Human nature cannot, by any means, subsist."[34] Nonetheless these individuals are forms, manifestations, activities of the spirit. For the existence of a civilized society, the elision of differences within the limits of commodity production and division of labor is necessary.

---

[32] Ibid., 280.

[33] Ibid

[34] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* ed. Tom L. Beauchamp (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2004 [1772]), 99.

To this point I have shown that economy is a type of knowledge that encompasses the "whole," as Hume puts it, from the perspective of a body and spirit dispositions. The fundamental assumption of this position is that commerce and trade are manifestations of the spirit of the age and that through this spirit it is possible to fully express human nature. Spirit is not just a combination of new ideas or the manifestation of nature's designs; it is invention.[35] Within Helvétius' (1715-1771) discussion about spirit there is a chapter dedicated to what he calls "*De l' esprit du siècle"* that opens with the assertion that this kind of spirit does not contribute to the development of arts or sciences. Helvetius' differentiations in this section are entirely geared at showing the superiority of the men that perpetually and eagerly try to achieve more knowledge and experiment beyond the limits of the common experience. Nevertheless he concludes that the fundamental pretension of the "*sprit du siècle"* is being agreeable and charming in conversation. In the first chapter I showed that those characteristics are part of the economic ideals and ideas about nature of Hume but that they do not encapsulate the total significance of the spirit of the age. For Hume, spirit is a way to refer to the present, to the actual form of temporal and spatial organization. For him any criticism of the present contains within itself the danger of extremism and fanaticism. Hume's philosophy of "common life"[36] locates itself within universal history, as a culmination of its possibilities as well as of its limitations.

The universality of Hume's own historical history, its expansive nature, relies on

[35] Claude-Adrien Helvétius, *De l´Esprit*, texte revu par Jacques Moutaux (Paris: Fayard, 1988 [1758]), 443.

[36] David Livingston, *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1984), 272-342.

the spirit's movement across differences and particularities to settle and provide asymmetric happiness. By asymmetric happiness I mean that as the spirit moves, it prompts production, distribution, luxury, arts, the relaxation provided by science, and refinement, and that it also establishes positions and functions within the division of labor. This process of movement and establishment Hume understands as offering happiness and fulfillment of everyone's inherent capacities.

When Hume advises that most of the destiny of philosophy is to respect man[37] he is referring to the limits of the universal as expressed in man's spirit. Attention to the core of clarity of exposition and the avoidance of melancholy is indeed a patriotic understanding of philosophy,[38] and this comprehension implies that the activity of philosophy must communicate and prescribe the means that conform the movement of the whole, although that implies damaging or hurting some individuals or not recognizing the vast majority of the population who are obliged to obey the customs that keep them close to death.[39] It constitutes a fundamental misreading of Hume's understanding of agency, movement, and activity to interpret it as the movement from an entirely passive "subject -*subjectum*" to a notion of an active subject that, through its own activity, has the capacity to develop its own identity. Non-"radical subjectivism"[40] affects Hume's notion of the division of labor, and its social conditions of possibility, as a requisite for effective

[37] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* 6.

[38] David Livingston, *Philosophical Melancholy and Delirium: Hume's Pathology of Philosophy* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1998), 173-175.

[39] Flavio Baroncelli, *Un inquietante filosofo perbene: Saggio su David Hume* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1975), 173-200.

[40] Bernard Freydberg, *David Hume: Platonic Philosopher, Continental Ancestor* (New York: SUNY Press, 2012), 5.

humanity. The constitution of the subject is a subsidiary expression of the establishment of civilization and division of labor. Even acknowledging Hume's critique of the "sustancialidad de la identidad personal,"[41] personal identity remains the requisite of nature: that one's "subjectivity" coincide with the whole and its assignation of social, economic, and political locations.

In expressing one's own duty one is manifesting the spirit or universal history as it presents within the specificity of a historical period. Identifying oneself with the spirit of the age is the act by which an individual truly embraces his or her liberty. It is a way of saying one is acting in accordance with the whole, with spirit[42] as the source of one's necessity. Hume introduces us to an understanding of the relationship between liberty and necessity in which the individual is expected to orientate his or her movements in accordance with the dynamism of the division of labor. These are the necessary connections that "are not to be controlled or altered by any philosophical theory or speculation whatsoever."[43]

3. Economizing Women

On the basis of his comprehension and presentation of spirit, Hume offers a careful consideration of the economy of women's bodies and fidelity. Economy in this context has to be understood as administration and selective expenditure of women's "nurturing nature." Women are required to be available within the household as their contribution to political society. They are expected to present themselves as permanently

---

[41] See Agustín González Gallego, *Antropología Filosófica, del "subjectum" al sujeto* (Barcelona: Montesinos, 1988), 98, for a discussion on the substantiality of personal identity.

[42] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* 84.

[43] Ibid., 91.

aware of men's needs, understood as an expression of the needs of the larger public sphere. Without this female disposition, humanity would never reach its state of individuality. The fidelity to the "marriage bed"[44] has utility in one precise sense: it provides security to the city and enables the reproduction of the population. In caring for and nurturing those in their household, women are useful to the public. Another aspect of this female bodily economy is the expectation that women remain chaste; according to Hume, to do this, women have to control their imagination as well as surrender themselves to silence.

> Even in repeating stories, whence we can foresee no ill consequences to result, the giving of one's author is regarded as piece of indiscretion, if not of immorality. These stories, in passing from hand to hand, and receiving all the usual variations, frequently come about to persons concerned, and produce animosities and quarrels among people, whose intentions are the most innocent and inoffensive.[45]

Women's economy of themselves encompasses even the act of writing, reading, and talking because these apparently innocent acts contain the possibilities of disrupting the gentle and trustful sociability that serves as a base for the multitude of relations that happen simultaneously in society. What is expected of women is that they always be on hand to educate children and to offer their bodies to their husbands. Even "robbers and pirates,"[46] remarks Hume, maintain a basic understanding of justice among themselves; so there is all the more reason for a political society to elaborate on the most delicate aspects of human intercourse if that society wants to subsist. Tellingly, Hume describes women's behavior and position within political society in practically the same breath as

---

[44] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, 100.

[45] Ibid., 101-102.

[46] Ibid., 102.

general rules for drinking, gaming, and traveling. What, then, is an unnatural woman? It is one who becomes merely a shadow of her own natural being by being neither useful nor social. She must, moreover, ignore her passions, for her most private inclinations are in themselves public as far as they are carriers of value —enough reason for them to be subjected to public scrutiny.

Women generate interest yet always with the understanding that they maintain their subservient position to men. The spirit of the age has provided them a value that is directly equivalent to their capacity to avoid another bed. The presupposition here is "that sex's" proclivity is to indulge secret and indecent appetites. This is a basic philosophical position in that it assumes a distinction between women's and men's mental capacities or women's intense fleshiness. Women can lose their productive status if they become social infidels. Men decree that women are entirely public and that "the smallest failure is…sufficient to blast her character."[47]

Discussion about this question, by writers from Annette C. Baier[48]to Ann Levey,[49] focused on the consistency of Hume's theory of virtue as well as on Hume's theory of regulation[50] and the advantages of Hume's characterization of women for academic purposes.[51] Richard Boyd's consideration of Hume's theory of morals and manners clarifies the economic profile of chastity and body discipline. For Boyd there is an

---

[47] Ibid., 123.

[48]"Good Men's Women; Hume on Chastity and Trust," *Hume Studies* 5, no.1 (1979): 1-19.

[49] "Under Constraint: Chastity and Modesty in Hume," *Hume Studies* 23, no.2 (November, 1997): 213-226.

[50] Éléonere Le Jallé, *L´autorégulation chez Hume* (Paris: Presses Universitaries de France, 2005).

[51] Lívia Guimarães, "The Gallant and the Philosopher," *Hume Studies* 30, no.1 (April, 2004): 127-148.

intrinsic connection between civility and "the properties Hume attributes to the market;"[52] this connection effectively functions as a disruptive force that creates differences at the same time that it weakens boundaries and common assumptions. Without the production of differences, Boyd insists, there cannot be commerce in its broad sense of the creation and sociability of individuals.

Even if one acknowledges that: "Feminist and postmodernist scholars have recently been drawn to Hume because of the challenge his work presents to the fallacy of essentialism, which would suggest that there are certain fixed and immutable characteristics associated with different races, nations, or genders,"[53] this cannot be interpreted as an attempt to separate Hume's critique of the self and his economic theory. Hume's interventions about women are part of a process of naturalization that tends to promote the solidity of the household and intimate relationships, as they were understood as one of the nuclei of the spirit of the age. Hume himself clarified this point in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding:*

> The mutual dependence of men is so great in all societies that scarce any human action is entirely complete in itself, or is performed without some reference to the action of others, which are requisite to make it answer fully the intention of the agent. The poorest artificer, who labours alone, expects at least the protection of the magistrate, to ensure him the enjoyment of the fruits of his labour. He also expects that, when he carries his goods to market, and offers them at reasonable price, he shall find purchasers, and shall be able, by the money he acquires, to engage others to supply him with those commodities which are requisite for his subsistence.[54]

Hume's understanding of cooperation and social agency founded on trust establish

[52] Richard Boyd, "Manners and Morals: David Hume on Civility, Commerce, and the Social Construction of Difference," in *David Hume's Political Economy*, ed. Carl Wennerlind and Margaret Schabas (London-New York: Routledge, 2008), 77.

[53] Ibid., 80.

[54] David Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* 80.

the limits of Hume's separation from the idea of "naturalness." Without trustworthy social institutions and family relationships, the mechanism that identifies labor with enjoyment (and also security and self-confidence) can be damaged. Women therefore have to provide security for the sake of the market's and humanity's functioning. While the increase of trade and traveling were considered to be fundamental for the transformation of the public and private spheres, the "values of contemporary family morals" were assumed as a frontier of the progress of society.[55] Economic expectations grew from the achievements and sensible experiences of contiguity, friendship, and marriage to larger social and national ones. Because men dislike uncertainty in commercial sociability, they ensure certainty in something they think is controllable that is women and family.[56]

Economizing women, creating their nature, their "fears and apprehensions," is part of what was for Hume the most necessary condition to the establishment of human society: property. In Hume's case there are differences with possessive individualism's basic assumption: "that man is free and human by virtue of his sole proprietorship of his own person, and that human society is essentially a series of market relations"[57] or, more than differences, Hume's understanding of property is specified. For women, Hume's spirit of the age implies for women an equalization between restriction and agency, an operative form of inferiority.[58] Men do not allow women to administrate their own lives; instead, men considered even those parts of the market, a market under men's control. In

[55] Silvia Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment,* 150.

[56] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature,* 285.

[57] C.B Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011 [1962]), 270.

[58] C. Battersby, "An Enquiry Concerning the Humean Women," in *David Hume Critical Assessments* Vol. 6, ed. Stanley Tweyman (London-New York: Routledge, 1995), 255-264.

economizing women's bodies' appetites and imagination, men through women secure the ongoing process of the political and commercial society. For Hume, flesh has evidently sex.

4. Smith, Spirit, and Women

Smith understands that there is a propensity in human nature to exchange one thing for another. Related to the necessity of exchange is related, according to Smith, self-interest. What occurs in civilized society is fundamentally the expression of an individual's interest in his or her own subsistence. The permanent relations that occur in society are performed by different kinds of proprietors trying to acquire advantages; proprietors range from wage laborers to proprietors of land, metals, and small fortunes. Hence civilized agents or citizens express in their quotidian exchanges a twofold disposition: they have to demonstrate their capacity to develop themselves but to be able to do so without the benevolence of others. Protecting their own lives without the assistance of intermediaries is a decisive component of civilization. Second, this process of individuation does not, in any regard, imply a separation from other productive individuals. Indeed, if all of them could take advantage of their differences this would allow them to satisfy both their social necessities and their individual desires. This is the ultimate sense of Smith's proposal: individuals preserving their existence by their natural or acquired capacities without interfering but cooperating with other agents. Since everyone wants to preserve his or her own existence, it is preferable to pursue relations within the circuit of exchange and to have commodities as a universal form of communication. The sustainability of the circuits of exchange and sympathy are made possible in part by the public expression of spirit that must, according to Smith, be

imparted to the people. Society that Smith, like Hume, understood as an interconnected whole whose primary functions affect its most complex operations, needs to be incarnated in every single person.

Smith's understanding of spirit is widely presented in his *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations* explicitly in Book V, Chapter I, Part I-III, Articles II-III in which Smith proposes that "the third and last duty of the sovereign or commonwealth is that of erecting and maintaining those public institutions" [59] through and in which the great society receives advantage. For him there are institutions, procedures, activities, and amusements that due to both their complexity and beneficial nature in the work of reproducing civilized societies should be maintained by the commonwealth. By beneficial natural I mean that these institutions have as their basic orientation and aim the betterment and deepening in every individual of the characteristics that are necessary for the functioning of society.

Security and instruction intersect each other as both of these activities and their respective institutions have the responsibility to form people. The formation of the people and the security of the territory are part of the processes that disseminate and expand civilization. Instruction of the people as an economic notion used by Smith is understood as the means that allows the incorporation of "separated" individuals into society. It is necessary to differentiate, at least for now, Smith's understanding of instruction with that of formation of souls (*A Formação das Almas*[60]) which is related to Petty, with the idea

[59] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations,* 244.

[60] José Murilo de Carvalho, *A formação das almas: o imaginário da República no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1990).

of the formation of traditions[61] or as rationalization of property and inequality.[62] Smith's notion of spirit should be the object of detailed consideration for anyone is trying to understand the functioning of his economic theory. For Smith understood his own historical time with its spiritual structure as an expression of the end of the time. Nonetheless this comprehension is completely separated from Steuart's own politics of the spirit. There is continuity from Hume to Smith regarding the question of spirit that is developed as an economy of individuals and, more specifically, as the creation of women. There is a conceptual configuration that I would like to comment on as it is decisive to Smith's idea of spirit: I am referring to the concept of people as the originators of a series of differentiations that are part of the fulfillment of historical time.

Expense

The discussion titled "Of the Expence of the Institutions for the Education of Youth"[63] contains an important affirmation about the relationship between government and individuals. It clarifies the ways in which society can be preserved. Smith understands his own intervention in society in terms of the creation of the conditions of intelligibility and the conditions of necessity. First, he is interested in clarifying the basic components of education and its most salient characteristics. Then, he proceeds to locate education within what is, for him, the proper form to refer to it. Second, he establishes the minimum conditions for an education in a civilized society. Smith's first important affirmation is that without a government's intervention a society can degenerate and

[61] *The Invention of Tradition* ed. Erich Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 2012 [1983]).

[62] John Millar, *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*, ed. Aaron Garret (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2006 [1771]).

[63] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations,* 282.

corrupt itself. Civilized society is not, as can be deduced from the previous affirmation, a natural development; its maintenance requires control, protection, and, specifically, the intervention of government.

Instruction is not related to the acquisition of skills to operate or perform labor as labor consists for the most part in the repetition of a few simple operations. It follows that instruction has to operate in a different realm than that of labor. The realm within which instruction or education of the people proceeds is that of the human creature considered as a rational being. Smith recognizes that with the progress of the division of labor there is a tendency that combines specialization and repetition and leads to ignorance and stupidity: “The torpor of his mind renders him, not only incapable of relishing or bearing a part in any rational conversation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender sentiment.”[64]Smith here describes the loss of humanity of a “great body of the people” as they live by labor.

In losing humanity they become a danger to the social body, because they are incapable of being obedient and self-controlled. The people, that product of the progress of the division of labor, are not just foreign to the most delicate customs of society; they are also incapable of defending their country. Living by labor annihilates even the will to live, to preserve one's own life, and by extension any desire to participate in the improvement of the public sphere. In Smith's philosophy of history the pain, extenuation, and diminishing of the capacities of the “labouring poor” are an intrinsically necessary component of a civilized society. That was what Hume called “spirit of the age.” This is the difference between a civilized society and “barbarous societies:” civilization is, in

[64] Ibid., 303.

spatial terms, the absolute limit of human possibilities. It requires for its living to create a massive social sector which it's disposed from its most elemental features as human creature.

In "Barbarous societies," affirms Smith, every man is multiple or, more precisely, manifests himself in multiple occupations and activities. In doing that his reason and ability to interact with nature is continually increasing. Being civilized, if one is part of the common people, had a narrow significance. It meant making your body function until you reach its maximum level of productivity. However, it is the responsibility of the public, which Smith distinguishes from "people of some rank and fortune,"[65] to give attention to those who offer their bodies in the market.

Smith's solution for the risk implied in the process of the division of labor is to offer to the common people the most basic parts of education. This elemental instruction consists in the acquisition of technical abilities that can be applied in commerce and security.

> But the security of every society must always depend, more or less, upon the martial spirit of the great body of the people […] But where every citizen had the spirit of a soldier, a smaller standing army would surely be requisite. That spirit, besides, would necessarily diminish very much the dangers to liberty, whether real or imaginary.[66]

Instruction on how to defend society is the regulatory idea that orientates Smith's idea of education for the common people. By security he means two disparate and particular components: what should be secure and defended is the division of labor, the production of commodities, and the inequality between "ranks." Smith is trying to

[65] Ibid., 304.

[66] Ibid., 307.

eliminate the inherent conflict of the process that created the "labouring poor" merely as consumers and factors of production. Smith is best understood within the history of rebellions and social conflict that occurred in Scotland throughout the eighteenth century.[67] The imperative tone that characterizes Smith's urging for a model of education for the common people corresponds to different incidents in Scotland to do with the occupation and property of land. This atmosphere understandably prompted some reflection.

Hitherto what characterizes Smith's ideas of education are "structures and mechanisms of power."[68] So, "Accustoming the poor to social discipline"[69] was not restricted to schools and parishes; Smith includes its own philosophical work as an arm of those institutions or, more accurately, as its theoretical head. The real dangers to liberty are historically traceable and although not necessarily revolutionary they could be "vengeful and rebellious." Real dangers to liberty refer to effective and physical acts of rebellion from the common people. Smith reads these acts of rebellion as the manifestation of a decomposition of the imaginary ties that related the "godly commonwealth." The physical acts of rebellion have as counterpart what should be called a dangerous imagination; Smith interprets it as the fading of the most essential parts of the character of a man.

> But a coward, a man incapable either of defending or of revenging himself, evidently wants one of the most essential parts of the character of a man. He is as much mutilated and deformed in his mind as another is in his body, who is either

[67] Christopher A. Whatley, *Scottish Society, 1707-1830: Beyond Jacobitism, towards industrialisation* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), 142-183.

[68] Ibid., 143.

[69] Ibid., 149

deprived of some of its most essential members, or has the use of them.[70]

Smith here predicates the way in which the body is animated or not by the spirit. The spirit manifests itself within the established institutions of society as people's bodies are willing (*pace* Steuart) to offer themselves to its protection and subsistence; these people retain their human character. Although they do not have the same political rights[71] their roots as humans are conserved if they defend themselves and their society. Defending oneself must not be confused with the preservation of one's individual, autonomous life; rather it refers to the relations that make possible one's existence in society. For the "labouring poor" the achievement of a fully developed "individuality," as expressed in Hume's biographies and autobiography is not part of their horizon of expectations. The absence of spirit for such people mutilates them. This has different consequences. My suggestion is that the most important comes from a consideration of Smith's theory of propriety[72] and consists in the impossibility of recognition. The coward, the spiritless one, cannot be recognized, and also loses his capacity of self-recognition as a human creature. That is the reason why Smith treats cowardice as a disease and the coward as an infected organism that can spread its malice throughout the social body. The medical imaginary is not, in any regard, simply metaphorical; rather, it is attached to an anatomical and biological view of social life that is poignantly expressed in what Smith calls oeconomy of nature.[73] This economy of nature is at the same time related with what

---

[70] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations,* 308.

[71] Christopher A. Whatley, *Scottish Society, 1707-1830: Beyond Jacobitism, towards industrialisation* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), 1-15.

[72] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D.D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976 [1790]), 9-25.

[73] Ibid., 77.

is depicted in *Robinson Crusoe* as an "evil influence" that carries a person away from his or her father's house.[74]

The house of the father as an equivalent of the actual and self-generated organization of life is abandoned simply because of an external force that takes momentary possession of a person. The house is already structured, finished, arranged in such a way that the spirit can inhabit it. That is the reason why one of the characters of the novel can interpret the abandoning of the Father's house as an act with theological implications:

> However he afterwards talk'd very gravely to me, exhorted me to go back to my father, and not tempt Providence to my ruin; told me might I see a visible hand of Heaven against me, *And young man,* said he, *depend upon it, if you do not go back, where ever you go, you will meet with nothing but disasters and disappointments, till your father's words are fulfilled upon you.*[75]

Smith's sees the origins of Crusoe's traveling as having originated in his discomfort about what Smith considered "useful habits."[76] It was an adventure without the blessing of God or the Father, both of them are aspects of what Smith considers spirit. Not having spirit implies an anatomical deficiency, a moral failure, and also a rupture with the visible hand that arranges the dwelling of the spirit in and through society. With the publication of *Frankenstein,* desperate imagination, as presented by the character of Victor, is also represented solely as the origin of the monstrosities.[77] The monster is the one who cannot relate itself to society; he is the one who is not useful and has to hide in

---

[74] Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, ed. John Richetti (London: Penguin Books, 2003 [1719]), 15.

[75] Ibid., 14. Italics in the original.

[76] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations,* 296.

[77] Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, ed. J. Paul Hunter (New York-London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2012 [1818]).

the forest. Spirit is social or manifest and distributes itself through all social activities. Because of that Smith insists on the advantages of offering instruction to inferior ranks of people.

> As instructed and intelligent people besides, are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant and stupid one. They feel themselves, each individually, more respectable, and more likely to obtain the respect of their lawful superiors, and they are therefore more disposed to respect those superiors […] and they are, upon that account, less apt to be misled into any wanton or unnecessary opposition to the measures of government.[78]

To avoid rebellion, monstrosities, and disorder Smith insists on a type of instruction that creates a sentimental individuality that manifests itself in the performance of obedience and, underlying it, in the recognition of established social divisions. Smith presents instruction as a mechanism of creation of individuals and the contention of the intrinsic antagonisms originated from the division of labor. Smith interprets instructed people to be the ones that allow the fluxing of the natural course of existence, though with the possibility of benefiting from the movement of the spirit.

Though Smith offers this form of instruction for the "labouring poor," for the other ranks instead of obedience and contention he proposes amusement and diversion. The most beautiful expression of the spirit is manifested in public diversions, open and exultant celebration of the pleasures of life without excess that are performed by the gayer ranks of society.[79] Then what matters is not that to the "lowest ranks" division of labor produces "intelligence [...] for the worker, stupidity, cretinism;"[80] instead what matters is the overflowing presence of the spirit and how it reproduces itself with and

---

[78] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations,* 308.

[79] Ibid., 318.

[80] Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844", 272.

through these "homeopathic doses"[81] of instruction.

Smith's notion of spirit (martial spirit) [82] has conceptual importance. To grasp its implications and reach within Smith's theory it is necessary to locate it beyond the limits of martial impulses and dispositions mainly associated with war between nations. For Smith, spirit entails production and reproduction of ranks, economizing of energies and intimacy, and administration of stupidity.

Spirit has different levels of significance. It refers to the limits of human historical possibilities as well as to the manifestation of nature's most developed state. It is the full interpenetration of economy and nature, the closure of historical time. The spirit sanctions that the existing society as it is experienced by the different ranks of society must fundamentally not be changed. Spirit is the cohesive element that makes the general economy of society possible. In this case, the spirit is a force that takes on, or should be expressed, through different social procedures, in the life of individuals. It is the force that impels the connections and dynamism that exists within the public and private spheres, defending, securing, and healing the commonwealth.

Spirit is also what gives life in a double sense: it gives or sustains biological life as well as social and even intimate life. Without the regulatory presence of the spirit, the body/flesh loses its condition as a human creature being; that is to say, it is a condition of fellow-creature. The individual exists as it is recognized as other by the whole; thus individuality points to a productive source of roles or locations that also produces

---

[81] Karl Marx, *Capital Vol. I*,, 484.

[82] Pierre Force, *Self-Interest Before Adam Smith: A Genealogy of Economic Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 226; Robert Manzer, "The promise of Peace? Hume and Smith on the Effects of Commerce on Peace and War," *Hume Studies* 22, no. 2 (November, 1996): 269-382; Emma Rothschild, *Economic Sentiments,* 7-51.

identifications. Spirit is also a condemnation of death of residual aspects of individuality or any individualized reality that is not coincidental with the internal self-regulatory processes through which it can mobilize itself throughout the interconnected spheres that constitute civilized society. The actuality of individuality is manifested in its reproduction of the spirit of its society. Society's spirit is the other in which one is recognized as other. The "poor," as a commentator recognizes, are socially invisible until their vanishing.[83]

Hirschman suggest that, "Smith sees the loss of martial spirit and virtues as one of the *unfortunate* consequences of both the division of labor and commerce in general."[84] For him, the question of the loss of spirit does not have any connection with the explicit references established by Smith between the division of labor, human impoverishment, and instruction. Hirschman, as well as recent commentators,[85] have maintained a position that completely overlooks Smith's concentration on "economic behavior"[86] and its non-intentional derivations has as a condition of possibility for the maximum economization or instruction of the "poor". Hence, the absence of spirit that worries Smith and for which he develops his recommendations about education of the common people, is basically one: it is the largest sector of society that allows and sustains with their labor all aesthetic admiration and gentle conversations in salons; unless they are spirited common people

[83] John O' Neill, "The Political Economy of Recognition" *The Adam Smith Review*, 6 ed. Fonna Forman-Barzilai (London-New York: Routledge, 2011), 129-151.

[84] Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests,* 105-106.

[85] For instance Lisa Herzog, *Inventing the Market: Smith, Hegel, and Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Samuel Fleischacker, *On Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations: A Philosophical Companion* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004); Tony Aspromourgos, *The Science of Wealth: Adam Smith and the Framing of Political Economy* (London-New York: Routledge, 2009).

[86] Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests,* 110.

can constitute a disruptive aspect in the economic circuits.[87]

5. Women, Nature, and Economy

It is from this perspective that the question of the creation of women is discussed in what follows. A description of the state of the education of women serves as an introduction to the most specific or practical of Smith's observations:

> There are no public institutions for the education of women, and there is accordingly nothing useless, absurd, or fantastical in the common course of their education. They are taught what their parents or guardians judge it necessary or useful for them to learn; and they are taught nothing else. Every part of their education tends evidently to some useful purpose; either to improve the natural attractions of their person, or to form their mind to reserve, to modesty, to chastity, and to oeconomy; to render them both likely to become the mistresses of a family, and to behave properly when they have become such.[88]

First, what appears in this passage is an apparent distinction between the domestic and public spheres. The education of women is presented as a domestic activity whose contents are necessary for the reproduction of the domestic realm. Nonetheless, in their case, instruction entails ubiquitous activity by the physical body, the passionate body, and the hyper-economic body. The prefix 'hyper' accentuates that for Smith the body itself is a basic economic concept as far as labor, as a producer of value, is an operation of human bodies or, more precisely, the operation of the “poor labouring” bodies both in their workplaces as well as within their households. The extent to which the physicality of women is an economic factor and not just a part of his theory of virtues has to be explained within the tension between the idea of the end of time and propriety.[89]

---

[87] Ann Firth, “From Oeconomy to `the Economy': Population and Self-Interest in Discourses on Government,” *History of Human Sciences* 11, no. 3 (November, 1998): 19-35; “Moral Supervision and Autonomous Social Order: Wages and Consumption in 18th Century Economic Though,” *History of Human Sciences* 15, no. 1 (February, 2002): 39-57.

[88] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations,* 302.

[89] Chris Nyland, “Women's Progress and the 'End of History,'” in *The Status of Women in Classic*

This tension can be expressed as the way in which Smith tries to conserve, within the novelty and definitiveness of the division of labor, aspects that will permit the conservation and enjoyment of relationships not orientated by the permanent flux of commercial society. What Smith wishes to conserve is a social space in which it is possible to balance the bodies that confirm civilization. It is upon the women's divided body that Smith locates the necessary "reserve" that can make possible the reproduction of the transient world with the new and enduring one. Although this is an important entry point to Smith's notion of women, there is also another.

In trying to confine women at the frontier of progress, without allowing them to fully embrace their possibilities, Smith makes explicit a type of economy based on a twofold position: first, he wants to reduce women's possibilities to participate in the productive market at the same that he pushes the solidification of the idea according to which the domestic activities belong to the natural realm. Women's economy is indeed understood as expenditure without value.[90] Therefore, women's body work is considered not as labor but as a manifestation of the spiritual element that unites the different bodies that integrate the whole and produces the possibility of profit. The bodies of women are considered as that which brings together nature and economy not just in terms of the ideal of refinement but also in terms of the necessity of radical divisions[91] that were differently

---

Economic Thought, ed. Robert Dimand and Chris Nyland (Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Pub., 2003), 108-126.

[90] Odile Redon, "Aspects économiques de la discrimination et de la marginalisation des femmes XIIIe - XVIIIe siècles," in *La Donna Nell' Economia Secc. XIII*-XVIII, a cura di Simonetta Cavaccioni (Prato: Le Monier, 1989), 441-460.

[91] Silvia Sebastiani, "'Race', Women, and Progress in the Scottish Enlightenment," in *Women, Gender, and Enlightenment*, eds. Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 75-96.

experienced among the ranks of society.[92]

Economic delicacies

A detailed treatment of this question requires a consideration of Smith's lectures at the University of Glasgow in 1763, specifically of those lectures that he dedicated to explaining the different relations and obligations that must occur within a family.[93] The lectures about man as a member of a family belong to the series of lectures dedicated to the theme of the rights of man. Smith divided these rights into three arenas: individual, familiar, and social. The foundation of the family is the relationship between husband and wife having sex because of the specific rights and obligations attached to it. For Smith, the relationship between husband and wife is centralized in reproduction; any other link appears to be secondary to the increase of the species. Smith understood the ability to conceive children as a natural process originated in the physiognomy. Nevertheless, because it is expected that a family have several children, it is a requisite for a marriage to be as permanent as possible. Legality is indeed connected with economy as family, since family is the nucleus of economic relationships.

The subsistence of the children is bound up to the relationship established in and through marriage. What provides actuality to marriage is the existence of the children and their helpless state. In their family relationships, women are permanently working to sustain their children; they reach the limits of their own existence as they become part of their children's lives. The affections that, according to Smith, unite the family are expressed by women in the form of expenditure of their lives for the purpose of

---

[92] Shulamith Shahar, "The Regulation and Presentation of Women in Economic Life (13th Century - 18th Centuries),"in *La Donna Nell' Economia Secc. XIII-XVIII,* 501-522.

[93] Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence,* 141.

supplying more prosperity to their country.[94] Although Smith presents the relationship between parent and children as one in which the children have to yield their will to their parents' authority, what occurs in the relationship between mother and children is different. In their everyday social intercourse, both mother and children have to "bring down his passions" and restrain their will as both of them are part of a larger dynamic: the production of "laborers", as Smith explains in the *Wealth of Nation*.[95]

The intimacy and affection they share threatens to be trespassed by the imminence of starvation due to the decreasing demand of their bodies.[96] Nonetheless what is of importance for Smith are the social bonds to whose vigor and necessity any other intimate relationship must be subordinated, especially in the case of workers' families.

Smith's lecture of Tuesday, February 8, 1763 begins with the assumption that the previous lectures have introduced the "origin of the perpetuity of marriage"[97] but the explanation provided combined two forms of explanation. Initially Smith offers a natural outlook on marriage, which he includes as a conclusive example of the relationships of procreation between species. Then he introduces human procreation and family ties within an economy of passions and will that has as a purpose reproduction of sociability. Women are both artifacts that produce children and instructors that produce "labourers." This lecture offers a historical view, beginning with the institution of marriage as was practiced by the Romans and ending in his own time. Smith's consideration of what he calls "license of divorce" is unequivocally condemnatory; he considers divorce a

[94] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations,* 79.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid., 89.

[97] Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence,* 143.

corrupter of the "moralls of the women."[98]

Once again, as with Hume, the assumption is that women have to restrict themselves to deepening their natural capacities as well as offer their discretion for contemplation by others. Women have an interrupted or limited mechanism of self-regulation that makes them eager to explore and expand their passions. If rights are given to them, says Smith, they will negate with their actions and imagination the most delicate and admirable features of their nature.

Women's fluctuating passions are also the reason why Smith criticizes the practice of polygamy. According to him, women are not capable of controlling jealousy, which makes them potentially unsociable and unproductive. He continues:

> A son is considered as an inferior to his mother and under her command, which idea is altogether inconsistent with that of a husband and wife, where the husband is conceived to have the superiority. The marriage of the father with the daughter is also very shocking and contrary to nature, but not altogether so much so as that of the son with the mother. The affection of a father is without a doubt very different from that of a husband and that of a daughter from that of a wife [...] But then there is not the same contrariety betwixt their condition in other respects. The father is the superior and the daughter the inferior, and this still continues in the husband and wife; whereas the mother is superior and the son the inferior, which is altogether to the idea of husband and wife, where the husband is always considered as the superior.[99]

The concept of women expressed here should be discussed taking into account one decisive factor in Smith's argument: that women are naturally inferior in the marriage relationship. The economy of the household is conceived of as a descending hierarchy in which women have to remain subjected to their husbands. The members of the family function as indicators of social spheres and their connections. Father and sons are indicators of the public, commercial, and political space while mother and daughters are

[98] Ibid., 145.

[99] Ibid., 163-164.

indicators of the interior spaces (chiefly the household).

As long as the asymmetry is maintained nature is respected and preserved, goes Smith's argument. Since women are always inferior, regardless of the ambit in which they can be found, the criterion to differentiate between natural and non-natural is the degree of authority and autonomy that they can achieve in specific societies. Smith assumes throughout his exposition that the father, in a monogamous marriage, will guarantee the survival of his wife without giving her special prerogatives regarding her life. The father's superiority contains a decisive economic implication: he, and his sons, are the ones that could achieve, through their public relationships with other agents, the benefits of commerce. Their activities, in their most strict physical sense, are the consequence of an original accumulation: the unpaid preservation of their lives that they receive for years within the hierarchical intimacy of the family.

The Lecture of Friday, February 11th, 1763 combines a biblical and economic argument about marriage. Of importance is to make clear that for Smith the passage in Leviticus 18:18 that prohibit marriage with ones wife's sister is entirely rational and, at the most, necessitates some contextual clarifications. Religious tradition is not dispossessed of its authority as it provides regulations that can allow the functioning of the family. Second, Smith commends marriage, as it guarantees the legality of the children.

From these two indications, that indicate the link between religion and law, in the next lecture[100] he reiterates the most characteristic feature of the family's structure of authority: the father's emblematic and unquestionably predominant position. Preceding

[100] Ibid., 171-175. Monday February 14th 1763.

the introduction of this characteristic is a summary about the nature of monogamous marriage. Man perpetuates his legacy in the public sphere through his children as his own echoes. Reproduction, in this context, goes beyond the mere biological multiplication of a species. It includes also the dreams of the father, and the extension of the structure of authority, in which his own self is based, into every relationship. The father's dream is to reflect in the public arena the dynamics of his marriage bed. His dream is of a supine woman, her legs spread both to be penetrated by him and to give birth. He is the master of that territory, the one who establishes its norms of functioning, its trade, and exchange. His dream is to reproduce himself as the spirit of the world. Women do not form an integrally visible aspect of the world dreamed up by the father but they are responsible for their biological reproduction. Because of that Smith affirms years later that:

> Barrenness, so frequent among women of fashion, is very rare among those of inferior station. Luxury in the fair sex while it inflames perhaps the passion for enjoyment seems always to weaken and frequently to destroy altogether, the powers of generation. But poverty, though it does not prevent the generation, is extremely unfavourable to the rearing of children.[101]

Women are indeed producers of life; that is their fundamental contribution to a civilized society, says Smith. The capacity of "women of fashion" to produce enjoyment and consume commodities is subordinate to biological reproduction. For Smith, the production and distribution of wealth among women of "superior rank" could have the fateful consequence of allowing women to concentrate on their self-sufficiency as buyers of commodities, rather than keeping them intent solely on producing the next generation of workers or man of letters who will produce those very commodities.

Discussions about the question of women in Smith's thought have mentioned that

[101] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations,* 88.

his focus had been the issue of effeminacy,[102] that is, the loss of the "masculine" characteristics because of the outputs of commercial society. From this perspective, women and femininity are considered to be corruptions of the conditions of possibility of the reproduction of a civilized society. This argument does not negate what I have presented earlier; on the contrary, it shows an aspect implied in my explanation: that women should concentrate on their reproduction of life, and that in doing so they provide society with an example of self-control not only physically but also in the forced constriction of their imagination.

The relationship between commerce and traditional restrictions or identifications does imply a tension if one considers that the division of labor was understood as overcoming all the previous social relationships. This is not the case with Smith and Hume. Smith does not simply ignore women or refute their intellectual achievements.[103] He invents women using historical observation and idealizations not without being aware of the important and decisive stages of the division of labor: it starts in the division of the women's self as subjected to the authority of the father, husband, and spirit. Smith's interventions "about the women" are generative in the sense that his intention is not merely to propound rhetoric of discrimination. Smith's notion is that women belong to a position that is trying to overcome relativism[104] through the intensification of "commercial intercourse" and the reproduction of stability, security, and familiarity of the

[102] Stewart Justman, *The Autonomous Male of Adam Smith* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).

[103] Edith Kuiper, "Adam Smith and his Feminist Contemporaries" *New Voices on Adam Smith* ed. Leonidas Montes and Eric Schliesser (New York: Routledge, 2006), 40-60.

[104] Fonna Forman-Barzilai, "Smith's Anti-Cosmopolitanism" *The Adam Smith Review* Vol. 5, ed. Vivienne Brown and Samuel Fleischacker (London-New York: Routledge, 2010), 145-160.

household's economy.[105]

Smith's understanding of women is an exercise in the extension of the spirit and also a way in which to open oneself to the presence of it. Smithian "knowledge of capital" does know the destructive capacities of the division of labor. There is no "fantasy" in this regard.[106] His thinking tries to close the possibilities opened by relationships of inequality. In his notion of women he concentrates on an ideal: the absence of struggle or radical changes so the spirit can be authentically universal. Women's "independence" is achieved as they express their nature, a nature actually determined by men though under the guise of spirit. Because of this, the question of whether women are, for Smith, invisible or economic agents[107] is a reductive understanding of Smith's theory.[108] Some studies[109] have presented Smith's philosophy as a task to "free us from repressive institutions"[110] or as a critique of "capitalism."[111] These studies fail to understand that Smith's thinking combines both movement and

---

[105] See for a similar explanation Christian Marouby, *L' Économie de la nature,* 91. See also Nancy Folbre, *Greed, Lust & Gender: A History of Economic Ideas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 58-62.

[106] Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic,* 239.

[107] Robert W. Dimand, Evelyn L. Forget and Chris Nyland, "Retrospectives Gender in Classical Economics," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18, no. 1 (Winter, 2004): 229–240.

[108] An important treatment of this reduction that shares similarities with my own discussion is Kathryn Sutherland, "Adam Smith's Master Narrative: Women and the *Wealth of Nations*," in *Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations: New Interdisciplinary Essays*, eds. Stephen Copley and Kathryn Sutherland (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), 97-121.

[109] See as an example Charles L. Griswold, Jr, *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Also David Casassas, *La ciudad en llamas. La vigencia del republicanismo comercial de Adam Smith* (Barcelona: Montesinos, 2010).

[110] Charles L. Griswold, Jr, *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment*, 10.

[111] Ryan Patrick Harley, *Adam Smith and the Character of Virtue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 209.

repose or, to put it differently, his normative philosophy prescribes the conservation of those elements that, in the case of women, were widely discussed as oppressive and derogatory.[112] Smith's defense of the "standpoint of ordinary life" implies, as I have demonstrated, the embracing of traditional facts as teleologically oriented to satisfy the requirements of civilization. Smith's "critique of reason's power"[113] reintegrates masculine domination as nature. His alleged critique of reason belongs to the process through which he establishes as a necessary cause specific forms of domination that in his case are condensed in the dominion of the father-master and the automatism of the division of labor. The rejection of philosophical knowledge[114] as a guide for human actions and as a parameter to judge virtue makes Smith a describer of the "human cost of the division of labor." He presents labor as normative[115] or necessary due to his providentialism as it is expressed in his understanding of spirit.[116]

6. Spirit, Spiritual Police, and Economy of the Flesh

There are internal commonalities between theological arguments and Hume's and Smith's understanding of spirit. These commonalities are condensed and expressed not as

---

[112] See Priscilla Wakefield, *Reflections on the present condition of the female sex; with suggestions for its improvement* (London: printed for J. Johnson; and Darton and Harvey, 1798). See also the compilation *Women in the Eighteenth-Century: Constructions of Femininity* ed. Vivien Jones (London-New York: Routledge, 1990).

[113] Knud Haakonssen, *The Science of a Legislator: The Natural Jurisprudence of David Hume & Adam Smith* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989 [1981]), 78.

[114] Charles L. Griswold, Jr, *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment,* 14.

[115] To talk about a divorce between science (economy) and ethics is a fundamental misconception of Smith's project. For an example of such a misreading see François Dernange, *Le Dieu du Marché: Éthique, économie et théologie dans l'œuvre d'Adam Smith* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 2003).

[116] For a different reading with similar conclusions see Paul Oslingtone, "Divine Action, Providence, and Adam Smith's Invisible Hand," in *Adam Smith as Theologian*, ed. Paul Oslingtone (New York: Routledge, 2011), 61-75.

forms of explicit legitimation or vulgar instrumentation of theological notions or imaginary. They are both diachronic and synchronic and thus are part of a trajectory that manifests itself specifically and with variations according to contextual particularities. In Hume's and Smith's case such a perspective supposes that the division of labor, economic theory, and theory of morals do not eradicate the theological. Moreover, within their project theological motifs and modes of argumentation are developed and metabolized. As with Knox and Calvin, Hume and Smith understand that the affirmation and dissemination of the spirit is of fundamental importance for the preservation and reinforcement of their world. The development and stabilization of the spirit has a correlation with the concept of flesh. Something has to be done with flesh.[117] It becomes necessary to elaborate modes of approach and delimitation of flesh. Most importantly, there is the attempt to rescue or, more precisely, to incarnate flesh within a body or bodies.

The Spiritual Empire or the predominance of the spirit and nature implies the distribution of identifications and roles. At the bottom, in the center, throughout of these identifications and roles flesh appears. That is to say life that expands its boundaries and detaches itself from its multiple empirical manifestations. Flesh is the condition of possibility of life. Also, it overflows its bodies, its incarnations. Being fleshy implies a distance with the attributes that make possible the circuit of economy and civil government. Thus, flesh is intense life that also moves beyond life.[118] It procures to move beyond the spirit's condensations. Every life is carnal; because of that every life is also a

[117] Eric L. Santner, *The Royal Remains: The People's Two Bodies and the Endgames of Sovereignty* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2011), 61-62.

[118] Ibid., 7.

struggle with identifications, agency, and personality. Flesh delays or eludes its apparition as it is looking forward for its transformation. Flesh is hurts the multiple closed bodies that pretend to capture it. Without flesh what remains is pure physicality unable to perform economic activities and to fulfil her nature. Thereof, flesh enables modes of individuation and spirit's movement as well as interrupts them in order to preserve itself. The preservation of flesh, that is always political, requires a disputation: every empirical representation must be contested, revised, and ultimately ignored. Flesh longs for recognition beyond incarnation, without stability, and in the midst of the loss of personality or, to be more precise, in the midst of the suspension of an understanding of personality that requires the punishment of dissonance and silence. Flesh is wounded by the multiple bodies that attach to it. In this regard flesh is always socially disputed and constitutes the political.[119] Its struggle is not against the body but against body's pretentions to erect itself as Empire. That is to say as closed totality that produces false differences and dangerous liaisons.

What we encounter with Hume and Smith is tension rather than rejection of flesh. In the next two chapters, I present a detailed development of the thesis according to which Hume's and Smith's philosophy has to be presented as an economy of the flesh.

[119] Ibid., xiv.

CHAPTER 3

Hume and the Almighty Creator: Nature and Economic Theory

"To live carnally is to be wholly given over to the sway of the flesh and to be averse to the Spirit; to live spiritually is to obey the Spirit, never to abandon faith."
Zwingli, *De Vera et Falsa Religione*

Introduction

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part presents a methodological discussion in which I propose a way to read Hume. I show how there is a fundamental tension within Hume's philosophy, particularly in his considerations of selfhood and the conditions that make sociability possible. Hume's philosophical tension introduces the conditions that made economy of the flesh necessary. Those conditions are eminently practical and oriented to the protection and security of common life. My reading emphasizes that, although it is important to understand political economy, it is insufficient to understand Hume as proposing an ethical or an economic theory with hidden metaphysical components. Instead, Hume's philosophy is constitutively theological. Following this thesis, the second part of the chapter reviews and discusses the importance of Christian practices in Hume's thinking. I argue that Hume did not try to depart from Christianity in order to construct his philosophy. Moreover, his philosophical project remained within the ambit opened by certain Christian motifs and questions. In order to present Hume's economy of the flesh, in the third part of the chapter I offer a reading of the question of suicide. Hume's treatment of the question of suicide reinforces and develops his theological discussions as well as connects them to his economic thinking.

Furthermore, his entire philosophical enterprise is possible because of the internal

connections that he makes between subjects such as suicide and true philosophy. This is so because Hume's science of man has the pretention of incorporating every aspect of human existence within a matrix, including commercial society and its division of labor and ranks. Hume believes and longs for a type of universality that does not negate the participation of an almighty creator. It is from this perspective that Hume's humor must be received: "I believe I shall write no more History, but proceed directly to attack the Lord's Prayer & the ten Commandments & the single Cat; and to recommend Suicide & Adultery: And so persist, till it shall please the Lord to take me to himself."[1] Hence, one must remember that for Hume the rejection of theism is scientifically unviable[2] and politically dangerous.[3]

Beyond Ethics and Hiddenness

I have demonstrated that Hume's and Smith's philosophy is an attempt to resolve the question of through which mechanisms it was possible to sustain and expand the "spirit of the age" as expressed in what I have called the reversion of the pilgrim's progress. By this I mean the understanding of history as an elliptic movement that expresses the culmination of its possibilities in, for instance, the representations of David Hume's life and the social conditions that make it possible. The culmination of history's possibilities also included the acceptance of the necessary existence of damaged lives and a slave morality expressed in the consumption of life.[4] It is important to insist that

[1] *New Letters of David Hume,* 43. Letter 25.

[2] David Livingstone, *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life,* 296-297.

[3] Jennifer Herdt, *Religion and Faction in Hume's Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 165.

[4] For this notion see Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, trans. Charles Levin (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1981), 61-62.

according to both authors there is no contradiction between wealth and wasted lives. Moreover, the movement of the spirit necessarily implies the production of life and the distribution of death. To let people die is indeed an attribute of the spirit, especially when the spirit embodies itself in commercial and civilized societies. From Steuart to Hume we observe a constant reflection regarding the question of life and death. For these authors the achievement of happiness, honor, and humanity is possible only through the act of offering one's life to the universal principle that makes life possible. This idea is related to something proposed by Jean Baudrillard (1929-2007). According to him, one of the particularities that appeared in eighteenth-century Europe was that "When exploited, labor power is good: it is within nature and is normal. But, once liberated, it becomes menacing in the form of the proletariat."[5] Hume thought it better for the wretched to offer their lives to the greater whole instead of trying to contradict nature. For the "poor" the culmination of their humanity is always closely related to their extinction. Although for Hume the word 'I' cannot be an ontological word,[6] he considers suicide to offer the possibility of an ontological achievement.

In Hume's and Smith's philosophy the incarnated spirit as well as its condensed expressions are rendered as a theory of nature and economy. This theory continues with theological renderings of the relationship between spirit, government, and identity performances. Furthermore, Hume and Smith continue the theological tradition of the Spiritual police and Spiritual Empire by modifying it or, to be more precise, emphasizing aspects of it as I have explained above.

---

[5] Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production,* trans. Mark Poster (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1975), 57.

[6] Justus Hartnack, *From Radical Empiricism to Absolute Idealism* (Lewiston/Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 19-20.

Rationality, Market, and Ethics

From this perspective it is important to reference and discuss the following remark:

> Market behavior is influenced by rational, purposeful pursuit of interests. The partner to a transaction is expected to behave according to rational legality and, quite particularly, to respect the formal inviolability of a promise once given. These are the qualities which form the content of the market ethics. In this latter respect the market inculcates, indeed, particularly rigorous conceptions.[7]

The rational behavior explained by Weber (1864-1920) has, as its condition of possibility, the delimitation of the agent's competencies. Or, what is the same, the regulation of oneself or more precisely the production of a person (*pace* Butler). I do not negate the importance of instrumental rationality and ethics in order to understand political economy. However, as I shall demonstrate, both Hume and Smith openly reject rationality as opposed to the dynamism of economy. Before thinking about reason and morals, Hume thinks about the person and common life. By this I mean that he was completely aware that the priority of an economic system was to create its producers and reproducers. Hume understood that in order to create productivity the "promise" could not be a legal contract. The contract must be an expression of a previous and deeper commitment. What has to be promised is not the obedience to particular contracts; "the promise once given" was for Hume the promise of fulfilling one's own nature through the condensations of the spirit. The fulfilling of one's nature implies, for Hume, a radical economy of flesh.

Hence, more than an ethical proposal, what Hume introduces is a theory of productivity from which an ethic could be derived but it is not its matrix. In Hume's

[7] Max Weber, *Economy and Society* Vol. I, ed. Guenther Roth and Clauss Wittich (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1978), 636.

theory, production is not circumscribed or limited to the factory but is understood as interconnected processes in which individuals are creating themselves in both continuity and discontinuity with the past. This theory of productivity assumes the interconnection of nature, economy, and spirit.

Marx understands the labor process as purposeful activity aimed at the production of use-values. It is an appropriation of what exists in nature for the requirements of man. The assumption behind this explanation is not a radical separation between nature and soul[8] but the necessity of a permanent metabolic interaction between man and nature. For Marx this metabolic interaction is a condition of human existence, and it is therefore independent of every form of that existence, or rather it is common to all forms of society in which human beings live.

Hume's philosophical process was also an attempt to produce use-values. This supposes a double recognition. As a factor in the production and reproduction of its sociability each individual had to "awaken". If for Marx the labor process activates the possibilities inherent in nature or human productions, for Hume processes of production are the form in which it is possible to transform "the merely possible" into real and effective constituents of the social and political body. In order to produce reality, to transform anatomy into life, one has to be "infused with vital energy". Hume's vital energy is not a content or norm but, as I discussed before, a series of condensations of the spirit.

Moreover, Hume proposes a theory of the incarnated spirit or, to be more precise, the processes of how the spirit takes place in the flesh. Here, a use-value is something or someone that is spirited and serves the purpose of securing and extending existent

[8] Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production,* 63.

sociability. In the case of Hume, the process of production of use-values includes levels of society not explicitly mentioned by Marx. While Marx imagines that the production of use-values consists in the "appropriation of nature" in order to satisfy human needs, for Hume it is nature that which appropriates individuals in order to serve the "requirements" and health of a commonwealth. However and above all it is the spirit that, as an uncontrollable force, fulfills its own destiny in appropriating nature and human beings.

The spirit consumes flesh, flesh understood not just as labor-power or nude physicality but as surplus life and, as I explain below, as reason. Hume presents the division of labor, the society of ranks, and civilization not as a result of a single and concentrated immanent principle of organization but fundamentally as the result of the intersected movements of spirit and nature. Each social individual has to embrace the steps of civilization: progress through exploitation; development of science and technology through and based upon wage-labor; the creation of wealth and well-being out of and by means of destitution and colonization; the development of culture, on the basis of mass ignorance and obscurantism or limited and merely instrumental instruction. But she has to embrace those steps not as the result of relations of power and modes of social organization but as necessary aspects of civilization.

Hume's economic theory and theory of nature is the mechanism that interferes in order to allow nature, through the spirit's impulse, to be complete in each individual. To do so they have to ensure a form by which "the material" (bodies) are not wasted. Therefore, what is targeted as material to be appropriated is not just labor-power but, as Marx himself explains, life. Nevertheless, this life is not appropriated just as it becomes a thing purchased in the market. For Hume, life is appropriated in the process of production

of economic agents, in the creation of a framework of recognition in which everyone has to recognize himself as the owner of private property. The relationship between economy and self or personification is better understood by investigating how, for instance, the rationalization of the division of labor and the naturalization of customs are constituted by theological tropes.

The economic person, as a creature of social convention[9], precedes and sustains the formal reason expressed in rational legality. The productivity of people is guaranteed by the creation of a framework or mirror[10] that enables individuals to assume identity and agency, and to operate within the relations of production and consumption.[11] In the case of Hume's science of man what is proposed is not a market ethic but a more complete and complex invention,[12]one that formulates a definitive judgment about the truth of the world. A central component of this judgment is a lengthy reflection about the self, personal identity, and productivity. For this reason it is not sufficient simply to argue about Hume's conservatism or ethics. Nonetheless, Weber's idea of rationalization or Marx's theory of commodity's fetishism is important for the present discussion as it points to Hume's theory of selfhood and identity. In other words, it is indeed justifiable to determine what kind of "subject" is capable to perform its natural/historical duties.

This discussion has received a detailed treatment by Donald W. Livingstone (1938). His argument is that Hume's entire philosophical project consists in a

---

[9] Nicholas Phillipson, "Propriety, property and prudence," in *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain* ed. Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 302-320.

[10] André Gorz, *L´Immateriel* (Paris: Editions Galileé, 2003).

[11] Didier Deleule, *Hume et la naissance du libéralisme économique* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1979), 24-25.

[12] I am using the word invention as a concept in the sense coined by Edmundo O'Gorman, *La invención de América* (México: FCE, 2006 [1958]), 16-17.

rationalization of the customs of common life.[13] In other words the civilized "subject" is the one that tries to embrace and secure the world as it is given to him. Although I agree with this argument and have developed it in the previous chapter, I also find it important to present Hume's philosophical anguish and longing for a different "subject".

1. The Flesh's Captivity: Zwingli's Procedure

Hume's philosophy of self has an antecedent in Huldrych Zwingli's (1484-1531) theology of flesh. Both authors discuss the limits of the self. In each case their conclusion is that the affirmation of the self conduces only to death and monstrosity. Zwingli specifically links self and flesh:

> Ioan 3:6. Christus sic inquit: Quod natum ex carne, caro est. Sequitur ergo quod qui ex mortuo nati sunt, ipsi quoque mortui sunt. Nam Adam ut primum ad se conversus fuit, totus in carnem degenerative. Ut igitur caro, sic et mortuus fuit: hace enim arquipollent, carnem esse, mortuum esse, quatens hic de morte loquimur, ut in superioribus patuit. Nunc autem recipe nulla ratione potest, ut qui mortus est vivum generare quaet: nequit ergo mortuus Adam generare, qui a morte sit alienus. Nunquam enim immutari potest: quod natum est ex carne, caro est.[14]

The basic assumption of Zwingli's theology is that human beings have the tendency to concentrate on themselves and forget about the Lord and Master. He presents this self -love or self-interest as the beginning of a process through which one becomes slave (*servus*) to himself. For Zwingli, God is the principle that articulates and insists on other. The attempt to develop individuality, to concentrate on oneself, is a sin peculiar to the "corrupted and fallen man." This sin is fundamentally the sin of the flesh. Zwingli equals flesh with self and death. Turning one's attention to oneself implies death, distance from the matrix of the world, and radical solitude. A completely fleshy being (*totus in*

[13] Donald W. Livingstone, *Philosophical Melancholy and Delirium,* 21.

[14] Huldrich Zuinglii, *Opera Completa Editio Prima Volumen Tertium*, curatibus Melchiore et Io. Schulthessio, 469.

carnem) is the same as saying that one has decided to look for oneself outside the limits of the Lord's control. Flesh is dead in a particular sense: it is intrinsically damaged and defective. One cannot belong to the realm or kingdom of God if one is a slave to the flesh. The alternative Zwingli offers is to be a slave to God the Master. For him, being born implies being defective. This defectiveness cannot be repaired except through bondage to God. Hume would say that one has to be bound to the metaphysical principle of common life in which God incarnates itself. From Zwingli to Hume the alternative does not change. One can only be a slave or, as Hume says, a loser.

2. Flesh and Promise: Hume's Theater

The discussion about the "subject" within Hume's philosophy is understood here as part of the question about the characteristics of an economic agent or person. The following lines are of fundamental importance to access what I have called Hume's theater:

> There are some philosophers, who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF; that we feel its existence and its continuance in existence; and are certain, beyond the evidence of demonstration, both of its perfect identity and simplicity.[15]

Although an important aspect in Hume scholarship,[16] it is necessary to remark that Hume combines a theory of an evanescent and fictitious self with another of a firm

[15] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature,* 164.

[16] For example, Guilles Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité: Essai sur la nature humaine selon Hume* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2007 [1953]); J. García Roca, *Positivismo e ilustración: la filosofía de David Hume* (Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 1981); Heiko Schulz, "Das Ende des common sense : Kritische Überlegungen zur Wunderkritik David Humes," *Zeitschrift für neuere Theologiegeschichte* 3, no.1 (1996): 1-38; João Paulo Monteiro, *Teoria, Retórica, Ideologia* (São Paulo: Ática, 1975); *Novos Estudos Humeanos* (São Paulo: Discurso, 2003); Annemarie Butler, "Hume on Believing the Vulgar Fiction of Continued Existence," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 27, no.3 (2010): 237-254; Tony Pitson, "The Evident Connexion: Hume on Personal Identity," *Philosophy* 87, no. 1 (2012): 127-132. See also Don Garret and the bibliography contained in his, "Reasons to act and believe: Naturalism and Rational justification in Hume's philosophical project" *Hume Readings*, 21-40.

and stable self. On the one hand he sustains that the self is a presentation necessary to regulate and embrace the successive temporal and spatial changes. Self is what retains and gives a sense of continuity and permanence to us. It is a practical justification to continue the operations of an agent. When Hume reflects on the "destructivity of the self" or judges that "all the disputes concerning the identity of connected objects are merely verbal,"[17] he is questioning the social duties that make the existence of society possible. In his first *Treatise*, Hume does not abandon a sense of uncertainty and paradox regarding the relation of ideas that enable the formation of an identity. Nonetheless, the wounds of identity are sutured by his fear of flesh:

> I am first affrighted and confounded with that forlorn solitude, in which I am plac'd in my philosophy, and fancy myself some strange uncouth monster, who not being able to mingle and unite in society, has been expell'd all human commerce, and left utterly abandon'd and disconsolate. Fain wou'd I run into the crowd of shelter and warmth; but cannot prevail with myself to mix with such deformity. I call upon others to join me, in order to make me company apart; but no one will hearken to me. Everyone keeps at distance, and dreads that storm, which beats upon me from every side […] When I turn my eye inward, I find nothing but doubt and ignorance.[18]

Hume's solitude is the result of his inquiry about identity. His philosophy appears here as a way of exiling himself from the constraints of being an agent or person. His philosophical reflection suspends the validity of duties and engagements. Thus it opens a new landscape of possibilities and difficulties. Hume's philosophy collides with the conditions that are necessary to be social. As he interrogates himself, Hume cannot but discover a theatrical display in which he is a character that can observe himself as he performs. Being one or singular is being multiple or other with respect to particular presentations of oneself. Every performance of oneself opens space for other types of

[17] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 171.

[18] Ibid., 172.

performance that occur simultaneously. The simultaneity of difference and unity implies the irruption of modes of individuation that are communicating with each other as they disappear. Individuation and singularity are understood as movement that detaches itself from the security provided by imagining oneself as being a unity without fissures. For Hume, human beings are a sensitive niche of mobile gardens. Humans have the capacity to be affected by all worldly existence, and, by being affected, their own self becomes open, unstable, and fluid.

For Hume, receptivity and affections that make the self an ongoing process are what constitutes existence. The self, at most, is the precise capacity of being affected and felt: "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception […] When my perceptions are remov'd for any time, as by sound sleep; so long am I insensible of myself, and may truly be said not to exist."[19] At the end of Hume's questioning of his self-representations there remains only a series of body experiences that cannot be fully grasped. The simplicity and unity are categories created for practical purposes. The labyrinth of his interrogations is a theater in which there are only silhouettes and shadows:

> The mind is a kind of theater, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations. There is *properly* no simplicity in it at one time, nor *identity* in different; whatever natural propension we may have to imagine that simplicity and identity.[20]

Every self is a duplication of multiple ruptures and failed attempts at permanency. Therefore there is no original self that carries with it the authentic or

[19] Ibid., 165.

[20] Ibid.

substantial truth about oneself. All that exists are duplications, performances, openings, sequences of a self that vanishes as it appears. Hume understands himself like a hologram that expands and diminishes as it floats throughout the margins of society. Thus the monster is that insatiable plurality that reveals itself as multiple ones that cannot be completely reached. Herein is the contradiction of Hume's philosophy and "all human commerce": the rupture with the conception of a united self blocks or obstructs the fulfillment of one's duties and engagements. The monstrous is expressed precisely in a use of reason that creates space for the surplus life that dreams of other forms of existence. These forms include solitude and repose. Hence, the suspension of productivity and commercial exchange is announced in Hume's storms.

Against his flesh, Hume opposes habit and nature. Flesh is understood as a kind of sickness, a chimera that has to be controlled by believing "in the general maxims of the world."[21] Hume understands that flesh's impulses to exceed the limits of the social are related to satisfaction and pleasure. This is a type of pleasure that comes from the rupture with the sphere of common life or, to speak with Zwingli, the kingdom of the Lord. Pleasure is opposed to or in conflict with the spirit's institutions and modes of intelligibility. Hume's despair with the empiric phenomena is the center of what he calls his speculations. At the core of his philosophical anguish he foresees the interstices of the entire mechanisms that produce and reproduce social relationships.[22] His philosophical speculations express the discomfort of the flesh not towards a particular political, economic, or social form of organization but to an epistemic structure. By epistemic structure is meant the metaphysical assumption of an identity always equal to itself. This

[21] Ibid., 175.

[22] Fred Wilson, *Body, Mind and Self in Hume's Critical Realism,* 17-26.

metaphysical assumption grounds and reinforces identifications, transforms social relationships into identities, and sanctions as monstrous any attempt to move beyond the boundaries of one's natural location within the social divisions of labor, sex, and culture. Hume thinks that an absolute that splits itself in pieces does not have the pretention to become a fully integrated body. Nonetheless, he prefers to transform himself into a loser philosopher: "I *feel* I shou'd be a loser in point of pleasure; and this is the origin of my philosophy."[23] Nevertheless, the origin of his philosophy is not the "loss of pleasure" in order to satisfy the Lord. The authentic origin of Hume's philosophy is the conflict between flesh and spirit. The origins of his philosophical reflection enable us to grasp the beginning of the economy of the flesh.

It is in his so-called political essays that Hume fully presents his philosophy of the loss and death of the holographic self. In his essay "Of the Original Contract,"[24] Hume distinguishes between two kinds of moral duties. The first kind of moral duties are those "to which men are impelled by a natural instinct or immediate propensity;"[25] these can be considered to be pre-rational. These duties are related, according to Hume, to the survival of a person, and include things like love, respect, and pity toward the unfortunate. Hume links the second kind of duties with a sense of obligation. At the core of his distinction among duties is the idea of a permanent self, a self capable of fulfilling its bondage. As a corollary to this idea Hume states: "It must here be asserted, the commerce and intercourse of mankind, which are of such mighty advantage, can have no security where

[23] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 176. Emphasis in the original.

[24] David Hume, *Essays*, 465-487.

[25] Ibid., 479.

men pay no regard to their engagements."[26] Following Hume's interest in securing the "intercourse of mankind" I argue that his philosophy should be understood as eucratic. That is to say that Hume confronts his own philosophical intuitions in order to conserve the health and wealth of the social and political body or, in theological terms, the master's kingdom.

3. Eucratic Philosophy: Preventing Flesh

It is important to remark that I am not proposing here a sort of overcoming of the "religious veil" in order to achieve a fully rational comprehension of human relations. What I propose is to approach Hume's understanding of nature and economy as theologically dense. The thesis according to which Christianity is a "religious cult of man in the abstract"[27] is still insufficient to adequately comprehend the theological composition of Hume's philosophy.

> It is nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things. In order, therefore, to find an analogy we must take flight into the misty realm of religion. There the products of the human brain appear as autonomous figures endowed with a life of their own, which enter into relations both with each other and with the human race.[28]

As I have shown, it is not simply and exclusively within "the misty realm of religion" that political and cultural practices appear as independent of the conditions of production and dissemination. The composition of Hume's philosophy also presents this peculiarity: economic theory, which for Hume is a branch of philosophy and not a particular science, has as its background in what Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) called a

---

[26] Ibid., 481.

[27] Karl Marx, *Capital I*, 172.

[28] Ibid., 165.

"rational civil theology of divine providence."[29] For Hume the only solution to his doubts about the existence of a closed and immutable self is to link the rationality of social relationships with the Almighty creator.

The meaning of this is that Hume accepts that there are certain aspects of human existence that are "*hidden* from men—the future—or what is hidden in them—their consciousness."[30] The invisible is the internal tie that makes the totality of human commerce rational and intelligible. Even if the human mind cannot reach and understand the invisible, philosophy has to make an attempt to demonstrate how providence "has ordered this great city of the human race."[31] This organization does not depend entirely on human volition. The result of this perspective is a theory of unintentionality and negative providence that enables the progression of Hume's science of man.[32] Hence, for Hume the creator guarantees the unity of the world without negating the possibility of philosophical inquiries.

Hume's economic theory and theory of nature is a spiral that connects questions as dissimilar as suicide, money, and a theology of providence. His theory of nature and economic theory appears to derive from a theological discussion in which it was necessary to establish the legitimacy of his philosophy. Hume does not reject theology, neither does he propose a superficial form of atheism but a detailed theological program in which God is replaced by immanent principles of organization that, nonetheless, are

---

[29] *The Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984 [1744]), 102 [342].

[30] Ibid., 102.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Didier Deleule, *Hume et la naissance du libéralisme économique* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1979), 114-121.

God's own creation. Without this theology other aspects of his thinking lack their internal cohesion.

As with Knox and Calvin, with Hume we have to understand that his philosophy is not only a device of punishment or correction. Instead, he offers his interventions to construct a practical way in which to shape true human beings who are not bonded to flesh. His fundamental preoccupation is with how to conserve life and its conditions of possibility: commerce, free trade and regulation of the different ranks of society.[33] In order to do so he purposely focused on forming a eucratic philosophy that is a coherent development of Hume's biological and anatomical imaginary. Guillaume de Saint-Thierry (1075-1148), following a long tradition, clarifies that:

> Aussi, dans le corps animal, sa complexion propre consiste dans l'association première et naturelle des éléments en lui. Si elle est équilibrée et bien composée; c'est-à-dire que les contraires ne se combattent ni ne se détruisent, que le chaud soit tempéré par le froid, le froid par le chaud, et ainsi de suite, alors il y a une bonne complexion, et, la nature étant bien accordée, il y a "eucrasie" (bon mélange), c´est-à-dire un juste tempérament des quatre qualités. Tant que les dispositions naturelles restent dans état bien tempéré, le corps humain ne peut être attaqué par la maladie, puisqu'il est, comme on l'a dit, « eucratique », c'est-à-dire doté d'une bonne complexion. Que ce tempérament soit troublé, nécessairement le corps en est altéré.[34]

For Hume, the individual body does occupy the center of his philosophy because it is an integral and organic part of a larger and more complex body. The individual body itself is considered to be a natural element within the body politic. What is postulated in this position is that human art[35], a concept that surpasses a merely mimetic capacity,

---

[33] Ibid., 369. See also John Robertson, "The Enlightenment above National Context: Political Economy in Eighteenth-Century Scotland and Naples," *The Historical Journal* 40, no. 3 (September 1997): 667-697.

[34] Guillaume de Saint-Tierry, *De Natura Corporis et Animae*, texte et tradution M. Lemoine (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1988 [c.1145]), 73-74.

[35] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett, 1994 [1651]), 3.

enlists humankind to produce itself and also produce artificial life. The body, understood as a machine, can be duplicated. Life itself, and not just bodies, can be extended through art. Thus art is presented as both a political and theological operation that consists in the repetition of life with the purpose of creating and maintaining a commonwealth. Having as a background the question of the formation of the State, the idea of art as a practice capable of creating life and bodies extends itself as a theological and medical concept. At this level Hume's eucratic philosophy forms an idea of nature and proposes ways for the association of the multiplicity of bodies that make up the social and political body. The natural man, including his body, perseveres in his existence in and through the artificiality of its creations. All those creations do not contradict the design of the Almighty creator.

The reproduction of himself, according to this perspective, serves one specific goal: protection and preservation of the natural man. Hence, art is a concept that describes the act of creating and protecting life from itself, from the “kingdom of darkness” expressed fundamentally in flesh’s inclination to separate from and expand upon what is considered possible. The individual bodies have to undergo a series of transformations, and surrender themselves to an artificial man in order to save their lives. The artificial body, the political body, is the protector of the vulnerable natural bodies. The multiplicity of body amounts to the dream of an all together secured political organization. In this understanding, individual bodies are resolutely subsumed within the artificiality of its own creations (common life). This subsuming constitutes the politicization of animal oeconomy to the point in which anatomy itself becomes an area of political intervention. It is what we mean by the “corporeality” of politics, in the sense

that the political (its institutions and forms of social reproduction) is understood as a body that has to be protected, and the political makes necessary an economization of what exceeds or is disposed by the body. This last point introduces the problem of sickness (*maladie*). Sickness is transformed within Hume's philosophy into a reflection of three orders: a) the order of the individual body and its relationship with itself; b) the order of the individual body and its relationship with the creator; and c) the order of the individual body and its relationship with the social and political body.

Politics is, in this context, a "meta-normative" process whose task is to guarantee the equilibrium between regulation and enjoyment, free trade and politeness, industry and hedonism. Nevertheless, its most important function is to provide the conditions that allow the manifestation of the inherent possibilities of commerce. I propose that the eucratic philosophy of Hume works to avoid social sickness and to secure the social and political body. Hume's eucratic philosophy is not presented as a practice meant to overcome the Christian tradition. Indeed, Hume's philosophical project of protecting society is replete with Christian theological motifs. From this perspective I propose to read Hume's treatment of religion as a part of his philosophy of loss. Rather than attempting "atheism under cover,"[36] his intention is to obliterate the carnal renderings of religious practices in order to promote the commonwealth's security and health.[37] Hume's discussion of religion is political and social at its core. Since he is not trying to go beyond the given situation of his world his project is geared to avoiding and correcting what he

[36] Paul Russell, *The Riddle of Hume's* Treatise: *Skepticism, Naturalism, and Irreligion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 70-80.

[37] Jennifer Herdt, *Religion and Faction in Hume's Moral Philosophy.*

perceives to be dangerous errors of religious practices.[38]

4. Hume and Religion

Hume distinguishes between the foundation and the origins of religion. He claims that religion has an entirely rational foundation: "The whole frame of nature bespeaks an intelligent author; and no rational enquirer can, after serious reflection, suspend his belief a moment with regard to primary principles of genuine theism and religion."[39] The question affirmed by Hume needs to be considered in detail. First, it was not Hume's purpose to do a critique of religion based upon religion's lack of rationality. On the contrary, for Hume reason and religion do not contradict each other regarding the existence of an intelligent author or Vico's rational providence. Thus, it is completely rational to assign to nature a rationally accessible design. Hume considers the belief in this intelligent author and its design to be the unequivocal marks of genuine theism and religion. To the question regarding the rationality of religion[40] it is necessary to say that Hume effectively sustains a comprehension of rationality whose ground is immanent.

He does not pretend to derive any plausible conclusion about the nature of God or, in theological terms, its *opera ad intra.* The generation and procession of God's intimate life does not belong to Hume's rational religion. What definitely belongs to it is its *opera ad extra.* For Hume, it is important to emphasize that both *opera ad intra* and *opera ad extra* are not connected or, to be more precise, God's economy does not explain or manifest its possible internal existence. Hume accepts that the immanent world cannot

---

[38] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 177.

[39] David Hume, *The Natural History of Religion,* 124.

[40] Anthony Flew, "Can Religion be Rational?" in *Religion and Hume's Legacy*, ed. D.Z. Phillips and Timothy Tessin (New York: Claremont Graduate University, 1999), 193-206.

be in contradiction with the designer's rational design. His interest is not to prove God's attributes but to develop the consequences of its economy. Hume's apology partially explains his position:

> There is no foundation of any conclusion *a priori,* either concerning the operations or duration of any object, of which 'tis possible for the human mind to form a conception. Any object may be imagin'd to become entirely inactive, or to be annihilated in a moment; and 'tis an evident principle, *that whatever we can imagine is possible.* Now this is no more true of matter, than of spirit; of an extended compounded substance, than of a simple and unextended […] If my philosophy, therefore, makes no addition to the arguments for religion, I have at least the satisfaction to think it takes nothing from them, but that everything remain precisely as before.[41]

Nonetheless, the importance that Hume gives to natural theology still remains.[42] For Hume, the non-epistemic consideration of rational religion does not represent a closure in his philosophical inquiries about it. Hume's philosophical tension between the seemly impossible exploration of God's nature and the importance of natural theology has been briefly analyzed and named by J. C. A. Gaskin as "The Immense Abyss."[43] His argument begins with the following distinction: "But it must not be thought that Hume's contrast between what we can understand and what is beyond our understanding is the same as the positivist contrast between verifiable propositions and all other propositions."[44] The distinction is relevant and accurate as it effectively touches on Hume's expectation about the openness of time, multiplicity of memory, and changeability of selfhood. Gaskin's distinction locates Hume's philosophy as a relatively open project for the unknown.

---

[41] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature,* 164.

[42] Anthony Flew, "Can Religion be Rational?", 197.

[43] J.C.A Gaskin, *Hume's Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 81-84.

[44] Ibid., 83.

The abyss suggested by but not developed by Gaskin contains two interrelated dimensions that have been suggested separately in Hume scholarship. These are the questions of belief and "a priori." Belief has a methodological and epistemic component. Methodologically, belief serves Hume to discuss religion without the necessity of suspending its rational possibilities. From an epistemic point of view Hume accepts as valuable knowledge the invisible truths of religion. In this regard his philosophy resembles the starting point of the project of converting pagans "to the phantasm of the One, there is always a certainty of possessing, or of having found, an irreducible definition of the world, of its origins and its ends—its true and meaning."[45]

Belief

Regarding the dimension of belief it is important to begin with a comment not explicitly related to Hume's philosophy but that highlights important aspects of his comprehension of a minimalistic faith with larger implications for the "commerce" of everyday life:

> *Theology* is searching for a more original interpretation of human being's toward God, prescribed by the meaning of faith itself and remaining within it. Theology is slowly beginning to understand again Luther's insight that its system of dogma rests on a "foundation" that does not stem from a questioning in which faith is primary and whose conceptual apparatus is not only insufficient for the range of problems in theology but rather covers them up and distorts them.[46]

Hume's relationship with the "intelligent author", the general laws of the world, and common life belong to the ambit of faith. Although, as I have discussed, Hume's philosophy beings precisely with a tension with this position; the solution for his tension

[45] Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 230.

[46] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: SUNY Press, 2010 [1927, 1953]), 9. Italics in the original.

is to embrace the invisible as given reality. Hume's faith is expressed in the following idea: if one does not contradict one's worldly condition one is also moving within the creator's economy. For Hume, moving toward God implies suspending one's judgment about the possibility of God's presence in the world. Hume's theological reflection is minimalistic at its core. It has but a basic content: there is a creator that manifests its reason in the most common phenomena. Any attempt to construct a system of "dogma" Hume considers barbaric.[47] This God almost empty of attributes requires pure faith. For Hume, any attempt to understand into God's intimacy introduces barbarous conceptions. His conclusion is that, "The gods have maxims of justice peculiar to themselves."[48]

Nevertheless, faith has strictly material consequences, as Guilles Deleuze (1925-1995) explains:

> Nous avons vu que la philosophie n'a rien à dire sur la cause des principes, sur l'origine de leur pouvoir. Là est la place de Dieu. Nous ne pouvons pas nous server des principes d'association pour connaître Dieu comme la cause du monde, mais nous pouvons toujours penser Dieu négativement, comme la cause des principes. C'est en ce sens que la théisme est valable. C'est en ce sens que la finalité se réintroduit. Ella sera pensé, non pas connue, *comme l'accord original des principes de la nature humaine avec la Nature elle-même*.[49]

Effectively, Hume does not want to access first causes through his theology. But he does assume God to be the source and designer of the principles that sustain human existence. That is Hume's theism. His theism introduces a principle of organization within the immanent world. This principle gives the world not just a contextual meaning but also provides the world with finality. God's design, along with nature and human

---

[47] David Hume, *The Natural History of Religion*, 77.

[48] Ibid., 80.

[49] Guilles Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité,* 77.

nature, coincide within Hume's faith. When Hume affirms that: "The whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery"[50] he is only suspending his judgment about the attributes of God and not God's presence in the "more obvious works of nature."[51]

The intelligent author manifests itself in nature's multiple expressions. There is no separation between reason, nature, and intelligent author. In conjoining them, Hume establishes his universal and porous notion of human nature and universe:[52] "A purpose, an intention, design is evident in every thing; and when our comprehension is so far enlarged as to contemplate the first rise of this visible system, we must adopt, with the strongest conviction, the idea of some intelligent cause or author."[53] This basic idea allows Hume to develop further his idea of the presence of the invisible in the visible.

A priori: Visibility of the invisible

The practical a priori of Hume's philosophy is that the invisible can be accessed through the visible. The invisible or spirit does not hide itself but wants to be known through its works. Because of this a priori, one is apt to say that Hume follows Calvin's criterion: "*Any use of images leads to idolatry*."[54] There is nothing outside the immanent and visible creation and human art that can manifest God. For Hume there is no need to explore or investigate further the representation of the intelligent designer. For the intelligent designer's entire presence is condensed in the common life and complexity of

---

[50] David Hume, *The Natural History of Religion*, 87.

[51] Ibid., 85.

[52] For the contrary position see Christopher J. Berry, *Hume, Hegel, and Human Nature* (The Hague/Boston/London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982).

[53] David Hume, *The Natural History of Religion*, 85.

[54] *Calvin: The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Vol. I, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960 [1559]), 109.

the universe. The visible is the proper ambit of the philosopher because there is nothing beyond it. There are two aspects to the visibility of God: the one expressed in the metabolism of nature and human practices and the other expressed in the various visible forms that seek to represent God. About the first one, Hume insists that such metabolism is not contradictory to reason. Regarding the second form of visibility, Hume maintains that those forms of representation are purely idols: "How is the Deity disfigured in our representations of him!"[55]

Hume's problem with theology or religious practices is that the religious person may be an "enthusiast, and imagine he sees what has no reality: He may know his narrative to be false, and yet persevere in it."[56] The term 'enthusiasm' refers to expectations that cannot be inferred from the normal organization of the world. Religious enthusiasm calls from a horizon that longs for a different reality. For Hume, there is no life beyond the limits of the given social organization precisely because he believes that social organization expresses God's own reason and will.[57] God is substituted for its works and there is nothing else to wait for. Hume's philosophy turns into a philosophy of death in which God is synthetized in the heroic act of suicide. In his essay on suicide he develops more fully various elements of his theological reflections, enabling a more detailed discussion about his economy of the flesh.

---

[55] David Hume, *The Natural History of Religion*, 86.

[56] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* 103. For a commentary on this perspective see Timothy M. Costelloe, "In every civilized community': Hume on belief and the demise of religion," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 55, no. 3 (June 1, 2004): 171-185.

[57] Shirley A. Mullen, "David Hume and a Christian perspective on history: insights from an unlikely ally," *Fides et Historia* 35, no. 2 (June 1, 2003): 49-60.

5. Suicide

Hume's is a radical social philosophy and so is his consideration of religion. Hume assumes as a given relationships of control, subordination, and mastership that for him are completely in harmony with the Supreme Being's design and reason. His critique of the "philosophers" is that they do not recognize the stability and foundational character of the so-called common social forms of sociability.

> Those who have the propensity to philosophy, will still continue their researches; because they reflect, that, besides the immediate pleasure attending such an occupation, philosophical decisions are nothing but the reflections of common life, methodized and corrected. But they will never be tempted to go beyond common life, so long as they consider the imperfection of those faculties which they employ, their narrow reach, and their inaccurate operations.[58]

The productivity of philosophy is fundamentally economic as it is oriented to the rationalization of common life and the production of machines of death.[59] The object to be economized is life and what distinguishes Hume's position on suicide is that he pretends to erase the presence of an external sovereign. The question about who can live and who must live Hume responds to with another question: what are the conditions that fulfill that which can be called life? With this question Hume introduces not the possibility and necessity of war between nation/states, but a war against one's damaged life. The decision of segregation corresponds, in Hume's philosophy, to each individual. The most intense expression of autonomy is the decision to commit suicide. In order to exercise his autonomy every individual has to embrace the idea that he is his own enemy. Moreover, under certain conditions such as sickness and imprisonment he also becomes a danger to the common-life. Hume proposes a philosophy whose center is a conception of

[58] David Hume, *An Enquire Concerning Human Understanding*, 142.

[59] Achille Mbembe, *Necropolítica* seguido de *Sobre el gobierno privado indirecto* traducción y edición a cargo de Elisabeth Falomir (Madrid: Melusina, 2011).

the different modes of life as an impediment to the realization of the inner-possibilities and *telos* of history.

The struggle to death proposed by Hume takes place in one's own body. Suicide is a form of achieving the beatitudes of history. The novelty of this proposal is that it transforms submission and self-negation into theological virtues, into a fruit of the spirit. In Hume's case the body is transformed into a weapon, not to kill[60] but to give life. Through the suicide of a damaged life the public receives more life. For Hume, there is no final sacrifice, only consumable bodies that pass away without leaving a trace.

Without Transgression

When "sound philosophy"[61] takes possession of a mind it frees humans from superstition. In this regard philosophy is understood as a medicine or, more exactly, as a treatment that enables a full control of oneself that should, says Hume, rightly be expressed in institutions. The philosophical activity is understood as a series of procedures or exercises whose ultimate purpose is to embrace death. Hume equates "native liberty" with suicide in order to develop a theory of individual freedom. His philosophical reflection on suicide is a central piece of his understanding of nature and economy.

The standpoint of Hume's reflection on suicide is that suicide does not constitute a transgression. What he means by this is that there are no theological, legal, or moral arguments that can interfere with the individual's decisions about whether or not to terminate his own life. The sphere of the individual's life is restricted to personal

[60] Ibid., 67.

[61] David Hume, "Of Suicide" [1755] *Essays,* 578.

decisions and choices. There is no authority above that of the individual that can decide to dispose of his life. No one can have the right to put an end to a person's existence.

This is the most important political right and philosophical input: our death should belong to us. Hume's entire argument starts with a theological discussion that is clearly located within the larger debate of theological anthropology.[62] In it he admits the existence of "the almighty creator"[63] as he did throughout his philosophical project, a creator who created general laws and immutable rules for all creation. This creator is both a designer and administrator who manifest itself in those rules and laws that have existed "from the beginning of time." According to Hume all events "in one sense" are the acts of the "almighty." In which sense exactly is the creator acting through natural and historical events? Just in one specific and restricted sense that has been introduced before: the creator has arranged in people the capacity, within the limitations of their own constitution and those imposed from the natural world, to organize their own world.

The creator creates a being that in the process of its own existence is also a creator. Although Hume's almighty creator is capable of knowledge, this knowledge does not imply, in principle, any moral or political action, although it is its foundation.[64] This being is in every case indifferent to the world's history, while being the source of its most elemental laws and dispositions. Nature's economy is fundamentally expressed in two

---

[62] See for the context Mario Sina, *L' Avvento della ragione. "Reason" e "above reason" dal razionalismo teologico inglese al deismo* (Milano: Vita e Penseiro, 1976); Jason Van Vliet, *Children of God: The Imago Dei in John Calvin and His Context* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009); Donna T. Andrew, *Aristocratic Virtue: The Attack on Dueling, Suicide, Adultery, and Gambling in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013), 83-126.

[63] David Hume, *Essays*, 580.

[64] Thomas Holden, *Specters of False Divinity: Hume's Moral Atheism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

variables: the general laws of matter and motion. Nature is continually changed and transformed by human action. In transforming or resisting nature's laws, men produce themselves, says Hume. Humans' interactions with nature are not, in this case, fixed. Moreover, for human life to be possible it is necessary to permanently transform nature's immediate appearance: “It would be no crime in me to divert the *Nile* or *Danube* from its course, were I able to effect such purposes.”[65] Reason, expressed in the ability to transform nature's “first appearance,” expresses an elemental tension and decisive philosophical position. The tension is between what is given in nature and the human capacity and necessity to transform the world through human activity.

Human activities effectively modify and surpass the limits that are imposed by nature but Hume does not develop this idea politically. In transforming nature, humans are also inflicting on themselves a progressive transformation. Although nature restricts certain physical possibilities, Hume does not presented these as an insurmountable barrier. Hume's presentation of nature introduces his theology of radical incarnation of the deity in the world.

> Do you not teach, that when any ill befalls me, tho' by the malice of my enemies, I ought to be resigned to providence; and that actions of men are the operations of the almighty much as the actions of inanimate beings? When I fall upon my own sword, therefore, I received my death equally from the hands of the deity, as if it had proceeded from a lion, a precipice, or a fever.[66]

The almighty creator expresses itself in every action that happens in the world. Furthermore, in every expenditure of a creature's power, the almighty is expending itself, communicating its life. The whole dynamism of existence Hume presents as a

[65] David Hume, *Essays*, 583.

[66] Ibid., 584.

correspondence between the principle of organization and its historical figures. The hands of the deity are none other than the many things in the world as they interact with each other without a previously established form of organization.

All of one's own activities correspond to the creator in one specific sense: these activities are expenditures of energy. Hume's thinking does not reduce itself to be a reflection about empirical cognition. The creator is there for our perception, just in an oblique form: it always appears incarnated in the phenomena. This is because "Philosophy, like Empiricism, is cognizant only of what *is,* it does not know that which only *ought* to be, and for that reason *is not there.*"[67] But the creator does not exist *because* it is part of human's sensible existence. It does not appear to humans as a being they can immediately grasp. They see the creator not through, but in, its incarnations.

Thus, Hume does not negate the "supersensible altogether;" rather he names it as a condition of possibility of experience. The question of the creator introduces a moment of displacement: Hume's idea of the incarnate creator transforms every "finite determination" from human institutions to landscapes into condensations of the infinite or invisible. Every particularity is bonded with the deity as it is the power source of everything in the world. The universal component of this understanding is explicitly presented in the syllogism of the correspondence between creator and creation. This syllogism has implications beyond the discussion of suicide; it constitutes an instance of how the historical relationships are considered as completely autonomous from the divine.

---

[67] G.W.F. Hegel, *The Encyclopedia Logic. Part I of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences with the Zusätze*, trans. T.F. Geraets, W.A. Suchting, H.S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), 77. Emphasis in the original.

Notwithstanding all this, Hume's philosophy does not simply assume that truth is what is external if by external is understood the mere immanent appearance of phenomena without having connections and relationships. Hume accepts a non-moral creator that through its primordial creative actions makes possible the movement of all that exists. It is important to clearly distinguish between the creator as originator of laws and the creator as a designer of historical particularities. Hume assumes the idea of a Being that governs all things not "as the soul of the world, but as Lord over all"[68] that is everywhere and always present and constitutes duration and space, and he displays some of its consequences.

The Ruler

When Newton[69] (1642-1727) says that the Universal Ruler cannot neither be accessed through human senses nor represented by any corporeal thing, he derives from this cognitive abyss the Excellency of his God. That is to say that because it is not accessible to our senses, the "Being necessarily existing" is a Lord. Newton's creator creates but his substance remains unknown to humans. In the case of Hume the emphasis of his presentation is not on the unknowable substance but on the immanence of the deity. The immanent aspect is also present in Newton but the notion of the dominion of God obliterates that immanence.[70] In "Of Suicide," Hume has no space for the idea of a creator that could exercise any sort of complete and inscrutable dominion. He presents a

[68] Sir Isaac Newton, *Principia. Vol II: The System of the World*, trans. Andrew Motte rev. Florian Cajori (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: California University Press, 1934, 1962 [1686] [1729]), 544.

[69] The relationship between Hume and Newton has been discussed in detail by N. Kemp Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume* (London: Macmillan, 1949 [1941]); and Anthony Flew, *Hume's Philosophy of Belief*

[70] Sir Isaac Newton, *Principia. Vol II*, 544.

porous idea of providence, one that acknowledges the radical impossibility to transform the creator's government at the same time that he affirms that this government does not interfere with the disposition of one's own life. Providence does not impose life. Hume restricts the Newtonian idea of dominion by accepting the Deity's existence as a creator. Because God exists, suicide is permitted. This is so because suicide expresses just one of the possibilities within the laws of creation and the immanence of the divine.

However, this liberty for suicide does not imply an opening to transform society. Hume observes that, "A man may disturb society, no doubt; and thereby incur the displeasure of the almighty."[71] How can Hume's creator be disturbed by what happens within society? After all, Hume's deity does not express moral or political inclinations. How is the apathetic creator suddenly capable of being affected to the point of displeasure?

The response to these questions can be divided into three parts as follows. 1) The idea of the divine incarnation implies for Hume forms of organization that he presents as natural. Society or, more precisely, the constitution of the social, is substantially the communication of the creator's economy; 2) within the context of this discussion the concept of economy refers to an act of creation and preservation guaranteed by the deity's own presence in human's nature. This question has to be discussed as a part of the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum:* the Humean society expresses the unity of both human and divine nature; 3) consequently the almighty is affected when society is disturbed because society's organization itself is the Almighty's body: "Surely God does not have blood, does not suffer, cannot be touched with hands. But since Christ was true

[71] David Hume, *Essays,* 585.

God and also true man, was crucified and shed his blood for us,"[72] then it is in Christ that both human and divine nature are united without distinction. Hume radically extends this idea; for him the creator is fully present in both the individual's nature as well as in the order of society. Hume unites nature and society and in so doing his most important problem is how and when life ends. Hume's question is how and according to which criteria it is possible to determine when a life is worth living.

Hume's development of his idea of the "displeasure of the almighty" has an important corollary in which he explicitly introduces the concept of human nature. These principles act within humans making them aware of their guilt and blame. Thus, human nature designates an internal mechanism of self-regulation to be in charge of programming the adequate responses to social interactions and self-understanding. Biological life is organized and administrated by this mechanism whose fundamental responsibility is to preserve the creator's body (society). Hume transforms the relationship between biological life and his theology of incarnation, as expressed in "the principles of nature", into an antagonistic struggle. In this struggle the principles of nature are necessarily victorious. The question imposed here is, as I introduced above, not how the State exercises its power over individual lives. What is at stake here is how the individual itself decides to dissolve its own existence. Hume's following reflection will allow me to develop more about the question of the power of suicide.

> But allowing, that our obligations to do good were perpetual, they have certainly some bounds. I am not obliged to do a small good to society, at the expence of a great harm to myself. Why then should I prolong a miserable existence, because of some frivolous advantage, which the public may, perhaps, receive from me?[73]

---

[72] *Calvin: The Institutes of the Christian Religion* Vol. II, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960 [1559]), 484.

[73] David Hume, *Essays,* 586.

The question of the power and liberty of suicide belongs to economic theory as it is based on calculations whose variables have to do with the cost and benefit of a life to the public. The first consideration introduced by Hume in the response to his own question is composed by the dyad "age and infirmities." The underlying criterion from where this dyad comes is an ideal of vitality, action, production. Hume proposes that age can be considered a factor in the reduction of one's capacities to perform its inherent or natural duties to society. Society's economy requires, for Hume, a strict administration of population or, more precisely, useful population capable of reproducing itself. But, he does not locate the administration of population within the ambit of any exogenous arbiter. His argument entails the necessity of a consideration of one's own limits. These limits are not the limits of understanding but those of the fleshy body considered as an instrument to serve the public interest. Because of this the variable age has to be understood as a public issue.

This is a coherent aspect of Hume's ideal of man: "Man is also an active being; and from that disposition, as well as from the various necessities of human life, must submit to business and occupation: But the mind requires some relaxation, and cannot always support its bent to care and industry."[74] According to this understanding, the impossibility of a person being involved with industry and care supposes the lessening of that person's humanity. Hume's active being is both a philosophical position and an economic requirement. Without action "the human race" could not continue its existence. To the non-active, Hume offers the cold visitation of death.

Hume believed that in proving that there were theological impediments to suicide

---

[74] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* 6.

it was not necessary to offer any other kind of alternatives to the useless. The question of age introduces a clear reference to population. However, Hume's essay also raises the question of the individual, its body, passions, and, above all, self-ownership within society. The variable of infirmities, that could be combined with age, expresses more clearly how the question of suicide is a form of dealing with the constitution of a sphere of autonomy in and through which it is possible to secure the common functioning of society. Infirmities, the malfunctioning of the animal oeconomy, are interruptions in the economic circuit.

For Hume, death is instead a manifestation of natural laws, the Almighty's revelation. In naturalizing suicide Hume was addressing the problem of ending one's life as an indirect way in which to not interrupt the public interest. The old and sick are thus considered as instances of those whose existence is entirely disposable. Therefore, Hume's essay has the goal of becoming an artifact capable of making possible the interruption of life as a public service. The idea of suicide is the culmination of a long process the basis of which was a strictly economic problem: how much can a civilized society expend on damaged bodies? The first phase of Hume's suicidal artifact can be condensed as follows: a philosophical understanding of life enables suicide because it corresponds to the laws of nature established by the creator. To have a philosophical life is also to experience shame and sorrow due to one's own fragility and inability to be a useful participant in society.

The importance of the productive body in Hume's thinking must be highlighted once again. Even if it was a common trend in his epoch,[75] for Hume to know the body

[75] See for instance Phillipe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981 [1977]), 364ff.

and to have control over it acquires important and unique characteristics. In the first place, Hume assumes bodily experiences to be the origin of conventions and knowledge.

> It is certain, that the most ignorant and stupid peasants – nay infants, nay even brute beasts – improve by experience, and learn the qualities of natural objects, by observing the effects which result from them. When a child has felt the sensation of pain from touching the flame of a candle, he will be careful not to put his hand near any candle; but will expect a similar effect from a cause which is similar in its sensible qualities and appearance.[76]

It is their all-embracing skin that locates all humans in the same realm of experience or, to be precise, that makes them capable of experience. Hume understands the body as a large and interconnected series of permanent relationships in the world. In this sense the body does not require ulterior epistemological mechanisms of synthesis in order to establish itself as the center of animal life: moreover human artifacts, such as philosophy, are for Hume attempts to respond to the body's necessities and expectations. In attempting to preserve its own body, a given creature expresses its innermost attachment to itself. Even while accepting that the body is a "mighty complicated machine,"[77] Hume does not abandon a persistent echo in his thinking: that the body, its movements and projections, resists and struggles for its life. Bodies want to live and expand their life beyond the limits and dangers of their immediate world. This desire to preserve their lives is, as Hume suggested, an expression of animality.[78]

This instinctual disposition to protect its own corporeal and fleshy existence is itself economic: "Though the instinct be different, yet still it is an instinct, which teaches a man to avoid the fire; as much as that, which teaches a bird, with such exactness, the art

---

[76] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* 39.

[77] Ibid., 79.

[78] Ibid., 92-95 "Of the Reason of Animals".

of incubation, and the whole economy and order of its nursery."[79] In the context of his speculations about instincts, Hume understands economy as a practice or series of these instincts that want to preserve life. Hume reserves the concept 'economy' to the act of caring. There is no exchange, trade, or labor included in this basic and decisive understanding of economy as expenditure whose sole purpose is to sustain a given corporeal existence. This comprehension of economy does not suppose guarantees of return or surplus. It is the condition of possibility of social and political existence. Developing this argument can conduct to a criterion of rationality: It is reason that permits the preservation of the living body and, furthermore, that gives it the possibility to recreate its own life. This reading of Hume's delimitation of rationality has been advanced in recent readings of Hume's "theoretical philosophy"[80] that do not acknowledge its theological underpinnings.

Nonetheless, it is an implication of Hume's position regarding providence and creation. In a similar though not as explicitly theological position as that of N. Malebranche (1638 –1715), Hume rejects an understanding of the human senses and instincts as completely damaged by sin. Moreover, Hume does not even use sin[81] as an important theological concept. But in his theology of sovereignty, as I noted above, it is implied that human senses cannot be understood as intrinsically dysfunctional due to some sort of substantial impairment. The creation, the multitude of bodies that constituted the world, as they appear in the "examination of common life," cannot be adequately

[79] Ibid., 95.

[80] Donald Ainslie, "Hume's Anti-*Cogito*," in *Hume Readings* ed. Lorenzo Greco and Alessio Vaccari (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2012), 91-120.

[81] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* 91.

considered from the idea of sin. Instead, Hume focuses on the relationship between creator and creation. Properly understood Hume's concentration on the topic of creation was an attempt to develop a theology without ethical obligations with the creator and without a proper soteriology.

Furthermore what constitutes Hume's theological particularity is the solitude of his world. The creator in its absence is fully present within the world. This world is enclosed within its own dynamism and cannot be impacted by any transcendental force. Hume does not lack a theology; he does not concentrate on cult or obedience but takes a more complex path. He develops a theology of the autonomy of the world, of the coincidence between the creator's actions and the creature's freedom. Hume silences the rumors of a savior and liberator God as a contradiction to common life. Animal instincts, with its intrinsic economy of preservation, require for Hume institutional channels in order to fully express their historical possibilities. The tense relationship between animal economy of self-preservation and economic thinking introduces another level in Hume's understanding of the body that is expressed in "Of Suicide".

> But suppose, that it is no longer in my power to promote the interest of the public: Suppose, that I am a burthen to it: Suppose, that my life hinders some person from being much more useful to the public. In such cases my resignation of life must not only be innocent but laudable. And most people, who lie under any temptation to abandon existence, are in some such situation. Those, who have health, or power, or authority, have commonly better reason to be in humour with the world.[82]

According to Hume, the sick, aged, and considered useless has to renounce to himself in order to reach the principle of the satisfaction of the public interest. The heroism of death, the celebration of self-extinction, and reason are united in this

[82] David Hume, "Of Suicide", 587.

hypothetical condition depicted by Hume. The body that decides to cease its own life is a transfigured body without flesh. Between the instinctual and philosophical body there is a process of transformation that has diverse and not necessarily interrelated antecedents.[83] However, the nucleus of this transformation is the extinction of flesh.

Hume continues his suppositions saying: "Again, suppose a malefactor justly condemned to a shameful death; can any reason be imagined, why he may not anticipate his punishment, and save himself all the anguish of thinking on its dreadful approaches?"[84] This supposition differs from the previous one in a fundamental aspect. In this case suicide is related to the possibility of delay or rupture with the verdict of the law. Death and reason are united as death belongs to the condemned. He can retain some of its existence through the decision of not giving his last breath into the hands of the magistrate. Furthermore, in this case Hume's question clearly opens the interrogation about the differences between justice and torture. He does not question the fairness of the legal mechanism. What he does is to introduce the perspective of prisoner. In so doing he recognizes that the legal mechanisms are not only formal procedures.

Hume acknowledges their affective implications: thus, he presents suicide as a form of protection from the intensely disturbing outputs of the law. The practice of suicide comes from an excess of life that resists its annihilation. Paradoxically, the only form of resistance suggested by Hume is suicide, or what is the same, a life of pure bodies without flesh.

Moreover, he transforms the resistance of this surplus of life into its opposite: "He

---

[83] Sébastien Jahan, *Les renaissances du corps en Occident (1450-1650)* (Paris: Éditions Belin, 2004).

[84] David Hume, *Essays,* 587.

invades the business of providence no more than the magistrate did, who ordered his execution; and his voluntary death is equally advantageous to society, by ridding it of a pernicious member."[85] Here Hume transforms suicide into the disposal of pernicious members of society. Hume understands the life of the condemned as an infectious presence that must be disposed of. He leaves aside his first intuition that in which he presented suicide as resistance to law's cruelty. This ambivalence must not be understood as a meaningless contradiction.

It has a crucial relevance for Hume's philosophy. First, he affirms the predominance of the law as the condensation of the spirit's movement. Second, he insists and develops the concept of usefulness, one of the central concepts of his philosophy. The condemnation of the criminal is perfectly just and deserves all respect and consideration. Nonetheless, if one innocent person decides to commit suicide he is acting according to the "*Christian* dispensation," says Hume, as he is attempting to use his freedom for the benefit of society.

> There is not a single text of scripture, which prohibits it [suicide]. That great and infallible rule of faith and practice, which must control all philosophy and human reasoning, has left us, in this particular, to our natural liberty. Resignation to providence is, indeed, recommended in scripture; but that implies only submission to ills, which are unavoidable, not to such as may be remedied by prudence or courage […] The power of committing Suicide is regarded by *Pliny* as an advantage which men possess even above the deity himself (Pliny, *Natural History* 2.5.27 in the Loeb edition: (God cannot) even if he wishes, commit suicide, the supreme boon that he has bestowed on man all the penalties of life).[86]

The strategy Hume follows in this argument is theological. His rhetorical use of the authority of the scriptures is an attempt to circumscribe his defense of suicide within the limits of the Christian field of knowledge and power. Nevertheless, he considers that

[85] Ibid., 587-588.

[86] Ibid.

suicide should be considered a gift that belongs only to humans. This is the gift of being useful even on the *via negativa:* in his death the sick and useless person can provide society and common life with the favor of his disappearance. The courage that Hume desires is that in which one's own drive to self-preservation is controlled to such an extent that suicide appears as a heroic act. The heroic act is the embracing of the absolute as it is manifested in public affairs.

Theologically this implies that the most radical form of submission is the submission to oneself, to one's desire to protect one's life. Not being slave to oneself is achieved through self-dissolution. But this self-dissolution is understood as naïve life: it does not resist its annihilation because it acknowledges its precariousness. At the heart of Hume's meditation on suicide is not the freedom of the individual,[87] but the affirmation of the political and social body over its singular components. There is no moral transgression in Hume's philosophy of suicide, but rather the fulfilment of the individual's duties and engagements. The damaged, sick, aged, and criminals achieve through suicide their process of incorporation into the world. Incorporation and incarnation are two different ways to refer to the same process: becoming a human is being permanently open to the possibility of self-destruction. Hume's belief in "philosophical theism"[88] implies a celebration of death

6. The Good Ends of Philosophy

Although it was also an attempt to criticize Hume's discussion on miracles, George Campbell (1719-1796) wrote, in his *A Dissertation on Miracles*, an accurate

[87] J. L. Tasset, ""Suicidio y fiesta del Yo: el suicidio como transgresión moral definitiva. A propósito de «On Suicide» de David Hume,"" *Τέλος. Revista Iberoamericana de Estudios Utilitaristas* Vol. I, no. 1 (Febrero, 1992): 149-166.

[88] Donald Livingstone, *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life,* 206.

synthesis of an important aspect of Hume's philosophy:

> Ye ask, 'How is religion conducive to the exaltation 'and felicity to the body-politic or nation? I answer, It conduces to this end in these four ways: By the tendency and extent of its laws; by the nature and importance of its sanctions; by the assistance which it gives to the civil powers, both in securing fidelity, and in discovering truth; and by the positive enforcement of equity and good government on the rulers, and of obedience and submission on the people.[89]

Hume's philosophy is indeed a proposal to secure and sustain the "body-politic". His questions are also oriented to the satisfaction of the happiness of society. Hume understood that the pursuit for happiness was contradictory to the concentration of oneself. Hume's first self, the one that expresses the longings of flesh, cannot but call into question the law and its sanctions. Hume was able to see that flesh has the potential of subverting the magnanimous language of the Lord. Therefore, he decided to obtrude the outbreaks of flesh that came through his philosophical reflections. In exchange he proposed a philosophy of loss that pretended to be a crypt for flesh. Hume acknowledged that there is a loss in a philosophy whose main concern is to produce fidelity to the whole.

Flesh cannot promise an everlasting fidelity because it carries, without being afraid of shame, its vulnerability and necessities. The truth of flesh cannot be reached within the strict limits of an immanence that presents itself as God's own body. Because of this, Hume attempts to humiliate flesh, to locate it as the monstrous tendency that separates us from the Kingdom of God. Hume's kingdom requires permanent obedience and submission as well as the liminal separation of body and flesh.

This separation is precisely what enables Hume's productive being. This

[89] George Campbell, *A Dissertation on Miracles: Containing an Examination of the Principles Advanced by David Hume, ESQ. In An Essay on Miracles* (Edinburgh: Printed for William Creech, Peter Hill, and John Ogle; and T. Cadell & W. Davies, London. G. Caw, Printer, 1812 [1763]), 106-107.

productive being, condemned to a premature death because of his vulnerability, cannot recognize his own flesh. For him, flesh is something exterior, something that stays beyond the boundaries of his body. In this precise sense it is that flesh is monstrous. It comes to the productive and active body as the possibility to overcome its imaginary unity. Flesh is the possibility of a surplus-life that interrogates the assumption that everyone possesses a body.

The living body, which is not entirely different from the productive or active body, can live because of the tensions produced by flesh's own sensibilities. The good government and submission of the people suppose the punishment of the flesh. When Campbell says that: "Human laws, for the protection of peace and good order in society, may concur with the divine law,"[90] he still does not grasp the significance of Hume's economy of the flesh. For him, the distinction between human laws and rational religion is merely heuristic. The differentiation serves methodological purposes but it does not refer to a practical separation. The contents and thematic fields of rational religion are fundamentally expressed and developed within the Law.

Adam Smith develops the relationship between Law, punishment, and flesh in detail. I shall discuss this and other aspects of Smith's philosophy in the next chapter.

[90] Ibid., 109.

CHAPTER 4

Smith's Flesh: Sentiments, Savages, and Incarnation

The achievement of happiness is organizing principle of Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments.* By organizing principle I mean that even the conflict or tension between selfishness and preoccupation with others is inscribed within the assumption that each human being procures its own happiness. The idea of happiness organizes Smith's philosophy as his proposal is based upon the idea of a fully developed humanity and not some sort of open justification of social domination. This chapter follows this hypothesis through a reading that emphasizes Smith's theological discussions. Throughout the chapter, I demonstrate that there is no contradiction between moral and economic theory. Furthermore, I show that the continuity of morality and economy is possible due to Smith's understanding of God. Smith's project effectively has as its center the assumption of God's immanent participation in history. From this assumption comes his proposal of an economy of the flesh. I argue that Smith's understanding of flesh presents a fundamental interpenetration of theology and economic theory. For him, flesh is a vicious element that must be incarnated within the human body and the social and political body.

One of Smith's basic ideas is that human beings naturally tend to surpass or overcome the limits of their nature. Although this can appear at first sight as a contradiction, for Smith nature is in permanent digression with itself. The eccentricity of human nature, its rebellion against itself, is what makes it possible even for the "greatest ruffian" to experience a discomfort within himself. This natural discomfort is the result of a "clash:" while trying to affirm and preserve its own life, human nature also at the same

time manifests "sorrow from the sorrow of others." Human nature splits itself, tries to affirm its individuality but, at the same time, moves itself towards the other by attempting to carry itself beyond its "own person." Thus this clash and division is experienced by the person as a manifestation of the tendencies of his or her nature. The person does not have control of these movements that modify his or her existence from its core.

Smith presents the person as a sensible topos in which nature encounters itself at an economic disjuncture: how to conserve the person's life at the same time that he or she moves herself to experience the life of others.[1] There is a second disjunctive, namely that nature does not have or cannot provide persons with the capacity to fully embrace the suffering, joy, or pain of the other person, for "our senses will never inform us of what he suffers."[2] The others remain unknowledgeable as sensible beings to a person's senses as they are entirely concentrated on themselves. Being a sensible being implies, for Smith, being closed off to others. A person is sensible or aware only of themselves and of the experiences of their existence. They recollect or capture experiences in order to preserve their own lives.

Smith thus distinguishes between senses and imagination. The senses, because they are attached to the immediacy of the person's self-experience, lack exteriority. It is only through imagination that a person can experience, or at least have a sense of, the intimate life of the other. The distinction Smith proposes seeks to connect sensibility and imagination; he states that it is from the data provided by the senses that our imagination enables us to "place ourselves" in the other person's situations. Smith's notion of self is of

---

[1] Doğan Göçmen, *The Adam Smith Problem:* Human Nature and Society in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations* (London – New York: Tauris Academic Books, 2007).

[2] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 9.

a capsule of sameness that can be accessed only by the power of imagination.[3] The relationship with the other is always based on a procedure located within the person: as a result of sensitive stimulation the self can imagine the sensible experiences of another person. Imagining is, in its most basic meaning, an attempt to transmigrate—to relocate one's own center in the midst of what is suffered by other persons in their bodies. However, Smith also presents an inverse process, one in which it is not the intentionality of the person that makes intimacy possible, but their own damaged self:

> Persons of delicate fibres and weak constitution of body complain that in looking on the sores and ulcers which are exposed by beggars in the streets, they are apt to feel an itching or uneasy sensation in their correspondent part of their own bodies. The horror which they conceive at the misery of those wretches affects that particular part in themselves more than any other; because that horror arises from conceiving what they themselves would suffer, if they really were the wretches whom they are looking upon, and if that particular part in themselves was actually affected in the same miserable manner.[4]

Although the hierarchical relationship between sensible experience and imagination appears, this description introduces another dimension. What interrupts and irrupts within the realm of a person's self-closure is the uncontrollable damaged other. It is not the intentionality of the self that constitutes its field of experiences but the lacerated body of the "wretched." The self's secure dwelling in its world is taken into the deepness of terror by an anomalous body that resists the apprehension of the self's gaze. Damaged bodies, as rebelling angels[5] pierce the "delicate" person's bubble of selfhood, rebelling against the "throne and monarchy" of the person, distancing itself from anything that

---

[3] John J. Drummond, "Imagination and Appresentation, Sympathy and Empathy in Smith and Husserl," in *Intersubjectivity and Objectivity in Adam Smith and Edmund Husserl*, ed. Christel Fricke/Dagfinn Føllesdal (Piscataway, NJ: Ontos Verlag, 2012), 117-137.

[4] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 10.

[5] "Paradise Lost" *The Works of John Milton* Vol.II, Part I, ed. Frank Allen Patterson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 3.

surpasses its own satisfaction. Misery and pain concentrated in another person's body prompt this immediate corporeal response. Smith's ulcerated bodies rebel against the predominance of the spectator. It is not the spectator who arranges the surroundings but the unpredictable smells, texture, and voracity of the wounded other. It is not the spectator's interests and attentiveness that modify its sensibility and imagination but the unfathomable yet irruptive concreteness of the "beggars"—Smith's all-embracing designation to evoke the foreign and monstrous.[6]

For Smith, nevertheless, the beggars are apparitions without context. Their wounds and fetidness are sudden irruptions that are thought to be unrelated to the landscapes of the "delicate person." Smith describes the experience of the production of pure bodies and corporeal disgust. The beggar is pure battered physicality; it lacks, for Smith's spectator, the components of a full person. It is precisely the beggar's condition of putrid body, its unrecoverable otherness that produces repulsion: it is a nudum hominem.[7] This notion initially refers to a Christological dispute: was Jesus merely clothed as a man or was he an angel with the appearance of a man? Smith's bare man is the one that is indistinguishable from its wounds, basically terrenae carnis.[8] The bare man enters, producing terror into the field of possible corporeal experiences of Smith's spectator because it is terrestrial flesh. The spectator is obligated to experience in its own body what is commonly not regarded or, more precisely, not experienced. Therefore, Smith's bare man (nudum hominem) or beggar causes in the "delicate person" an unintended

[6] José Luis Barrios, *El cuerpo disuelto: Lo colosal y lo monstruoso* (México, D.F: Universidad Iberoamericana, 2010).

[7] Tertullian, *De carne Christi*, XIV, 8.

[8] Ibid., XV, 5.

variation in its sentimentality. The reverse of Smith's bare man is the body of the man of God or "uomo di Dio," and refers to that which is perennially fragrant and clean.

> There was fear and weakness, dizziness and guilt on the one hand, and on the other, the yearning for warmth, plenty, good health, and most for all for well-being and the body's safety. The delician paradise was a great votive casket full of dreams, desires and hidden fears […] The nostalgia for the lost Eden kindled the desire for what was missing: above all for the body's permanence, the total efficiency of its working parts: eyes without their worldly spark, strong teeth, an abundance of years.[9]

Camporesi's description, although not related to Smith's context or work, nonetheless expresses the atmosphere of Smith's introduction to his The Theory of Moral Sentiments with its combination of gazes, odors, and unexpected presences. It points to the manifest tensions that permanently question Smith's project.[10] His project is fundamentally a daring and permanent series of anthropological speculations and an attenuated materialism.[11] And these speculations and seeds of materialism have, as I argue here, a point of inflection in the emergence of what Smith considered to be its exterior, that which signals the limits of its own clean and united self,[12] a strong and fundamental assumption about the deity's design of his world,[13] and an explicit

---

[9] Piero Camporesi, *La carne impassibile* (Milan: Saggiatore, 1983), 265.

[10] See for similar reading about the atmosphere of Smith's reflection Vincent Bissonette, "The Most Cruel Misfortune:" Suffering Innocence in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*," in *New Essays on Adam Smith's Moral Philosophy*, ed. Wade L. Robison and David B. Suits (Rochester, New York: RIT Press, 2012), 137-150; also David Marshall, "Adam Smith and the Theatricality of Moral Sentiments," *Critical Inquiry* 10, no. 4 (June 1984): 592-613.

[11] Ronald L. Meek, "The Scottish contribution to Marxist sociology," in *Adam Smith: Critical Responses* Vol.VI, ed. Hiroshi Mizuta (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 15-30; Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

[12] For the context of this process see Margaret Hunt, "Imperialism, and the Traveler's Gaze in Eighteenth-Century England," *Journal of British Studies* 32, no. 4 (October 1993), 333-357.

[13] R. Kleer, "Final Causes in Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 33, no. 2 (1995): 275-330; Pete Clarke, "Adam Smith, religion and the Scottish

irrationalism[14] that functions as ground for his economy of flesh and, as part of the same, to create a philosophical framework that enables the matching between satisfaction and punishment. Albeit ubiquitous throughout Smith's philosophical interventions, it is in Frankenstein where another and relevant sentimental texture of The Theory of Moral Sentiments is most clearly expressed:

> I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room, and continued a long time traversing my bed-chamber, unable to compose my mind to sleep. At length lassitude succeeded to the tumult I had before endured; and I threw myself on the bed on my clothes, endeavoring to seek a few moments of forgetfulness. But it was in vain: I slept indeed, but I was disturbed by the wildest dreams.[15]

Those are the words of Victor Frankenstein describing a "dreary night of November" when he managed to create life. With his "instruments of life," Frankenstein transforms a lifeless thing into a catastrophe that breathes. Smith's own attempt to create and administrate life has a tone of despair and wild dreams. He is witnessing the opening of millions of new eyes and the consumption of countless lives at the time that his deep ideals of masculinity and commerce appear to be in contradiction. When Smith proceeds to create life that intention underlies his continuing and elastic notion of nature, and every time he feels that he is achieving it, he realizes that his particular world is dusk, ruins, and miserable splendor. Here Smith appears not merely as the untamed proposer of markets and domination but as a dream of a dream. With The Theory of Moral Sentiments one can

---

Enlightenment," in *New Perspectives on Adam Smith's The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. Geoff Cockfield, Ann Firth and John Laurent (Cheltenham, UK / Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2007), 47-65.

[14] Although he disagrees with my understanding of reason, John Dwyer agrees that Smith's moral theory does not pretend to be rational see John Dwyer, *The Age of Passions: An Interpretation of Adam Smith and Scottish Enlightenment Culture* (East Linton, Scotland: Tuckwell Press, 1998), 37-38.

[15] Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein,* 36.

access an unusual zone of social conflicts as they are expressed in the form of philosophical inquiries. Form, as important as it can be, cannot be distinguished from the combination of formation and dissolution of existential spheres that both embrace and reject individuals. Smith is capturing and communicating his wild dreams. He is forming plans and strategies to surpass their most dangerous implications and trying to prolong their most joyful possibilities. In order to do that he had had to expel the demons that haunt the divine character of his society. Although it does not do so immediately, the Theory of Moral Sentiments eventually reveals itself both as a lament and an affirmation whose center are theological procedures thought to be capable of recollecting and suppressing the abnormalities, excesses, and waste of life without destroying it completely. The economy of flesh points toward an incarnational mode of life that does not negate flesh but subsumes it within different bodies.

1. The Wretched

It is because of this interest in subsuming differences that the figure of the wretched plays a central role in Smith's philosophy. The wretched being, that laughs and sings, is closed, cloistered off in itself, and lacks the language and strength that are necessary to refer (to give reason) to its situation. The figure of the wretched one must be understood as a form to designate "the pure carnality" insensible to itself, lacking itself, hidden to its same presence as a productive unit. The wretched being is possessed by its despair and erring; it laughs and sings, according to Smith, because it has forgotten its own location. The wretched are infants that cannot access their roots: their pain and wounds block and cancel their condition as spectators. As the mother responds to the infant's crying, the wretched one, the closed carnality, depends on the other's gaze and

requires its maternal warmth in order to survive. It is a stationary flesh, trapped in time and in its mute pain. The wretched is an exhausted physic. It does not have a future; it lacks humanity. Thus, because it does not feel fear or anxiety, in significant ways it is not in the world. The world, nature, its anatomy possessed it. It cannot even attain the condition of despair. It does not know about its mortality; it ignores its future and its extinction. Its laughs and songs are screams from the deep and an exposure of its broken body. It is an empty body, a deepness from which something familiar arrives; it is also part of the spectator. Because of that the wretched does not belong to death of life. The sun burns its skin, the light illuminates its face, but the wretched one cannot establish relationships. The spectator would say that the wretched one shares the condition of the dead, as one who has been deprived of all its sensible experiences, of the company of others, of being recognized as life that lives in itself. Hence, the wretched is like the cold of the tomb. The textures, cadence, and vital rhythms of life are closed to it; it makes noises while it is a prey of its not developed self. That flesh that screams in the middle of the streets will not be forgotten, because it irrupts into the spectator's gaze and introduces an anomaly.

The "wretched poor," in contrast to the dead, is not in repose. It is in permanent movement; it is intense noise, flesh that extends itself to touch all borders. No one remembers or suffers on behalf of the wretched, yet its proximity to the world of the spectators produces discomfort. Smith affirms: "The most important principles in human nature, the dread of death – the great poison of happiness, but the great restraint upon the

injustice of mankind; while it afflicts and mortifies the individual, guards and protects the society."[16]

The wretched one does not fear death; it cannot because it ignores it as it ignores itself. It is not happy; neither does it practice justice, because it is not an individual. Because of all this the wretched does not protect or guard society. Instead, lacking spirit, it returns all of its weakness to society. Its apparition itself posits an economic question: What must a society do with those who lack the condition of individuals? Smith does not respond to this question immediately, but neither does he forget about it.

The mutual sympathy excludes, from the start, the damaged one because it supposes the encounter of two individuals, two beings that recognize themselves as carriers of humanity. To be more precise, the mutual sympathy occurs within or through practices of friendship and intimacy demarcated by the social division of labor. Sympathy can be expressed within the limits of intimacy, kept away from the interruptions of the different. Therefore, sympathy creates links at the same time that it establishes separations: its equilibrium consists in an exchange of pain and joy that can be understood and returned. Sympathy belongs to the circuit of exchange; it always expects a return, a surplus. Smith's theory also supposes an abysmal zone in which sympathy cannot be expressed. There are certain pains, anguishes, and joy that even inside the sphere of one's intimate circles cannot be embraced because the other's sentiments escape the foundational capacities of the spectator.

This sorrow or joy that the spectator cannot experience as the other for Smith constitutes excess. To him they are expressions of passion that surpass the limits of

[16]Adam Smith, *Treatise of Moral Sentiments,* 13.

propriety because they cannot be assumed by the spectator's gaze. For him, even in the intimate sphere, the only sphere in which sympathy can be expressed, emotional expression has to fulfill the principle of reciprocity. This principle is the one that makes the regulated exchange of emotions possible. It functions as a guarantee that emotional stock can be conserved.

> When the original passions of the person principally concerned are in perfect concord with the sympathetic spectator they necessarily appear to this last just and proper, and suitable to their objects; and, on the contrary, when, upon bringing the case home to himself, he finds that they do not coincide with what he feels, they necessarily appear to him unjust and improper; and unsuitable to the causes that excite them.[17]

The calculated exchange of sympathy has a social importance; for Smith the adequate regulation of individual sentiments makes the social continuum possible. The rupture of this delicate and primordial economic act holds within itself the possibility to create alterations in the spirit's movement. The propriety of affections is linked to the necessity and possibility of recognition and, along with this, to the production and reproduction of the social. The tense discernment about what is proper and what improper, as it is described by Smith, locates the life of passions as an economic object. For Smith the expenditure of sentiments is the condition of possibility of any other economic operation or, more properly, of economics. The equilibrated disposition, that reaches its paroxysm in the attitudes of the martial spirit, is the state that makes sympathy possible. Everyone has to take care of their passions, protect themselves from these passions, and take possession of them in order to be recognized as spectators. Despite all this, the spectator is not able to sympathize fully with the other that is within its intimate

[17]Ibid., 16.

circle. This lack of sentimental formation is the cost of the economy of calculated exchange.

The spectator feels and suffers because he cannot be properly embraced in his emotionally limited situations, where he cannot retain his overflowing passionate heart. However, the spectator also wants to sing and laugh but he has to do the impossible and overcome the sentimental torrent that damages the logic of return. Smith describes that vacuum in which the equilibrated sympathy cannot institute recognition. Because of that, we can best read his theory of sympathy as a meditation about loss, the lack expressed by the other that screams for "a more complete sympathy."[18] To this lack, imposed by the limits of propriety, Smith opposes the necessity to tamp down the discomfort that is generated by the spectator's gaze. If there is not equivalence between compassion and original sorrow it is not because that is a feature of human nature. Smith does not describe a condition; rather he proposes a principle of political economy. The attempt to experience the other is blocked, according to his theory, because it incorporates an excess: it implies the interruption of the accelerated rhythm of self-satisfaction; it induces a break within the circuit of the market's production and expansion.

He explains: "In order to produce this concord, as nature teaches the spectators to assume the circumstances of the person principally concerned, so she teaches this last in some measure to assume those of the spectator."[19] With this, according to Smith, the wound produced by the impossibility of recognition is sutured. Every spectator has to assume the inevitable incommensurability of its own sorrow and joy. This is one of the

[18]Ibid., 22.

[19]Ibid.

characteristics of Smith's spectator: to retire from the social life, putting above himself his despair and ecstasies, the sentimental excess that can surpass the social concord. The spectator is intrinsically broken; he recognizes his own condition of being human by trying to ignore that this sentimental economy hurts his life. In trying to suture the lack he has, the spectator cannot relate his own sentiments, those which are more significant, with his social life. On the one hand he has to depart from himself and on the other hand he has to remain in silence with himself and listen, without feeling his sentiments. The presence of the other serves as a reminder to him that nothing must disturb the gray tone of the firm emotions. The "candid and impartial light,"[20] meanwhile, burns the mute intimacy of the spectator.

Being a master of oneself implies ignoring one's broken sentimentality every day. Within the ambit in which each spectator exercises sympathy, conversation about the surfaces of everyone's banalities is allowed. Because of that, the "poor wretched" one that screams, and the latent howl that dwells in each spectator, are both beyond the limits of sympathy. Smith's spectator walks on the edges of his own catastrophe and believes that it is possible to survive within a society of radically lacking individuals. The spectator, in Smith's presentation, has to choose sadness and concealment in order to produce wealth.

The spectator wants to be the master of an impossible silence. He wants to quiet what is more intimate through words; meanwhile his flesh is being devoured by a death that he does not know. This is a kind death that is not the secure one that produces just a modest fear. The tranquility of calculation makes the master a servant of the silence and

[20] Ibid., 23.

howls at those that are always interrupting the moderate conversations of friends. The words without intensity are the condensation and expression of "self-denial" and "self-government": control of a fracture that must be cured by engrossment. From this perspective, the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* is a theory of the intensity of the voice.[21] What unhinges Smith's theory of moral sentiments are the demands and laments of the "sufferer" because in them the power of the master is revoked. They transform the sentimental geography and make it impossible to ignore them. But it is not just the noise that produces discomfort and disgust in the spectator; so too does the public exposition of fluids and grimaces. The flesh that struggles to express what weighs it down, particularly the weight of the prospect of death, represents for Smith an affront to sociability. It is the duty of the spectator to make his most intense experiences appear as neutral as a cold wind. The other exists just in the measure that this other is a copy of the spectator. Then selfishness is not surpassed but rather is located within a calculation: if the other maintains its propriety, the spectator can take of her but she will take care of him. This is the meaning of Smith's sentimental exchange and reciprocity.

2. Love

Smith does not want to negate Christianity. Moreover, his reflection on love has Christianity as a framework. His understanding of love is central for his project of an equilibrated society: "As to love our neighbor as we love ourselves is the great law of Christianity, so it is the great precept of nature to love ourselves only as we love our neighbor, or, what comes to the same thing, as our neighbor is capable of loving us."[22]

---

21 Ibid., 24. For an interesting discussion about the question of the voice see Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: MIT Press, 2006).

22 Ibid., 25.

Smith starts here with a reference to Christianity, a reference in a strict sense: he does not attempt to think of love from its basis in Christianity but to depart from it. He locates his own concept of love as an initial instance that announces a non-contingent law of love. Nature's law subsumes Christianity's law and in subsuming it introduces a transformation. What is in question is not whether to love our neighbor but to love that neighbor as he or she can love us. Love, for Smith, must be contained until the last moment, until the other shows of what it is capable. Just at this moment the spectator loves. To love is to return, exchange, and exercise the power of a master. If Christianity, according to Smith, does not establish a limit to love, nature is a regulator of love's intensity. The spectator loves because it has been an initial gesture, an emotional expenditure that must be returned. Virtue is, paradoxically, to love without the expectation of return: because of that Smith renounces loving the scream, the echoes, and the complaints of the corpses. Virtue contradicts calculation because it expects the magnanimous and this is, within Smith's system, the irrecoverable lost. Because of that, Smith maintains that this type of love is impossible for human nature. With this he introduces an understanding of love that is relived, at least formally, from failure and rout.

The Christian idea of love is a consideration about how to exist inside failure: love is announced when it has failed, it emphasizes that we have been loved first, and that there is occasion for retribution. Love is always a response to its own loss. It cannot sustain itself because it has fallen. This dirty and muddy love is, for Smith, indecent because it attempts the impossible. It tries to unlink itself from nature and society. It makes mediocrity tremble. A type of love that does not fear loss is furious passion that, as

hunger, is voracious. Every passionate life is fundamentally carnal: "the true cause of the peculiar disgust which we conceive for the appetites of the body when we see them in other men, is, that we cannot enter into them."[23]

Body

The question of love has effects in Smith's conception of the body. At the core of his conception is the idea of the body as uncontrollable thing that he cannot possess. The body is an insatiable assemblage of desires. It desires itself, to touch its texture, embrace other bodies, penetrate them and go out, and to wander looking for itself. The spectator cannot enter into the jumble of a body that shakes with joy. The spectator is a cold and distant gaze that does not boil. The body has appetites because it is alive, it does not consume objects but other bodies and the spectator's gaze. The body, while enjoying itself, is not productive. It remains, according to Smith, concentrated on its own sensible existence, forgetting about its social obligations, obligations such as the discipline of the factories and the marital bed. These bodily appetites are located outside the realm in which sympathy can operate.

The body is a heap of parts that demand to be satisfied. In this regard the body is, for Smith, the limited experience of being permanently affected by the world. However, the body cannot trespass itself. It makes circles, swings around itself, but it cannot recognize anything with the exception of its own existence. It is confined, as the poor wretched, to an existence without intimacy. Its insatiability, always increasing according to Smith, separates the body from what is more intimate and secret for others.

[23]Ibid., 28.

Imagination and Loss

The body does not know the monetary economy: "The person, who has lost his whole fortune, if he is in health, feels nothing in his body."[24] As an empty foundation, the body, therefore, does not belong to Smith's basic idea of sociability. The body's appetites obey a strict code: they do not require money to be satisfied. Imagination, on the other hand, says Smith, is attached to the monetary economy. For Smith what excites imagination is the absence or possession of money. The lack of money makes imagination construct states of radical solitude, shame, and misery. Money, to Smith, makes reference to the possession of human energy or life. It is money that provides identifications and that guarantees social recognition. Smith understands why the person who loses his or her fortune represents this loss as "the loss of his dignity."[25] To possess money identifies those who have embraced the spirit of the time.

The content and activities of imagination he reduces to the accumulation and circulation of money. To him, an accumulation of money expresses dignity. In order to accumulate money one has to recollect and procure to extinguish one's corporeal appetites. From Smith's position there always will be an irreducible antagonism between money and body, between dignity and wounds. Only the one who makes a docile body can accumulate the necessary money to ignore its own body. To forget the body is not a metaphor: the theory of moral sentiments is a theory for a delicate body that hides behind a modest smile. The monetary economy requires consuming, touching, and dissecting bodies. Hence, this economy asks: How can one fight against the body? Money itself is a

[24]Ibid., 29.

[25]Ibid.

body, hundreds of condensed and unsubstantial bodies. There is only one alternative to winning and that is bowing out without reserves of money. Money is, for Smith, what erases memory.

3. Pain, Forgetfulness, and Economy

Money is not only an element of economic theory. It itself economizes the body's rage, its excessive flesh. Nonetheless, imagination does not forget the separation and clash between body and money. It cannot erase from its profundities that money is bodies and that the ones carrying, taking, and dancing around money are also bodies. Imagination stalks the delicacy and propriety of the spectator, makes it return to its own blocked appetites. In so doing imagination opens economic theory to its social roots. It points to the fact that money accumulation is only possible from an exchange: the exchange of wounds for coins. Because these wounds are social, this means that they are dispersed throughout the social body and concentrate its most terrifying effects there where the songs are more intense. If "a philosopher is company to a philosopher only; the member of a club to his own little knot of companions,"[26] then the only thing universally recognizable, the only thing that links while breaking is money. This is so because the virtue of a philosopher, for Smith, consists in the creation of hermetic spheres that protect him from foreign screams. Money is what creates the territory of the virtuoso life: which consists in accumulating corpses concealed by prisons.

> A prison is certainly more useful to the public than a palace; and the person who founds the one is generally directed by a much more just spirit of patriotism than he who builds the other. But the immediate effects of a prison, the confinement of the wretches shut up in it, are disagreeable; and the imagination either does not

[26] Ibid., 34.

> take time to trace out the remote ones, or sees them at too great a distance to be much affected by them.[27]

Prisons are patriotic creations because they, like surgical instruments, fulfill the function of extirpating the wretched from the public world. A prison's lugubrious appearance contradicts its vigor: the edification of a prison is the synthesis of public virtue. The prison divides the social territory and so makes explicit the spiritual hierarchy of society. If prisons are horrible edifications it is because they take their shape from those who inhabit them. The goal of a man of virtue consists in being able to acknowledge the beauty in the midst of the putrefaction of a prison, because the prison liberates society from its "germs" and stalkers. The walls of that edification are the encrypted book that the man of letters should read in the solitude of his room. There he can find the message that he must seal in his own sad body: the punishment and pain of the wretched are the cost of the security of his perpetual present. The question is not how to appreciate the monstrosity of the wretched but to consider one delimited subject: the institutions created to punish them, horrendous as they should be, are based upon a virtuoso judgment. If initially these institutions appear to be exterior to society, this is due to the agent's weakness.

Smith insists that society requires jail cells in which to throw its waste. For the philosopher, a prison is the most human of edifices. It condenses and expresses one of the nodal points of Smith's theory of moral sentiments: sympathy and compassion are limited, and its most ardent intentions, impossible. Protection by and empathy with intimate friends is also affected by this impossibility. Trying to conduct oneself from an impossible horizon leads only to destruction and violence. With their iron and stone

[27]Ibid., 35.

eating bones, prisons reminds us that the world will never deserve a love beyond calculation. In a society surrounded by "wild beasts"[28] such places of confinement are the luminous pleasures of a humanity that must love its executioners.

Ranks, Shame, and Punishment

After expressing his admiration for prisons and punishment, Smith develops a justification of the division of social ranks. He admits that there is a relation of necessity between poverty and pleasure— clearly not because he considered poverty to be beautiful. On the contrary: "we make parade of our riches, and conceal our poverty."[29] The man of rank is, above all, an exhibitionist, and expends himself without contention. In the act of exhibiting himself he believes that he is swallowing space, time, and souls. The primitive accumulation that permits this luxurious expenditure requires unrestricted punishment and moderation. Smith writes a nostalgic song to immortality: the great man should live forever. This sentiment, explains Smith, necessarily implies the rejection of anything that happens amongst the low ranks. Among them particularities disappear; they are the ones whose most profound desire is the long life of the great man.

The origin of the distinction of ranks and the order of society is the human propensity of loving the rich and powerful. In this point Smith's philosophy turns to be the lost voice of the "poor wretched": the philosopher speaks for them in order to affirm that, despite everything, their loyalty will be always with the great man. Smith makes the low ranks pronounce a word, a promise: that they love hunger and punishment. The great man speaks for the condemned to corroborate the thesis that in an equilibrated society

[28]Ibid., 39.

[29]Ibid., 50.

conflicts or disputes must not exist. Inside the healthy and pompous body of the triumphant man everyone has to find a minuscule space to satisfy his or her own needs.

Reason, Philosophy, and Order

Smith continues his justification and exaltation of the class system by saying, "That Kings are the servants of the people, to be obeyed, resisted, deposed, or punished, as the public convenience may require, is the doctrine of reason and philosophy; but it is not the doctrine of nature."[30] Once again a tension appears. Smith introduces the public equilibrium as the criterion by which to judge authority and sovereignty, reason and philosophy, hunger and social and existential despair. Although limited, this criterion is political and therefore admits interpretations and applications. It is possible to understand that the organization of society will be what prompts political relationships. Therefore reason must reach the highest limit of social tensions in order to satisfy its own expectations. Rational are those practices that are put into radical debate and can be transformed. The rationality of an action follows if it is effective or has a plausible capacity of contributing to public wellbeing. It is known that, for Smith, the public ambit includes only men from the high ranks. Independently of this, Smith opposes the doctrine of philosophy to the doctrine of nature.

The latter assumes authority as constitutive and inalienable. Once Smith establishes the natural (not rational) preeminence of the great man, he advises the "man of inferior rank" of how to distinguish himself in the public sphere. All this advice comes from what Smith denominates as the doctrine of nature. Reason has to surrender itself to the doctrine of nature, he insists, because this doctrine is the foundation of the differences

[30]Ibid., 53.

of rank.[31] This is Smith's critique of reason. He is not looking for the rational. The basic argument of the contradiction between reason and nature Smith develops as an apology of nature and divine favor: "By 1776 when he published *The Wealth of Nations*, he does not appear to have moved far from the stance adopted in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* where he maintains that success in business, like aristocratic birth, should be regarded as a sign of divine favour."[32] This apology serves as a structure of his economic theory. As a social application of this apology he proposes to those of low rank strategies to achieve excellence: they have to improve their technical skills, stretch their physical capacities to the limit, and wait with patience for death. Moreover, and perhaps most important, the "low ranks" must always be prepared to give their lives for the great man. This new (low ranked) man, the public man par excellence, should be ready for the battle because it is battle that allows him to be recognized as an honorable man.

These men have only their bodies to give testimony of themselves. In the empty landscape or war, in the midst of corpses and the halt, the men of "middle and low rank" build their bloody future. Not only that, but he insists it is crucial that they die with pride. Because of that he develops a theory of sympathy to the miserable. They are the ones that will die in the place of the men of letters and monarchs. It is from this assumption that come Smith's cautions about the "man of fashion."[33] Men of fashion lack the physical and spiritual conditions to defend society. Yet they are no less for that; indeed, Smith insists that we (presumably meaning lowly men, canon fodder) never forget that fashion,

---

[31] Jonathan I. Israel, *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights 1750-1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 237. See also Marcel Hénaff, *Le prix de la vérité: le don, l'argent, la philosophie* (Paris: Seuil, 2002), 28-30.

[32] Ibid., 238.

[33] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* 64.

the refined language of the salons, and good conversations require the brave and obedient masculinity of the men without honor.

> Many a poor a man places his glory in being thought rich, without considering that the duties (if one may call such follies by so very venerable a name) with what reputation imposes upon him, must soon reduce him to beggary, and render his situation still more unlike that of those whom he admires and imitates, that it had been originally.[34]

To those non-recognizable men no noble sin or excess is allowed. Their vocation, if they aspire to recognition, is to assume fully the rigorous discipline of the factory, the martial spirit, and the shadows of happiness. For Smith the requisite for recognition is the obedience to nature. That is to say to forget reason in order to receive, perhaps, a tear.

4. Economic Objects

Smith establishes in the first part of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* the necessary conditions for a healthy and wealthy commonwealth. At the beginning of the second part there is a reflection about what Smith calls the "imaginary resentment of the slain."[35] His reflection assumes that death destroys life without attenuations. The cold corpses cannot say anything to us; it marks the end of our responsibility to them and to all they could have desired and cared for. Phantoms do not exist; economy has only life as its object. And life is understood as the blood exchanged in the market by warm bodies. The dead, because they cannot reappear, must remain foreign to our hearts. An economy should not stop its march toward progress because of the unachieved dreams of those captive in graves. We must, Smith says, pay no attention to the vengeance of the

[34]Ibid., 64.

[35]Ibid., 69.

offended, to sentiments that sway us in our daily tasks. Indeed, to resist death, or to conceive of its annihilation, belongs to the most important secrets of reason, he insists.

Economy of Nature

Smith proposes a theory of resentment that does not consider the complaints and blood of the dead. What underlies this theory is the doctrine of the just punishment, the necessity and usefulness of the punitive structure and its forms of social implementation. Without punishment, according to Smith, there can be no society and without accepting punishment as some sort of educative apparatus there can be no agents. Sympathy is not directed at individuals or specific events but fundamentally at what, for Smith, makes society possible. What is at stake in his theory of moral sentiments is the type of relationship that must be established between law, punishment, and sentimentality. Every law must be inscribed on the body so that punishment can produce intimate satisfaction. Smith manages to cancel any possible rebellion against law and the doctrine of nature.

Smith was able to foresee what Borges declared later: "Ciego a las culpas, el destino puede ser despiadado con las mínimas distracciones."[36]The randomness of destiny cannot determine social life and because of that it is necessary for the masses to understand that they inhabit a world that has, for them, just two possibilities: law and punishment. Because of this it is necessary to say that Smith's philosophy is an attempt to overcome reason.

[36] Jorge Luis Borges, "El Sur," in *Obras Completas* I: 1923-1949 (Buenos Aires: Emecé editores, 2005), 562.

The Crypt and Writing

Smith does not propose a rational philosophy. Although he intuits reason, he prefers to escape from its conflictive character. Smith's writing pretends to seduce the future: honor is a possibility if one assumes it can protect the condition of being men and women. He speaks to the multitudes, asking them to be pure, and advising them that it is fundamental to avoid luxury and riches. As an alternative to palaces he offers a common place: the city, home, and the places of work. Gray and cold as they are, those are the spaces in and through which society grows and becomes interconnected and indispensable. Smith's reflections do not admit ambiguous interpretations: "The very existence of society requires that unmerited and unprovoked malice should be restrained by proper punishments; and, consequently, that to inflict those punishments should be regarded as a proper and laudable action."[37]

The theory of just punishment belongs to what Smith designates as "the economy of nature." Within the context of his presentation "Of Merit and Demerit," Smith narrows the economy of nature to one goal: nature provides humanity with a basic tendency toward self-preservation and propagation. Smith understands that human beings want to persist in their existence, extend it through procreation (family), and even avoid thinking about their own extinction. The authentically human has an aversion to death that, according to Smith, lies at the frontiers of thinking. The authentic thinker is the one whose orientation is to preserve human life through planning and instruments. To think is to act according to the principle of the production and reproduction of the conditions that make life possible. The problem for Smith is that, once again, nature and reason do

[37] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* 77.

not coincide. The ends provided by nature reveal themselves as too immense for the means (reason) that humans have for reason's achievement. Though Smith's humans aspire in any way possible to continue their existence, they cannot do it by themselves. These men of weak reason and obscure futures cannot deal with themselves. The vulnerability of their reason transforms these beings into hungry animals. Smith knows that desire is not the result of lacking an object but that its dynamism precedes any specific object. Desire creates worlds and shadows. In throwing himself towards the satisfaction of his desires and the enjoyment of its basic necessities, laments Smith, man forgets about the goals that "the great Director of nature intended to produce by them."[38]

In the midst of ardent desire and insufficient reason Smith's men do not take into account the director of nature, the fundamental economist. Smith presents pleasure and weak reason as a distraction that transforms means into ends. If man's reason cannot make the future, Smith proposes a complementary economy to nature's economy directly from nature's director.

Reproduction and Survival: The Theory of Justice

Starting with this section I present the most specific theological contents of Smith's philosophy. The complementary economy continues within the path of just punishment and it is synthesized in a general principle that Smith calls "the most sacred laws of justice:" life, property, and contracts. These principles are thought to be artifacts that regulate the factual constitution of society. This implies that they cannot be satisfied if the present forms of social organization are or attempt to be transformed. Then, it is possible to say that Smith proposes that the laws of justice cannot be fulfilled without the

[38] Ibid., 78.

existence of his ideal society. To his mind, society does not have an open horizon. Its possibilities have already been expressed. This interpretation emphasizes that Smith's society is, at its core, a creation of the director of nature and that justice is way of calling for the defense of society.

Making Us Social

> Were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with its own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face.[39]

Smith's concept of human is a part of his complementary economy. It implies a strong disposition to work over one's flesh to produce a natural self. Because of this the bare man, the madman that sings, cannot recognize himself and feel shame (for he lacks culture). Solitude is, for Smith, an open door through which to become absorbed in one's own passions, a space in and through which one seeks pleasure as an end in itself. Communication and language is consequently a defeat, a scar, and a memory of an intimate life in which there were other channels by which one could have shown one's humanity and been with others, whether that were by a kiss, a scrawl, or by drunkenness. The inclination of the head, the tactile playfulness, and the unexpected disasters are subjected to a primordial punishment: the mirror and the eyes of the other.[40]Smith's agent is broken at his core and divides himself to conclude the procedure of examination. The constant divisions and the resultant multiplicity function as the production of capital.

> When I endeavor to examine my own conduct, when I endeavor to pass sentence upon it, and either to approve or condemn it, it is evident that, in all such cases, I

[39] Ibid., 110.

[40] Ibid., 110-111.

> divide myself, as it were, into two persons; and that I, the examiner and judge, represent a different character from that other I, the person whose conduct is examined into and judged of.[41]

Smith's I has the peculiar capacity to interrupt the appearance given by the mirror. The I that examines and judges suspends the artifice that allows the agent to participate in the social transactions as united. This unity is partially destroyed to make possible the judgment over the persona. This is the physical apparition that moves, makes and fulfills contracts, kills in war and exerts effort in the factories, and appears and disappears as a shadow exposed to noises. A defeated body and sentiments constitute the person; she or he is a labor force, a weapon of war, and a reproductive machine. However, as in the case of the bare man, such a person lacks his or her self. In one of the corners of his or her room the person, whether exhausted or energized, is taken to trial without knowing exactly of what he or she is accused. However, this trial does not occur in a space that is time determined; rather it functions as the *a priori* concept of space-time. The productivity of a person presupposes the recurrent and constant judgment. The trial is happening always, because the person cannot be absolved.

The charges against the person continue to grow even if that person is trying to obey the director of nature. Every trial is suspended if the accused promises eternal loyalty to the director of nature and to its purposes. The division of the I or self is a way to maintain a prerogative: there is a point at which the spectator is always united. This unity is what Smith proposes for the society divided into ranks and for the social division of labor. If he admits that the human essence is the complex combination of its social relationships, then it is necessary to say that this essence is an uncontestable judgment

[41]Ibid., 113.

against which are leveled secret accusations. The divided society embodies its cuts, domination, and modes of production all the while stalking the internalized judge. A. Schopenhauer (1788-1860) takes Smith's juridical theater to the level of existential condition. Schopenhauer presents sadness and nostalgia without considering their strong attachments to what for Smith are everlasting foundations.

> Our existence has no foundation to support it except the ever-fleeting and vanishing present; and so constant motion is essentially its form, without any possibility of that rest for which we are always longing […] Thus restlessness is the original form of existence. In such a world where there is no stability of any kind, no lasting state is possible but everything is involved in restless rotation and change, where everyone hurries along and keeps erect on a tight trope by always advancing and moving, happiness is not even conceivable.[42]

Schopenhauer's sad tone is the written version, the condensation, of historical and social conditions. This sadness does not know how to ask about its own origins. He identifies failure with an unavoidable fate linked to itinerant and elusive time. Schopenhauer cannot overlook that sadness is a symptom of quietness and reiteration; if the market moves, it is because at the core of the people and their apparent mobility the reiterative judgment blocks the eruption of the volatile. If there is no rest it is because the market has to grow and its growing requires extenuation. More than a condition, being restless is a result of modes of social organization. These modes of organization should produce anger and rage towards the condition of the person. Smith opposes rage and offers happiness instead. What we must think about is how to liberate ourselves from the happiness of surviving judgment one more day.

> The real individuals of our time are the martyrs who have gone through infernos of suffering and degradation in their resistance to conquest and oppression, not the inflated personalities of popular culture, the conventional dignitaries. These unsung heroes consciously exposed their existence as individuals to the terroristic

[42] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena* Vol. II, trans. E.F.J Payne (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 284.

> annihilation that others undergo unconsciously through the social process […] The task of philosophy is to translate what they have done into language that will be heard, even though their finite voices have been silenced by tyranny.[43]

I do agree that there are forms of individuation that are not completely subsumed by the cruel happiness of Smith's prisons and intimate scaffolds. Nonetheless the access to those experiences and finite rebellions cannot be translated into philosophical language. Moreover, what exactly is the language of philosophy? Is it not Smith's own language, a language that comes from philosophical techniques? As I have demonstrated, it is in the philosophical language itself that tyranny reveals itself, showing at the same time paths to radically different forms of individuation. Therefore the task of philosophy is to approach its own trajectories and most significantly its own tyrannies. The pretension of being a translator of finite voices transforms the philosophical act in a mimetic gesture of Smith's own translation of the loud voices of the other. It is in philosophy itself that the tyranny and its multiple counterparts are expressed as a part of social and political conflicts that are not translated but rather than enacted by philosophy. Philosophical interventions are not simply the communicators of a singular scream or command. They always contain, even as scars, the presences that populated the world that made them possible. Philosophical interventions are as sinuous as the relationship between agent and spectator.

5. Agent and Spectator

The one taken to judgment is the agent, the public figure that everyday lives out the doctrine of the creator. The judge is the spectator (the original idea) that acts in the world through its copy. Their difference cannot be abridged to "one is cause and the other

[43] Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (London/New York: Continuum, 2004 [1947]), 109.

the effect."[44] The spectator is the perfect version that, because of its condition of perfection, cannot relate directly to the everyday affairs of the world. This also has to do with its constitution as it does not have a body and therefore does not suffer alterations. The agent, copy, or residuum of the spectator is fundamentally a body that just intuits the spiritual life. Their relationship is necessary because Smith knows that the new economy cannot produce and reproduce itself without bodies. In its most pathetic version, the relationship between idea and bodies there is not forgiveness for the body and its needs.[45] This is possible because, for Smith, bodies want to be recognized and embraced by the idea.

Religion: A World to Come

After his apology on punishment and his elaboration of obedience, Smith offers a reflection about religion. His objective is to differentiate between true and false religion. This differentiation continues his discussion about the limits and possibilities of recognition. The first point of his reflection deals with the religion of the desperate as they cannot achieve recognition in Smith's understanding of society. He clearly acknowledges that religion plays a primordial role in the rebellion of the poor. Because Smith's notion of recognition is impossible, the masses of condemned bodies look to the solace of religion.

> The persons in such unfortunate circumstances that humble philosophy which confines its views to this life, can afford, perhaps, but little consolation. Everything that could render either life or death respectable is taken from them. They are condemned to death and to everlasting infamy. Religion can alone afford them any effectual comfort. She alone can tell them that it is of little importance what man may think of their conduct, while the all-seeing Judge of the world

[44]*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 113.

[45]Ibid., 118.

> approves of it. She alone can present to them the view of another world; a world of more candor, humanity and justice that the present.[46]

For the condemned the constituted world is an irredeemable place. For Smith, the condemned ones screams of innocence and rebellion cannot be attended to. The organization of social relations does not have space for reparation and doubt. Verdicts, judges, and trials cannot be contested. Philosophy, or more precisely the philosophical techniques, acts like the copyist of the judge: philosophy writes and proclaims in the salons and universities that the condemnation to death is more than rational; it is the revelation of the organizer of nature. Yet as Smith recognizes resistance to annihilation persists—in the form of religion. Religion offers another world, one in which the legal structure trembles. From those irruptions arise, like wild plants, images and noises of a justice that does not require division and subjugation.

The judge that sees everything does not condemn and incites the imagination of another world. Within Smith's theory, religion has an anomalous status, but at its core it is indecent because it introduces the impossible into what he likes to think of as his closed world.

The Forbidden Name

The introduction of the religious anomaly helps Smith to emphasize that in the real world the religious judge does not have any power. The ambit of the judge is the wounded heart of the condemned person who longs for individual consolation. That world does not have the potency to interfere with the world designed by "The All-wise Author of Nature."[47] The religious world is evanescent, unsubstantial, a product of

[46]Ibid., 120-121.

[47]Ibid., 128.

weakness and despair. From this perspective it is possible to argue that religion is not a complex of beliefs but a horizon that must be practically and partially reached. How then does one create a new world? The "Author of Nature" on the other hand makes social relationships the highest goal of human life. The author has left the world entirely to the disposition of men so they can judge themselves. Politically this means that it has sanctioned Smith's divisions as transcendental. First, men judge and condemn each other, and then they condemn themselves. The demigod never forgets.[48] If the internal judge is afraid to condemn itself and this is one of the motivations of Smith's reflections, a demigod rises against it. Against this demigod struggles another root of human nature: a hope and expectation for a coming world. Smith writes from within an agonic struggle. The effective and factual social relationships face the also real and unfathomable expectations of a non-calculated and novel space that come from the rebellion of the poor. From the ruins and scraps of desperate men appears an afflicted nature.

As a response to this, Smith proposes to keep loving life: "The poor man must neither defraud nor steal from the rich, though the acquisition might be much more beneficial to the one than the loss could be hurtful to the other."[49] If the thirsty and hungry poor person decides to steal or, more precisely is obliged to do so in order to preserve his life, he has to put the love of life above the love of self. Any individual necessity, not even the drive to self-preservation, can be considered as more valuable than the interest of the majority. The demigod is the one that gives a message: do not

[48] Ibid., 131.

[49] Ibid., 138.

resist, be a man. To die Smith considers as divine virtue; it is what makes the poor be closer to God.

6. Deity and Spectator

Smith's philosophy of moral sentiments is a theological enterprise throughout. As a part of this enterprise he creates his own understanding of a true religion. Therefore, religion also has its double. For Smith there is another religion which is part of the sequence of law, punishment, love, and death. In this religion it is the deity itself that inscribes morality in every heart. Within the realm of this deity there is no other possible world. Smith's world finishes its cycle: it announces that it start from facts and ends with an explicit theology. Nonetheless, from the beginning of his moral philosophy, Smith proposes a theology. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments'* form of exposition implies that there has since the beginning been an encounter between nature and deity. In contrast to his idea of human reason, Smith's divinity is all-comprehensive and self-founded.[50] It is on this basis that Smith writes his philosophy. Smith's deity is theological in one precise and concise sense: it is a presence whose apparition depends upon and is made possible by writing. It does not differ from the word that represents it. This religion and its deity are necessary to reinforce the sense of duty. The obligation is not to the divinity but to the happiness of the commonwealth. This deity does not require anything because it has deposited its entire being into justice and its "vicegerents." Smith equates the historical and contingent reality with the law of a God.[51]

---

[50] For an analysis that can be applied to Smith see Franz J. Hinkelammert, *Crítica a la razón utópica* (San José: DEI, 1984), 91ff.

[51] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* 210.

As a part of this equation Smith locates the vicegerents of God inside every person; he understands the social conflicts and struggles as if they were a battle against God. In this labyrinth of tensions that Smith is always touching upon and from which he wants to escape, his last play is to put God on his side. It is in the immanent heaven that everything can be remediated. Smith's false alternatives are either to cooperate with God to achieve happiness or to rebel against it: "By acting otherwise, on the contrary, we seem to obstruct, in some measure, the scheme which the Author of Nature has established for the happiness and perfection of the world, and to declare ourselves, if I may say so, in some measure the enemies of God."[52] And this God is always stalking, ready to punish, and eager for revenge. Its body is the body of the philosopher. Smith returns to one of the most important questions of his moral philosophy as a result of his reflection about God. The question can be considered strictly soteriological.

Flesh and Savages

The question to which he returns is: what are the conditions, exercises, and economization that everyone has to practice in order to fulfill God's plan? Smith's response is based upon an alleged "comparative anthropology." One of the categories that organizes this comparison is self-denial. Smith compares his own anthropological situation with what he denominates "savages and barbarians."[53] These are beings that close themselves to any risky passion because they are in permanent danger. Their primordial condition is that of the weak that hides from the other, and that attempts not to be perceived. Their being is always about to be destroyed. They are never satisfied with

[52] Ibid., 166.

[53] Ibid., 205.

themselves. Their misery, that for Smith is congenital, does not allow them to develop a personality and societies. In the strictest sense the savages, as the wretched, cannot develop such things because of their constitutive weakness. The savage is a solitarian without a possible salvation; it is completely turned towards its broken self.

Such savages cannot have encounters with others because their own life is ungraspable to them. Among the savages sympathy has not been developed; they have, therefore, another nature. The savage, says Smith, falls into its solitary silence and does not get out of it. If for Smith noise is a mark of damaged humanity, silence is its scar of inferiority. If one is fully human, that humanity, the philosopher emphasizes, has to be expressed through moderate talking. This means permanently exposing oneself, constantly revealing oneself to others. The spoken word is the place in which the person is solidified. Through speaking a person exposes him or herself to the judgment of others. The spoken word serves as evidence of the state of one's secret places. Smith introduces an analysis of language as juridical device: the act of speaking weakens the security artifices within the speaker that introduce a conflict with duty and God. In speaking, the agent shows everything to its accusers. Talk is always the economic norm that Smith misses in the savages. Among themselves, explains Smith, they are indifferent.

To silence, savages add distance from every stimuli. Smith, who writes from a colonial imaginary, creates what can be called sensible blocking of the conqueror: due to the fact that when they are being tortured the savages do not express the natural emotions of a person, the conqueror cannot demonstrate his or her own sensibility. For Smith, conquest and torture do not affect the sphere of human sensibility because the conquered other, given its alleged insensibility, shows its empty heart. Smith understands conquest

as a pre-sentimental activity in which what are being hurt are merely objects, raw material. Savages are thus another modality of the bare man. Here a question of particular political importance that has been discussed, among others, by Achille Mbembe (1957), must be introduced:

> I do not intend to go back over such problematic of continent as "invention", since the history of that imaginary has been firmly established and its wellsprings laid bare. I am, rather, concerned with two issues, two sides of a coin. One is the burden of the arbitrariness involved in seizing from the world and putting to death what has previously decreed to be nothing, an empty figure. The other is the way the negated subject deprived of power, pushed even farther away, to the other side, behind the existing world, our of the world, takes on himself or herself the act of his or her own destruction and prolongs his/her own crucifixion.[54]

It is clear that Smith's colonial and fantastic take on others is sustained by a ferocious inventiveness. However, Mbembe's double issue is an attempt to understand why the conqueror and his philosophers try to destroy what is not even supposed to exist. This is a question about the motivations of a philosophy that declares both the inhumanity of savages and at the same time expresses certain nostalgia about its alleged primitive and original characteristics. It is more appropriate to refer to the instances rather than motivations through which a philosopher pretends both to negate the existence and capture a savage or barbarian. In the case of Smith it is, as I shall explain in what follows, some of those fixations and fantasies that populate the philosophical delirium.

The Sound and Fury

For Smith the basic theological and economic contradiction is between the savage and God: "every savage is said to prepare himself, from his dreadful end: he composes for this purpose what they call the song of death, a song which he is to sing when he has

[54] Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, trans. A. M. Berrett (Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 2001), 173-174.

fallen into the hands of his enemies, and is expiring under the tortures which they inflict upon him."[55] Smith's savages compose songs. Their intimacy and interior appear not to be accessible. Their voices remain distant, open to a future that does not belong to the torturer. The savage murmurs a melody that guards its life from the fire and also makes present the multitude of lives that make its songs possible. All music speaks; it says multiple things that are not always immediately understandable. The torturer, whose voice the philosopher pretends to be, gets frustrated because the burning body is not his property, and because the bloody lips of the savage conceal what is most important. Torture has as its purpose to make the condemned live enough to declare that they surrender. To surrender to the torturer has a direct relationship with the imperative to obey the spectator. In each case what is at stake is accepting the infinite power of God. The songs that the savage sing are suspired against death, the songs introduce a battle with God. Smith's dream is that all the impoverished, accused, and tortured learn how to defeat their weaknesses in order for them to remain firm when the fire consumes them.

For Smith, conquest and colonization are hazardous turns of fortune[56] that demonstrate, in the midst of cruelty, the noble character of the savage. To the question of the uniformity of human nature[57] Smith adds this apparent tension: the braveness of the savage. Smith laments that it is a feature that has been weakened in and through civilized societies. The philosopher keeps the hope that it will be possible to combine the love of God and the availability of death. The economic theory and anthropological speculations

[55] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 206.

[56] Ibid.

[57] C. Marouby, *L' Economie de la nature,* 31.

are linked in order to ask even more of the condemned: "The hardiness demanded of savages diminishes their humanity, and, perhaps, the delicate sensibility required in civilized nations sometimes destroys the masculine firmness of the character."[58] The previous declaration is awkward. The savages are from the outset not considered as humans. The relationship between the civilized and the savage, inside Smith's work, is organized from the assumption of a radical difference that is never called into question. The angle that interests Smith is not the "loss of humanity" but the question of the destruction of masculinity.

The Gentleman's Nostalgia

As we saw in chapter two the concept of women and men is at the heart of economic theory. Here, the dichotomy of feminine and masculine is addressed, at least momentarily, from a third place: the imagined as savage. In him is paradoxically condensed masculine firmness, thirst for blood, and indifference in the midst of terror. The savage still has original characteristics that appear to be vanishing inside the turbulence of the city. The gentleman feels nostalgia for the combination of discretion and fury. His dream is a world in which the agony of the battlefield is covered by blood. The savage, a rhetorical figure, provides the place in which the human is a combination of laconic heroism and monetary accumulation. The rupture between matrix and body, origin and present marks Smith's anthropological genealogy.[59] As in the case of the

[58] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* 209.

[59] Gerhard Streminger, *Der natürliche Lauf der Dinge,* 9-33.

division of labor, in which he recognizes its deadly effects on the workers, Smith makes the "original masculinity" of the savage an object of philosophical remembrance.[60]

This is the reason why Smith's theory of moral sentiments is an artifact that creates differences and encrypts them.[61] The production of differences, in this case concentrated on the savage, is in itself cryptic.[62] The savage, as a rhetorical place, is the intentional oblivion of what exceeds the gaze of the spectator. But Smith does not stop there. He estimates that it is even necessary to cancel the nostalgia. Smith turns against himself and his fantasies about beings that have the war inscribed in their skin. The philosopher creates an itinerary that serves as a philosophy of history: the origin of the human, conserved still by the savage, is found in the inclination towards action and care of silence. When history, that subsumes savages as ashes, reaches its highest productivity the roots of humanity are put at risk.

Thus, Smith writes a requiem for the savage whom he cannot but condemn to perpetual servitude.[63] At the core of this condemnation is the project to include these men by ignoring who they are, and seeing them solely as a labor force: "One who, in flying from an enemy whom it was impossible to resist, should throw down his infant because it retarded his flight, would surely be excusable; since, by attempting to save it, he could

---

[60] Silvia Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment,* 6-9.

[61] For this procedure see Franck Tinland, *L'Homme Sauvage: Homo ferus et Homo sylvestris de l'animal à l'homme* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).

[62] Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001 [1944]), 45-49.

[63] Fonna Forman-Barzilai, "Smith's anti-cosmopolitanism," *The Adam Smith Review* 5 (2010): 145-160.

only hope for the consolation of dying with it."[64] Smith interprets the abandonment of children, in the context of persecutions and killings, as the expression of an ancient tradition. With this he negates the tension and radical loss that are implied by deciding to let a child die. The gentleman reader of so-called historical documents cannot admit that while reading about far away tropical people he is also provoking escapes and death:[65] "Thus, there is no violence in a colony without a sense of contiguity […] Furthermore colonial violence is linked to the exercise of language, to a series of acts, gestures, noises."[66] Reading and writing are also those gestures in and through which Smith belongs to the imperial and colonial enterprise.

7. Take care of yourself: Distance and Obedience

Smith concludes that everyone has to take care of himself.[67] This maxim meshes with Smith's idea about the constitutive sentimental narrowness of the human.[68] To face this condition, which for Smith is natural, it is necessary to create small units of care. These unities have as their norm to reduce distance and to intensify sentimental exchanges.[69] Besides that they preserve social peace: "The distinction of ranks, the peace and order of society, are in great measure founded upon the respect which we naturally conceive for the former […] The peace and order of society is of more importance than

[64] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* 210.

[65] Showing this interrelation is the merit of Emma Rothschild, *The Inner Life of Empires: An Eighteenth-Century History* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011).

[66] Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 175.

[67] Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests,* 109-113.

[68] Ed Cohen, *A Body Worth Defending: Immunity, Biopolitics, and the Apotheosis of the Modern Body* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009), 109-116.

[69] See for a detailed discussion David Sunderland, *Social Capital, Trust and the Industrial Revolution, 1780-1880* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 85-106.

even the relief of the miserable."[70] This principle is extensively developed in the section entitled "Of Universal Benevolence" and "Self-Command." As a whole these two sections conclude Smith's theological economy by offering the meta-theoretical conditions for *An Inquiry Into the Wealth of Nations*.[71]

Throughout the development of his theory, Smith does not conceal a deep sense of unsettledness. He is aware that the solid can and, effectively is, vanishing into the air. He is able to grasp and even show some of the conflicts of a world that is being fractured by conquest, impoverishment, and commercial trade. The spectacular mobility of the world that Smith is trying to contain makes him create a mega-economic criterion: it is imperative for everyone to surrender to the Universe. Smith's model is, once again, that of the soldier who is willing to gives his life.[72] This imperative of cheerful sacrifice has to be read as a total politics of life.[73]

For the condemned, those of low rank, the savages, madmen, and the rebellious there is no option but to be the vomit of a drunken Universe. In Smith's theological hierarchy one has to stop, in order to grasp his theological thinking, in the cosmic residuum over which Smith passes as a warrior. This distant closeness with the marginalized and fools leaves testimony of the tensions of a theory throughout which the

---

[70] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* 226.

[71] John Millar, a student of Smith at the University of Glasgow, was the first to point to this transition. See John Millar, *The Origins of the Distinction of Ranks,* ed. Aaron Garrett (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2006 [1771]), 264-265. For a recent commentary, see John McMurtry, "Understanding Market Theology," in *The Invisible Hand and The Common Good*, ed. Bernard Hodgson (Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer, 2004), 151-182.

[72] Wendy Brown, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 157.

[73] Franz J. Hinkelammert, *Economía y revolución* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico, 1967), 124ff; also Ulrich Duchrow and Franz J. Hinkelammert, *Transcending Greedy Money: Interreligious Solidarity for Just Relations* (New York: MacMillan Palgrave, 2012), 100-102.

author faces an occult enemy. That enemy is a contemplative man, a phrase in the midst of flames, and a rumor of war fields.[74] Smith closes with a circumspect conclusion: "The administration of the great system of the universe, however, the care of the universal happiness of all rational and sensible beings, is the business of God, and not of man."[75] This position is consistent with Smith's entire political, economic, and philosophical project. There is no rupture between Smith's moral and economic theories. Moreover, he expands his idea of God's economy in his most openly economic reflections. Morality and philosophy embrace themselves in Smith's idea of the invisible hand. This idea is a culmination of his attempt to create a theory in which the world is presented as a totality without fissures.

The Invisible Hand

The previous passage announces and explains in advance Smith's invisible hand in *The Wealth of Nations*:

> He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public, nor knows how much he is promoting it. By preferring the support of domestic to that of foreign industry in such a manner as its produce may be of the greatest value, he intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention […] By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.[76]

Men's sole responsibility is to take care of themselves and their sentimental circles or units. The aforementioned passage of *The Wealth of Nations* accents the individual's actions within the market. As he establishes certain relationships and makes

---

[74] Michael J. Shapiro, *Reading "Adam Smith": Desire, History and Value* (Newbury Park, London, New Dehli: Sage Publications, 1993).

[75] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* 237.

[76] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry Into the Wealth of Nations,* 477- 478.

choices, he is creating the conditions of possibility for the invisible hand to lead him to promote the security of his society. This invisible hand is none other than the God from the *Theory of Moral Sentiments.* The God that is in charge of the universe as a whole introduces its hand in human society in order to promote unexpected implications out of self-interest. The message is the same although presented in different contexts and languages. The role of God and the invisible hand is that of conducting irrationality. There is in Smith, as in Petty and Steuart, a form of soteriological[77] longing. But in Smith's case the economic relationships and economic theories are not what directly offer salvation. Smith proposes a continuum that could be arranged in such a way that the authentic human beings, organized as a society, could achieve happiness not because of social practices intended to produce it for everyone. There are irrational and insensible beings that remain far from God's hand. Because there is no rupture between Smith's moral and economic theories,[78] Smith develops a theory of the incorporation of bodies within society.

Becoming a Body

Individuals have to become a body, transform themselves into bodies, and accept their bodies.[79] To be incorporated, as flesh, into social dynamics and institutions requires

[77] For a basic commentary about this passage that oblivions the question of soteriology see Daniel M. Bell Jr., *The Economy of Desire: Christianity and Capitalism in a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2012), 73-74. For a different approach see Yong-Sun Yang, *Economies of Salvation: Adam Smith and Hegel* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2012).

[78] Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 165-166. See also Eleanor Courtemanche, *The 'Invisible Hand' and British Fiction, 1818-1860: Adam Smith, Political Economy, and the Genre of Realism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 21-72.

[79] Didier Deleule and François Guery*, El cuerpo productivo,* 73-86.

everyone to be a unitary body that works, speaks, judges, and loves its country[80] but fundamentally its own self-interest, which Smith identifies as God´s own providence. Now it is possible to see that in Smith's narrative the poor are precisely those that are not possessed by corporality. It was Karl Marx who partially observed this question with particular accuracy:

> As a result, therefore, man (the worker) only feels himself freely active in his animal functions – eating, drinking, procreating, or at most in his dwelling and in dressing-up, etc; and in his human functions he no longer feels himself to be anything but an animal. What is animal becomes human and what is human becomes animal. Certainly eating, drinking, procreating, etc, are also genuinely human functions. But taken abstractly, separated from the sphere of all other human activity and turned into sole and ultimate ends, they are animal functions.[81]

Marx did not acknowledge that for Smith there is no such division or dichotomy between animal and human. In Smith's system there is no separation but the presence of a body, which is a transparent ensemble that permits the production, distribution, and accumulation of life. For Smith, life is the flesh that in Tertullian appears as be provided of inclinations and temperatures that make difficult for its capture and control.[82] Because of that Tertullian creates a flesh without action, density, and passion. This explains Tertullian's interest in the question of Mary's virginity.[83] In assigning a passive flesh to Jesus (*genere non vitio*) or more precisely in creating a theory of a damaged flesh, Tertullian creates the soteriological body, which is flesh controlled by the divine substance. He creates a body that consumes flesh at the same time that he locates it as an

---

[80] André Gorz, *The Immaterial*, trans. Chris Turner (London, New York, Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2010), 1-33.

[81] Karl Marx – Frederick Engels, *Collected Works Volume* 3, 274-275.

[82] *Tertullian's Treatise on the Resurrection*, ed. Ernest Evans (London: SPCK, 1960), 7-8 [21-27].

[83] Tertullian, *De carne Christi,* XVII-XVIII.

accessible and sensible present object. Incarnation, the process in and through which flesh is taken by a body, is an agonic struggle against the carnal *actus*: what Smith does is attempt to go to the densest and deepest part of the person in order to subsume its potency.

A body is not something that one carries or brings with oneself; to assume a body, as Smith demonstrates, supposes a trajectory: "Man *lives* on nature--means that nature is his *body,* with which he must remain in continuous interchange if he is not to die. That man's physical and spiritual life is linked to nature simply means that nature is linked to itself, for man is a part of nature."[84] The body that Marx refers to is not Smith's body. It is not simply the body of animal *oeconomy* but another body different from Marx's natural body. Smith's is a reflection about the body that pretends to transform or to take the place of the organic body. The pilgrim walks, advances, but because his body hurts, he has a hope inside him. To produce and achieve his hope he has to struggle against his basic productive tool: his corporality. He does not go so far as amputation or dismembering but he indeed is at the limits of locality and nationality. In his pilgrimage he becomes a silhouette, an unrecognizable shadow, a monster that hides in the forest.

He doubts Smith's God and its administration of the World and separates himself from its economy. Smith's bodies are thought to be reduced to the performance of basic tasks whose projection they cannot decide. Family, friends, and the country are also micro-productive bodies. Inside these bodies circulate and produce the words and gestures that make the market possible and excited. The market ultimately belongs to and

[84] Karl Marx – Frederick Engels, *Collected Works Volume 3: Marx-Engels 1843-1844,* 276.

is protected by God, says Smith. Its quotidian life is composed of the different body-performances, all of them separated by degrees of magnanimity and honor.[85]

The rest of the spheres of action that Smith assigns to the "weak man" must be understood as derivations of self-interest. The limits of the care for others Smith has established in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* as resignation and honorable masculinity. As a wound that spreads itself over the skin the world of Gods, demi-gods, and vice-regents that Smith instituted as ground for his philosophy reiterates a message: you must be a man until the end.

Economy of the Flesh: Dawn and Vice

My reading of Smith goes beyond some of the limitations that appear in even some of the most critical interpretations. Even when they adequately interpret Smith's project, some readers still miss some of its most important epistemic moves.

> Far from theorizing a self-regulating market that would work best with a minimalist state or with no state at all, *The Wealth of Nations*, no less than the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and the unpublished *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, presupposed the existence of a strong state that would create and reproduce the conditions for the existence of the market, that would use the market as an effective instrument of government; that would regulate its operation; and that would actively intervene to correct or counter its socially or politically undesirable outcomes.[86]

The aforementioned description inserts Smith's philosophy into the scheme of the relationships between state and market. It is accurate as it highlights the effective tendency at the surface of Smith's political economy. What it lacks is that it does not consider the foundational and theological area that in fact prompts Smith's narrative. What is theorized first by Smith is the transition from bare life (plural and moveable

[85] D.D Raphael , *The Impartial Spectator* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 123-125.

[86] Giovanni Arrighi, *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the Twenty-First Century* (London and New York: Verso, 2008), 42-43.

flesh) to bodies. Smith proposes an economy of minimal flesh that transforms flesh into strong and healthy bodies. These bodies are not all given by nature. What nature provides is an anatomical structure and a complex system of affections that must be transformed into agents and vigilant spectators. Incarnation becomes in this lineage a decisive security and health device to suppress the latent rebellion of impassible flesh: "More than an expulsion of flesh, this concerns its incorporation into an organism that is capable of domesticating flesh's centrifugal and anarchic impulses."[87] Although accurate, this assertion does not go to what is the precise ambit in which the economy of the flesh originates and extends itself: the assumption that there is in flesh a component, ubiquitous and intrinsically vicious, that must be identified and economized. This assumption allows the development of a series of techniques, therapeutic practices, philosophical interventions, and social and political sanctions whose intention is, at least in the case of Smith, to accumulate that territory called man. Smith reminds us that there is no man without a God. Without a God there will just be flesh. Therein laid the problematic relationship between the economy of flesh and incarnation.

Economy of Flesh and Incarnation

Esposito's argument will serve as an introduction to the question that I shall develop in the next chapter: "With regard to the distinction (and also opposition) vis-à-vis the logic of incorporation: while the incorporation tends to unify a plurality, or at least duality, incarnation, on the contrary, separates and multiples in two what was originally one."[88] The fundamental problem of this argument is that it does not understand that the

[87] Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, 164.

[88] Ibid., 167.

flesh of incarnation is not "identical to ours;"[89] it is indeed a material flesh but it does not carry the predisposition for contamination that ours still contains.[90] It has to be subjetivized, reduced to the condition of being one with God. In this sense the operations of incarnation and Smith's economy of the flesh remain within the same space as both of them claim to be dealing with an object-subject that requires being, intensively economized. The semantic and theological field in which Smith's economy of the flesh exists ranges from questions related to the loss of masculinity to the tone of the voice. Thus, flesh is the antipode of the human being, although it cannot be destroyed entirely. In this sense, Smith's project reveals the flesh's return to God.

[89] Ibid.

[90] As for example in Augustine, "Del pecado original,"en *Obras Completas de San Agustín* Vol.VI (Madrid: BAC, 1949), 433. There Augustine identifies flesh with uncontrollable body parts.

CHAPTER 5

For a Fleshy Theology: Birth, God, and Scream

You see, I was that sun, or thought I was who did believe there was that spark, that crumb in madness which is divine, though madness know no word itself for terror or for pity. There was an ogre of my childhood which before my birth removed my only sister to its grim ogre-bourne and produced two half phantom children.

William Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*

In the previous chapters I explained that the economy of the flesh rests upon the theological assumptions of a constitutive damaged flesh as well as a theology of God's sovereignty that does not distinguish between the social administration and production of the world from God's government of the universe. For David Hume and Adam Smith, theory of nature and economic theory intersect in the economy of flesh. Furthermore, the dynamism of their philosophies supposes the existence of an element, force, space, and natural component that has to be economized, incarnated within civilization.

Without this fundamental economic moment the rest of their theories remain incomplete. Therefore in this chapter I reflect on a theology of the flesh,[1] which, I maintain, continues to have a primary role in the constitution and development of economic, political, and social practices. One of the objectives of this chapter is to offer a thorough discussion of the most basic elements of a theology of the flesh in order to develop what provisionally can be call a fleshy theology. The concept that organizes and guides my presentation is birth, a presentation that departs from and is a response to Hume's and Smith's economy of the flesh. My response takes into account a complex of

[1] José Granados, *Teología de la carne: El cuerpo en la historia de su salvación* (Burgos, España: Monte Carmelo, 2012).

questions that come from their philosophy. First, Hume's and Smith's economy of the flesh expresses a judgment about the value of live. Throughout their philosophies Hume and Smith distinguish between forms of live in order to create the conditions and limits of recognizability. Thus, the magma of their theories is not just the question of nature and wealth but the instauration of a frame to determine whether or not something can become life or, more precisely, when something can be recognized as another being both equal and different. For both of them barbarous, savages, madmen, criminals, and "hysterics" could not be recognized as fully humans.

Second, within this question of the institution of humanity and civilization there is a moment of positive affirmation: both Hume and Smith developed their philosophies within the imaginary realm of a theologically grounded and oriented world. Because of this, they sanctioned that the presence of God, its incarnation in their society, functions also as a judgment about social relationships and political projects. As a result of this they tend to equalize God's economy, nature's economy, and humanity. The acceptance or negation of social identifications is understood by Hume and Smith as a theological problem.

Third, in order to be recognized and integrated within civilized society it is indispensable to focus of oneself and economize the surplus life that exceeds the basic and necessary requirements of the productive body. The enemy of a civilized person is within itself. Therefore, one has to exercise a permanent vigilance over oneself in order to remain within the limits of the theological society. It is important to say that this requirement of looking over oneself is not presented as a purely repressive mechanism. On the contrary, Hume and Smith presented this mechanism as one of the conditions of

possibility for the achievement of social and personal satisfaction: *Electio perfecta non potest esse sine habitu*.[2]

Fourth, flesh is not merely rejected or suppressed by Hume and Smith. Both of them acknowledged that a fleshless physicality cannot be fully productive. Therefore, it is considered as a damaged and useless life. Hume and Smith proposed the empire of the body over the flesh. Fifth, the economic circuit of production and distribution has to be understood as a relationship between bodies that fully embrace their social identifications and ranks. The affirmation of the body and its materiality belongs to Hume's and Smith's idea of the nature of faith. Being a useful, productive, sympathetic, and healthy body is one of the conditions to enter into the Kingdom of God.

In Hume and Smith I found a mode of thinking that subsumes theological procedures and categories in order to overcome the uncertainty and mobility of the world. They reemphasize the idea that flesh is both a constitutive part of human beings that should be studied, controlled and put to the service of a transcendence that makes possible the production and reproduction of both biological and social life. Flesh is *that* moveable force and element that is both universal and particular. It expresses itself in individuals and institutions. Its movements and trajectories are, at its core, opposed to God's will and economy but could be transformed or redeemed. This position has served has a framework to display theoretical positions that make equivalences between justice and punishment, economic wellness and starvation, and domination and happiness. Nevertheless, Hume and Smith also present their tensions and longings. Their philosophy does not hide its passion and political limits. Throughout their discussions there are

[2] S. Tommaso D' Aquino, *Commento alle Sentenze de Pietro Lombardo,* Vol. 9, ed. Roberto Coggi (Bologna: Edizione Studio Dominicano, 2001), 504.

several openings and cuts that enable ways to develop their labyrinths. Both of them introduce a struggle in which nature fights against itself. Indeed, flesh is confronted with nature's economy in order to accelerate exchange, self-interest, and courage. Also, one has to encrypt the intensity of his sentimentality for the sake of being a God's creature. Thus, being a subject supposes being under the siege of God's punishment and enjoy it.

Hume's and Smith's philosophy permanently introduces the dream of consolation and the desire of retain the most prominent features of commercial society, the vulnerability and contradictions of the flesh. Even when they affirm their society, with is subterranean horrors and bloody wars, there is an explicit questioning about their own fantasies that even if is not completely developed, give us a glimpse about the interstices and ruptures of their paradise. There are several subtractions that Hume and Smith cannot completely grasp and normalize. Colonization and social domination are partially exposed by them, even against their intentionality. There is a sense of terror and comedy[3] in Hume's and Smith's philosophy informs the present discussion.

1. Theology and Flesh

I shall now discuss theological reflections on flesh in order to provide a better contextualization of my position in this chapter. I have mentioned that for Tertullian it was of decisive importance to distinguish between Jesus's flesh and our flesh. For him, as well for Zwingli and Calvin, flesh is an intrinsically vicious and rebellious force whose primordial tendency is to oppose God's designs and projects. In Peter Lombard's (1100-

[3] For an interesting reflection about the relationship between comedy and philosophy see Alenka Zupančič, *The Odd One In: On Comedy* (Cambridge, Mass - London: The MIT Press, 2007).

1160) *Sentences*[4] there is a distinction between the twofold birth of Christ. In first place, Christ is born before time and in second place is born in time. This distinction is clarified as follows: Lombard sustains that incarnation is for us, and like us, and above us.[5]

For us, because for our salvation; like us, because he was a man born of woman and in the [usual] time from conception namely nine months; above us, because it was not by seed, but by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Virgin, transcending the law of conception.[6]

Thus, Christ is a person but not to the extent of being a carrier of damaged flesh. Christ's salvific nature comes from his double birth. He is not affected by the damaging heritage of flesh as he is the product of human seed. Sin itself is understood as dwelling in the flesh (*ipsum peccatum dicitur manere in carne*).

The virginal conception was the mechanism in which Christ's birth was liberated from the "tinder of sin" (*fomes pecati*). Christ's freedom from flesh was the condition of possibility of Christian narrative of salvation. The idea that God became flesh (*caro facta*) does not imply a change in God's nature. God did not become another nature. The third distinction of the book 3 of the *Sentences* is introduced as follows: "On the flesh which the Word took, what it was like before and it was taken"[7] and is resolved by the argument according to which the Holy Spirit cleansed Christ's flesh. The Holy Spirit immune Christ's flesh all contagion of sin. Lombard concludes:

---

[4] For the central importance of Lombard's *Sentences* in the development of Western Christian theology see *Mediaeval Commentaries on the* Sentences *of Peter Lombard*, Vol. I, ed. G.R. Evans (Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2002); *Mediaeval Commentaries on the* Sentences *of Peter Lombard*, Vol. II, ed. Philipp W. Rosemann (Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2009).

[5] Peter Lombard, *The Sentences* Book 3: On the Incarnation Of the Word, trans. Giulio Silano (Toronto and Ontario: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2010 [c. 1150]).

[6] Ibid., 38.

[7] Ibid., 9.

> From these words, what we said earlier is made very clear, namely that the flesh of Word was conceived and taken at the same time, and that the same flesh, indeed the whole Virgin, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, was made chaste from all shame of sin.[8]

The function of the Spirit is to immunize the flesh from sin. Immunity is both a device and a process. As device the Spirit protects the flesh transforming it into matter without concupiscence.[9] In this regard, flesh is strictly linked to erotic inclinations and sexual practices. Because of that Christ's is considered to have "the likeness of sinful flesh". It is just the same as our flesh because Christ's flesh has the ability to suffer and die: "And so, although his flesh is the same as ours, yet it was not made in the womb in the same way as ours."[10] Lombard's fundamental argument is that flesh is equal to carnal pleasure, apart from the concupiscence of lust and therefore: "so truly is said that the flesh of the Word was not in bondage to sin in the case of Christ."[11]The immunization process protects and reduces life at the same. Theological immunization is the process through which the Spirit takes possession of the flesh. Indirectly, being immune from the flesh's influences has a political function. Immunity is the premise for the creation and expansion of communities. The ideal of a community is to be an immune sphere. Lombard's focalization on carnal pleasure was further expanded to include not merely the bodily appetites "which can be summed up under the head of sensuality, but also of the self-assertive instincts which fall more naturally under the head of pride."[12] Karl Barth

---

[8] Ibid., 10.

[9] Ibid., 12.

[10] Ibid., 13.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Norman Powell Williams, *The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin* (London-New York-Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1929), 147.

(1886-1968), started, years before, a similar argument, have said that sin is not a particular action or thought. It is strictly an absence or lack that cannot be completely explained; it is a rumor of the Other within us. Sin is a matter of belief because it exceeds the particular life of one person; it is the constitution of our interiority. Separation is both from God and from the "purity" of us; but it is not tangible even if it has corporeal manifestations.

> In 'naturalness' there is always secreted that which is non-natural, and, indeed, that which actually contradicts nature. This contradictory factor waits the hour when it will break forth. When, by allowing nature to runs its course freely and uncontradicted, God and the world have become confused with one another, there comes into prominence a further confusion: what cannot be avoided or escaped from becomes confused with some necessity of nature, and this is in very truth a demonic caricature of the necessity of God […] Everything then becomes Libido: life becomes totally erotic. When the frontier between God and man, the last inexorable barrier and obstacle, is not closed, the barrier between what is normal and what is perverse is opened.[13]

In this movement of confusion the center is the predominance of the erotic and for Barth that is the fundamental manifestation of the sin. How can life be totally erotic? The erotic is related to the eye, the visible and the invisible. It is the eye, which is not just a physical organ, that which organizes our world and desires the apprehension of sensible forms and also produces imagination. A totally erotic life is that in which the voluptuousness of the visible/material – specifically other's or our own flesh – is exchanged for the invisibility of God. The concentration on the visibility of the flesh damages our eye to the point that it becomes useless.

Eroticism is for Barth the last form of idolatry whose intention reaches God through the satisfaction of our own appetites. The orgasm is always the joy of one, the

---

[13] Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans,* trans. Edwin C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1950 [1921]), 52-53.

closure to the Other. The real openness to the Other cannot be erotic but that of self-negation. Each look into my flesh is an assault on the glory of God. A totally erotic life supposes that even the human becomes a thing in itself. For Barth, human desire, in its deepest reality, does not belong to us but has autonomy and permanently tends to control the alleged freedom or free will of the human being. Furthermore, there is no such a freedom but a constant movement towards the 'No-God'. Barth suggests that the acceptance of our sinner constitution produces in us a certain joy that could be regarded as a Dionysiac enthusiasm.[14] The whole idea of self-negation and recognition must be read from the perspective according to which "The Son of man proclaims the death of the son of man"[15] and that death is the disclosure of the world and the real being of the human being. Thus, the perverse flesh has to be radically controlled in order to receive the gift of God.

Juan Luis Segundo (1925-1996) has introduced a slightly different interpretation of flesh (*carne*). His proposal is to consider flesh the fundamental mark of the creature's sensibility (*sensibilidad de la creatura*). For him, being a creature of God implies recognition of the creature's necessity to have a relationship with a transcendent God. Segundo links "Israel's" religion with Paul and concludes that flesh: "Far from being a negative element or animal zone within the person"[16] flesh designated an attachment to God. Nevertheless, the implications of incarnation, according to Segundo, relativize this attachment to point that after Christ's manifestation "everything is accessible to

[14] Ibid., 101.

[15] Ibid., 103. In other part Barth says: "God gives life only through death" (105).

[16] Juan Luis Segundo, *Teología abierta para el Laico adulto 2:* Gracia y condición humana (Buenos Aires: Carlos Lohlé, 1969), 116.

humankind […] Humankind is no longer under the law."[17] In his perspective, Segundo identifies flesh with bondage to law and refusal of freedom and immaturity. Being fleshy or carnal is a negation of human responsibility to create its own world and to risk its life in the midst of its historical projects. Curiously or not, flesh is identified as a limitation. Because of that Segundo's theology proposes a spiritualized flesh as solution to the wild inclinations of flesh. Therefore, freedom and liberation are the result of living according the spirit. Segundo proposes the government of the spirit as the mark of a liberated humanity.

2. Birth

The question of birth locates itself at the antipodes of Hume's and Smith's philosophy. Both of them have death as one the central categories of their economic theory and philosophy of nature. Moreover, one of their main philosophical goals is to propose that being willing to death is an unavoidable mark of civilization. Exposing oneself to annihilation and torture are considered by Hume and Smith as expressions of a type of masculinity that is able to retain the most important trans-historical or spiritual values. To offer one's body in order to immune and protect the commonwealth is regarded as the achievement of honor and civility. Thus, be conducted by the spirit of death and dispossession is considered as virtue. Smith effectively "wished to explain and to secure the unhampered progress of a limitless accumulation of wealth"[18] nonetheless this wish requires permanent activity and different forms of immunity, he and also Hume thought that the will to die was a fundamental economic and moral concept.

---

[17] Ibid., 117.

[18] Hanna Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago & London: Chicago University Press, 1998 [1958]), 101.

Both, Hume's and Smith's political project does not consider birth as a philosophical or economic problem at all because birth supposes the possibility of the new[19], birth "excorporates, exteriorizes, and bends outside"[20]and divides the unity. Birth is expenditure without return, surplus of loss and multiplicities. Birth introduces our constitutive precariousness[21] but not as damage. On the contrary, birth introduces the necessity of thinking about an economy of not return because being born supposes the interruption of self-interest and money exchange. Birth introduces a vacuum, pain, and disorder. Because of birth we loss ourselves.

Not only has birth been relatively neglected as a fundamental concern in Christian theological discussion, its marginality within Christian theology has impeded an interrogation of the dynamisms of political economy as they presuppose the absence of birth and the preeminence and celebration of death. That is to say that political economy is a practice that requires the abolition or concealment of the pure nakedness and repose that characterizes birth. Hume's agents and Smith's spectators appear never to have been born; we see them only as producers, consumers, men of letters, bodies that perform tasks. In order to be so they have to distance themselves from their own beginnings as such beginnings apparently imply the impossibility of action and production. Political economy necessitates that we erase our beginnings and create a sensation of a temporality in which nothing from the beginning is retained.

---

[19] Ibid., 9.

[20] Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy,* 176.

[21] Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (London and New York: Verso, 2009), 14.

Opening

I would like to open myself, and I am already open, to the opening and exposed body that in birth is calling me beyond myself, against myself and, perhaps, for myself. In birth the strength and strictness of the spectator is suspended to the point of silence. Because of this, I cannot be Smith's spectator or agent. It is the contradiction of flesh that occurs in birth that interrogates me; because one cannot always avoid facing one's condition, one cannot say forever: do not touch me. Now birth is almost on me, with me, within me. It is touching me, but remains invisible; in this moment I feel I am born, but suddenly the only thing that I can hear is the calling of the open and exposed body that I am starting to smell; and it smells like many nights in a distant/past place: "From the point of view of the "being who is born" or the engendered one, birth remains always *obscure*, or unclear. I have no perception of it, nor any memory of it."[22]The obscurity of birth does not imply that it remains outside our memory. The fact that we are alive now indicates to us an economy of care that has made our existence possible. There are also smells and voices that put in our midst the beginning.

Those nights I was not expecting, like now, a thread (*filo*[23]) that could help me find the unexpected and not purchasable. I want to feel my birth but I should first attend to the call of the ambiguous fleshy body that, since before I was born, has been calling me, and embracing me and from whom I am separated. So, in being called for my own beginning I cannot, like Hume and Smith, use biography as the adequate genre to sustain my theoretical position. Because in thinking about birth we are at the limits of the

[22] Emmanuel Falque, *The Metamorphosis of Finitude: An Essay on Birth and Resurrection,* trans. George Hughes (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012 [2004]), 129.

[23] Francesca Rigotti, *Il filo del pensiero: Tessere, scriviere pensare* (Bologna: Societa editrice il Mulino, 2002).

biographical and non-biographical. It is a space that delays the affirmative possibilities of writing. Writing cannot be a form of self-affirmation but an explicit questioning about what is still loss and wounded without having been noticed.

My truth is outside me and not in the totality of my synthetic capacities; I presume it is this call itself but it is not enough just to follow it. One should ask why, in this specific moment, is it possible to hear it? Why now and not earlier or later? What happens to us when we hear this call? The calling maintains its intensity and I realize that its persistence, its strength, does not depend on me. I could ignore it and continue; but the call seduces me irremediably.

This call is the inauguration of a *time* on time that comes and passes through us and we can only receive its posterity, but that is sufficient to remove us and bring us into a search without foundation. This time was not yesterday, it is not today and will not be tomorrow but it is always hidden or inscribed on that body that does not cease to call, or on those tortured lives that are not considered life anymore or never were considered life. I shall look forward to caressing that call, letting my body and letting my condition of being born be, letting me be taken for its elusiveness and its bloody multiple presence.

> This looking *at* is always a way toward something, a glimpse of what is objectively present. It takes over a "perspective" from the beings thus encountered from the very beginning. This looking itself becomes a mode of independent dwelling together with beings in the world. In this "*dwelling"* ["*Aufenhalt"*] – as refraining from every manipulation and use – the *perception* of what is objectively present takes place.[24]

The search to embrace birth is, effectively, just acknowledging that it is already there instead of tending to avoid it as we do. As mentioned in the previous quote, in this movement toward something (birth) we are not going outside of the inner space in which

[24] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 61.

we are encapsulated, but moving within our condition of being always "outside", split, and divided. Nevertheless, one is not so much looking at birth as feeling a call or an invisible touch. There is not "perspective", nor intuition, but flesh trembling when one is facing the loss of his birth. All locations – in the epistemic sense – are second-order expressions[25] of the reality of birth: "The real is a closely woven fabric. It does not await our judgment before incorporating the most surprising phenomena or before rejecting the most plausible figments of our imagination".[26] I am aware that birth is the appearance and therefore could not be exhausted by any description of it." However, what is calling me, the trace that appears with birth could not be erased even with the most powerful machine.

This is a paradoxical situation in which Adorno (1903-1969) brings clarification when he notes: "Thoughts intended to think the inexpressible by abandoning thought falsify the inexpressible. They make of it what the thinker would least like it to be: the monstrosity of a flatly abstract object."[27] What Adorno is saying is that only through the hard experience included in the act of thinking – when we are trying to conceive of something—can we talk about the inexpressible. It is not enough to refer to our alleged resemblance to God[28] as the be-all and end-all of a theological consideration of flesh. For

[25] The image is from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), viii.

[26] Ibid., x.

[27] Theodor Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E.B. Ashton (New York: The Seabury Press, 1973), 110.

[28] José Granados, *Teología de la carne,* 64-67.

flesh is not a substance but an intricate junction of presence and *poiesis*, labor and life, gift and struggle.[29] Rivera explains this idea and develops it:

> Rather than seeing individuals as self-contained entities that can be placed in discrete categories, we can learn to see the ways in which we are connected to others through the ties in which one life extends in time as well as space. Although the societies that we live in put us in categories and those categories affect who we might become, we are not reducible to such categories. No name or category can possibly describe all that a person is.[30]

Although in some ways Rivera's explanation about the limits of representation is adequate and relevant for our present discussion, her explanation also contains a limit. She is right that we cannot fully represent a "person." But precisely the concept of person assumes flesh[31]—that flesh is what makes us animals. Hume and Smith would agree that to become a human person requires a violent embracing of a series of behaviors and inclinations whose tendency is to subsume the excess, that which is not strictly personal or that has been fully incorporated. I argue that we should advance into a direction in which an interrogation of the concept of person. The importance of this attempt consists precisely in the fact that the concept person plays a similar role to that which the categories of human and spectator have in Hume's and Smith's philosophy: they could dissect, divide, subordinate, and rationalize violence and domination. Thus the problem for a reading of a theology of flesh is not the limits of representation but more profoundly

[29] Mayra Rivera, "Memory of the Flesh: Theological Reflections on Word and Flesh," in *Creating Ourselves: African Americans and Hispanic Americans on Popular Culture and Religious Expression* ed. Anthony B. Pinn and Benjamín Valentín (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009), 85.

[30] Ibid., 85-86.

[31] Roberto Esposito, "The *Dispositif* of the Person," *Law, Culture and The Humanities* 8, no.1 (2012): 17-30.

its categorical net. Rivera correctly affirms: our discussions have as a horizon "new births of blood and flesh".[32]

3. Opening and exposure: Flesh without viciousness

Birth is the painful opening and exposure of a woman's body and our own unknown and non-recognizable presence. Birth is contained in the wailing, blood, desire, and struggle with death of that exposed body. Hanna Arendt (1906-1975) explains that: The miracle that saves the world, the realm of human affairs, from its normal, "natural" ruin is ultimately the fact of natality, in which the faculty of action is ontologically rooted. It is, in other words, the birth of new men and the beginning, the action they are capable of by virtue of being born.[33]

Saving the world does not refer to the continuance of the existing social forms of organization and its theological frames. Saving implies passing through the experience of being active against one's own identifications. Just the nearness of our touch to the body giving birth makes us able to hear those wailings, to smell that blood, to desire that strength, and to struggle the same struggle. Nevertheless, not even our nearest touch puts us in an adequate location to tender an offering to a body that, in front of and for me exposes its vulnerability and vigor completely. There is a discontinuity between that open and exposed fleshy body and our kindest touch, the thin skin appears firm and ungraspable, her urgency begs for our presence but her flesh announces that we remain in the distance. Thus flesh is life, world, and environment that receive us not to a family or a household but to a realm of possibilities and danger. Saving flesh should not be thought

[32] Mayra Rivera, "Memory of the Flesh: Theological Reflections on Word and Flesh", 86.

[33] Hanna Arendt, *The Human Condition,* 247.

as an operation of cleaning achieved through our reunion with God. Nancy Pineda's reflection about salvation is relevant for the present argument:

> How the practices created by those who have lost loved ones to the feminicide carry theological insight into the meaning of salvation. Through the practices of resistance, we discover that two dimensions of salvation take on increased importance. First, salvation is necessarily actualized in history, albeit not fully. Second, salvation necessarily entails making visible the elemental social relations of all humanity and all creation.[34]

What appeals to me in Pineda's reflection is her idea of what can be described as understanding of salvation against the closure of history that comes from those "yet not to be born"[35]. Although in the previous quotation the emphasis rests on the historical character of salvation, throughout her book Pineda presents salvation as a series of practices that pretend to stop the current and hegemonic mode of producing of history: that which kills and forgets women under the cold sand of the desert. Salvation does not just happen in history but implies a contradiction and confrontation of modes of creating history, to make us historical. It entails a pause in the furious spirit of the epoch and a reconsideration of what should be considered as history and historical. There is a form of producing history that expels and violates those considered the residuum of civilization, the wretched. It was like that from Hume and Smith. The dreams of those yet to be born or those who have been killed announce the necessity to give us another form to be historical or even to go beyond history as a closed entity.

Birth and Negativity

In birth, when the open body is an offering to us, and we offer our care to such gratitude we feel the solitude paradoxically in the same act of resisting distance and

[34] Nancy Pineda-Madrid, *Suffering + Salvation in Ciudad Juárez* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 123.

[35] Ibid., 137.

obscurity. In the face of birth, it is fundamentally our weakness that reveals its vastness and that of the opening fleshy body. This negativity constitutes the unforgettable and without its potency we cannot be open to the world. It is precisely because this negativity affects us that we can say with F. Hölderlin (1770-1843): "So komm! dass wir das Offene schauen, dass ein Eigenes wir suchen, so weit es auch ist."[36] We can have no notion of space or feeling of belonging without together going through the experience of struggle against our own limits,[37] which is the opposite of Hume's and Smith's economy of flesh as it consists at its core in an ambivalent naturalization and spiritualization of historical limits.

If the fear of death cannot produce anything but a conservative politics, and therefore be the negation itself of politics, it is in event of birth that politics finds the originary impulse of its own innovative power. Inasmuch as man had a beginning (and therefore is himself a beginning), he is the condition of beginning something new, of giving life to a common world.[38]

Her open body, of the women giving birth, fractures my identity and forces me to go into the openness and to hear that which is calling me beyond myself, in my borders, in the exteriority of my possibilities. It is in the midst of the liminality that we can take care of ourselves without ourselves, without an invulnerable "identity" that is capable only of looking at itself, as Hume and Smith propose. But this proposal of vulnerability

---

[36] Friedrich Hölderlin, "Brot und Wein," in *Poems of Friedrich Hölderlin*, trans. James Mitchell, (San Francisco: Ithuriel's Spear, 2007), 10. My preference is to translate this verse as follows "That's why, let's go! Finally let's see what is open, let's look for what is ours, even as far away as it still is"

[37] Nancy Pineda-Madrid, *Suffering + Salvation in Ciudad Juárez,* 137-140.

[38] Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy,* 177.

has to be distinguished from Granados' idea of flesh´s fallibility.[39] For him, in contrast to my proposal, flesh's vulnerability is read as its natural inclination to fail and with the rupture between God's original plan and our own history. Granados calls this rupture the "rejection of the mysterious logic in which our existence is called to be developed"[40] which is the same as the rejection of the spirit and "the rejection of our belonging to the world".[41] This theology of the flesh continues Hume's and Smith's idea of incarnation as it reinforces the idea according to which the carnal, as synonymous of sin, expresses itself in the struggle against the given conditions of the world: sexual obligations, relations of hierarchy, and economic roles within the division of labor. In Granados' theology *Peccat caro* (the flesh sins) is understood as an inherent conflict of the flesh that pretends to overcome its body and through it the social and political bodies. Once again the body is understood as a receptacle that allows the production and reproduction of the necessary conditions for the existence of civilization. Against this idea of the fleshy body it is necessary to contrast the relationship between the fleshy body and the witness.

The witness

When, in birth, the fleshy body is open, it is not just exposed to the sight of others but it is exposed to itself. The boundaries of the skin, since they are broken, let the blood and excrement perch on the legs, arms, and toes. The vagina is transformed into a mixture of fluids that are commonly ignored and then the desire of propriety pretends to supplant the dirty body. Exposing the fleshy body to itself, to its depths and surfaces provokes, as

[39] José Granados, *Teología de la carne,* 137. The author says that: "The incarnated condition of the person allows us to understand the fragility of his steps and to define the exact zone in which the mystery of inequity is perpetrated".

[40] Ibid., 139.

[41] Ibid., 144.

the Costa Rican poet Jorge Debravo (1938-1967) suggests, the pain of all the fires. Everything that gives us light, warmth, pause, and nourishment is pervaded by pain. Poetry, trying to recount the moment of birth, calls to mind only the crucifixion.

Mujer, toda mi sangre está presente	Woman, all my blood is present
contigo en esa lucha que sostienes.	with you in this struggle you maintain
Contigo está mi amor incandescente	with you is my incandescent love
y en tu llanto y tu duelo me contienes.	and in your cry and your pain you contain me
Nunca en la vida estuve tan de prisa	Never in my life had I ever been so hasty
tan lleno de relámpagos y ruegos,	so full of lighting and begging
como ahora que ha muerto tu sonrisa	like now that your smile has died
y están con tu dolor todos los fuegos.	and with your pain are all of the fires.
Nunca estuvo mi amor tan a tu lado,	Never has my love been so close to your side,
nunca como esta noche de tortura	never like this night of torture
cuando sufre mi amor crucificado	when my crucified love suffers
en el mismo tablón de tu amargura.[42]	In the same plank of your bitterness.

The poet wants to be there –in the struggle that the woman is struggling—and he is offering his awakened blood to the blood of the woman; but, in birth the bloods are different. His blood is weak, unable to endure her struggle. However, he is offering his nearness although he recognizes that her tears and mourning are what sustain him. The power of tears consists in condensing and expressing the richness of that/those which/who are always giving us its/their ephemeral presence, not to think about it/them but to tilt our flesh towards it/them.[43] Why does the woman cry? For whom does she cry? Why is the poet crying in the face of the offering? She cries because she is being tortured or at least that is what the poet feels. She is crying for herself and because she is doing so,

[42] Jorge Debravo, "El Parto," in *Milagro abierto* (San José: Editorial Costa Rica, 2009), 98.

[43] Catherine Chalier, *Traité des larmes: Fragilité de Dieu; fragilité de l` âme* (Paris: Editions Albin Michael, 2003).

the poet cries. But, actually all that we have is the humidity and the ambiguous consistency of the poet's tears. Thus, the exposed fleshy body of the woman remains unreachable to us unless we trust the testimony of the witness.[44]

The poem returns us to the crucifixion, to the extermination, and leaves in silence what comes after that. For the poet, the truth of birth is just one (crucifixion) and it is written in the opened and crucified body of the woman. This prompts us to consider two questions: 1) What/who is a witness of a crucifixion? 2) What type of testimony is the testimony of a crucifixion? First, one can suggest that being a witness of a crucifixion is, primarily, the experience of being overcome by an excess of experience and emotion. The witness knows that his/her testimony will always be lacking something fundamental. Debravo said "Never in my life had I ever been so hasty." This unusual condition of being completely incapable of being in repose, of feeling a shivery power cutting through our body, is an experience that cannot be adequately described to another person. The crucifixion is unique but it is not happening to the witness. Though one could conceivably keep a tear of the victim as his/her testimony, but once one has it, it is gone forever – that is what is missing; finally the witness is someone who is able to stay[45] or not to be crucified. This is the condition of writing: being a signal of distance and survival. The radical absence of which he/she is witness is always absent. Having been witness of a crucifixion, moreover, prevents the infinite *aporia* of what is missing to be transformed in silence or irresponsibility towards those we have radically lost. The testimony that comes from this witness is inevitably fragile and perishable:

---

[44] Giorgio Agamben, *Lo que queda de Auschwitz: El archivo y el testigo: Homo Sacer III*, trad. Antonio Gimeno Cuspinera (Valencia: Pre-Textos, 2000), 1-21.

[45] Ibid., 9. Also Nancy Pineda-Madrid, *Suffering + Salvation in Ciudad Juárez*

After all, there is nothing in creation that is not ultimately destined to be lost: not only the part of each and every moment that must be lost and forgotten- the daily squandering of tiny gestures, of minute sensations, of which passes through the mind in a flash, of trite and wasted words, all of which exceed by great measure the mercy of memory and the archive of redemption – but also the works of art and ingenuity, the fruits of a long and patient labor that, sooner or later, are condemned to disappear.[46]

Despite this possibility of the nothingness as a horizon that comes for us, the testimony of the crucifixion – that of the birth – is a lament that seems not to reserve a further message. The lament is itself the message. The gestures of the witness, the form in which the images of the crucifixion take place in his/her hands, eyes and voice give to us, perhaps, more than just the facts without the pretension of being pedagogical or instructive. Lament is an uncontrollable language through which it is possible to bring into presence the painful path in which we are never sufficient. Through the lament one says: here "I am" and because of that at least now not everything is lost; because of these gestures and this pale presence – remember that according to Debravo in birth all the lights explode - we can imagine what complete absence is, what we have lost radically.

4. The New and the Possible

Jorge Debravo reminds us in his lament, the possibility of this redemption, the apparition of the new/different, the opening of the political sense, all that is possible, is given to us in the tense muscles, warm fluids and thick blood that are crucified – and continuing with the use of the testimony of the poet- with the open body of the woman that we could not forget neither could be forgotten, as Pineda insists, the cancelation of

[46] Giorgio Agamben "Creation and Salvation," in *Nudities*, trans. David Kishik and Stefen Pedatella (California: Stanford University Press, 2011), 7.

the political operated through and in the massive administration of social death.[47] One can ask what is underneath the blood and explore/imagine the density of the separation that happens to her in birth. Instead of that or before that, one should be sure that she/he has been immersed in the blood and touched sufficiently by dangerous environments. Arendt considers that "Since action is the political activity par excellence, natality, and not mortality, may be the central concept of political, as distinguished from metaphysical thought."[48] But when we approach her body, even if it is just through the testimony of a witness, natality becomes not just the opposite of mortality –as a metaphysical concept- but a unique experience that occurs in the interstice between the categorically elusive and carnally potent. In the interstice of natality and mortality, in the suspension of our categorical anxieties and metaphysical impulses, birth – as a distant smell and rhythm that is in our presence in her body – puts us into the "ambit" of the holiness.

Birth, Holiness, Space

To put one's life – her life – into deathly risk for the other, for the unpredictable that comes with the new – why it is new I could not be sure – is holiness but not because a natural obligation is being fulfilled.[49] Her exposed fleshy body is protecting the possibility of interrogate the world with her tired tendons and she is remembering that the same vagina that now is being manipulated by "antiseptic hands" and compulsive instruments before and later will be caressed by her own and other hands until she is wet from pleasure, exhausted from joy. Thus, "carnal lust" cannot be separated from live.

---

[47] Nancy Pineda-Madrid, *Suffering + Salvation in Ciudad Juárez*, 62-63.

[48] Hanna Arendt, *The Human Condition* 9.

[49] José Granados, *Teología de la carne,* 135-145.

Her joy: holiness. Holiness, in birth, is not just the disposition to offer her life to another but the intention to have joy, to enjoy and recover her body. To reopen or to close her body even to separate her from that salvation that was imagined by Arendt and reinvent or forget about salvation. In this regard it will be opportune to expand the political understanding of natality as it is possible to do from Pineda's conception of communal resistance and its various modes of expression. From her perspective birth is also the multiple processes in and through which we can constitute a project to transform even the most basic elements of the economy of flesh such as the form in which pain and mourning are expressed. There where Hume and Smith sanction the necessity of silence and forgetfulness, Pineda proposes, as Jorge Debravo, public lament and celebration. One of the primordial political outputs of birth consists in the opening and disruption of space: Just as the tortured and murdered bodies of the victims have been strewn throughout the city to mark territory, on the most overt level practitioners have marked and reclaimed territory by painting telephone poles with black crosses throughout the city, one for each murdered victim […] The practitioners have recognized and resisted the ways in which women's bodies themselves have been used by the murderers as territory marked through mutilation, violation, and ultimately destruction.[50]

A new birth for the women's bodies that had been killed implies also a reorganization of the space. The conjunction of bodies and space gives birth to a new form of body: the spectral, mobile, ungraspable body that is expanding and occupying memories and public places. Birth is in this regard a way to subvert fatality and another form of sense and sensibility.

[50] Nancy Pineda-Madrid, *Suffering + Salvation in Ciudad Juárez,* 112.

Exposure: Happening to us

Birth introduces another form of a sense.[51] We break out of the body of our mothers while we are emerging, covered by unfathomable blood, to another surface. We emerge to the temperatures, to the hands, to another ambience. The notion of ambience in this case, is not referring just to an exterior or natural environment (what I prefer to call the emergence into temperatures). Ambience is the widening of our affects [52] and the movement to the others' affects toward us (sense of recognition). Because we are affective we are constantly increasing and losing our energy – every affect gives and takes energy from us – being born is the ability to experience a drastically different way to be affected. What emerged in birth is our flesh that is, contrary to Spinoza (1632-1677)[53], the same possibility to think. We are there, coming and, in that moment, and today, we "[…] do not know what the Body can do, or what can be deduced from the consideration of its nature alone".[54] In the context of this passage Spinoza is referring to what the body can do without the orders of the mind, when it follows only its own nature. But there is another way of interpreting the unknown or unexpected possibilities of the body: "When practitioners act in public, placing their bodily selves at risk, they reclaim

[51] There is no absence of sense or meaning in the primordial space of the flesh of our mother. Within her and through her flesh we are exposed, in a specific form, to rhythms of the world and, at the same time, we participated in the intimate contours of sensations that are possible only in this form of being in the world. Primordial space does not mean a space without violence or contradictions because without these disruptions there is not space but *paradise.*

[52] In the sense of Spinoza see "Ethics: Demonstrated in Geometric order and divided into Five Parts, which Treat" *The Collected Works of Spinoza* Vol. 1, trans. Edwin Curley (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 491-594.

[53] Ibid., 494. Postulate 2, Scholium.

[54] Ibid., 496. Postulate 2, Scholium. *"quid Corpus possit, nemo hucusque determinavit hoc est neminem hucusque experientia docuit quid corpus ex solis legibus naturæ quatenus corporea tantum consideratur"*

their subjectivity and self-possession as embodied, female human beings who demand that public space be emancipatory space for women".[55] In this perspective the question about what the body can or cannot do is posed as a political problem: are the dead completely lost and separated from us? Pineda's response is that the testimony of the killed women persists and we do not know of what their flesh is still capable.

Messages and Eternal Life

This liminal incertitude, which at least should give the eschatological imagination something to think about, is condensed in our body when we tear the stretched skin of our mothers and the resistance of women stalked by structural violence. If we accept that this flesh—about whose capacities we know so little— is the body that appears in birth, one is obligated to say that our body never follows only the laws of nature, but is always intimately pervaded by all our experiences. Moreover, this suggests that it is perhaps the mind that now should be interrogated, as Tertullian reminds us when he says that, "*Omne quod est, corpus est sui generis"*[56]. Spinoza said later "I add here the very structure of the human Body, which, in the ingenuity of its construction, far surpasses anything made by human skill."[57] This complexity is the context in which birth happens. The new, then, is new; is outside us, is different in its same ingenuity, in its same condition of destructible. Flesh can be damaged; however, its emergence surpasses or maintains distance with everything. Because of that, every new body already possesses eternal life.

---

[55] Nancy Pineda-Madrid, *Suffering + Salvation in Ciudad Juárez,* 112-113.

[56] Tertullian *De Carne Christi* XI, 4. Everything that is (being), is corps, in its particular form/genre.

[57] Spinoza, "Ethics: Demonstrated in Geometric order and divided into Five Parts, which Treat", 496.

Whatever specific body emerges in birth always has, besides particular affects, also particular stature, weight, dimensions, tremors and, synthetically, place. She/he reveals him- or herself to me as small, fragile, and infinite. The specificity and pettiness of his/her place is impossible to encompass –looking through its profundity – by all my skills. She/he, in his or her emergence –which is the same as ours, but always different— is carrying the weight of a constellation of expectations. Looked at synchronously, birth happens in a specific social and historical moment; there is a before and an after the event. But diachronically looked at, in our birth there is the expectation that, in some way, we are taking on and taken on by all the legacies from the past and bringing them into a new possibilities.

The Ghost and Death

Because of this in every birth a child should be killed.[58] Let me explain the last phrase by introducing a question: how is birth annihilated? It is by tracing its meaning to the "*fantasme"* of the law, tradition, or reality. This happens when we do not allow a newborn to be new instead of integrating it or re-inscribing its novelty within the "inalterable route of History." All of us have our "*fantasme"* and, while we are recalling our emergence, we insist on defining it. So, one can say that it is impossible to receive the new as new since we are part of a structure, tradition, or world of life from which we respond to all newcomers or apparitions.

5. Becoming

Birth is the very possibility of everything according to Arendt and Pineda as we saw previously. Birth happened to us (*advenant*) and because of that we could *devenir*

[58] See Serge Leclaire, *On tue un enfant: Un essai sur le narcissisme primaire et la pulsion de mort* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1975).

(become)[59] a being that, in an irregular process, takes care or, in other terms, we are generated and because of that we are part of a generation and we could also generate world.[60] It is necessary to insist on that birth happened to us and, because of it, our intention was exceeded. So, we could, in this case, introduce ourselves into a question about the existence of a particular experience:

To the phenomenon that is most often characterized by an effect of intuition, and therefore by a deception of the intentional aim and, in particular instances, by the equality between intuition and intention, why would not correspond the possibility of a phenomenon in which intuition would give more, indeed immeasurably more, than intention ever would have intended or foreseen?[61] This question opens the ambit of the everyday epiphanies, something that happens to us, in which it is our intuition that gives us nearness with its terrible presence. To let our birth be requires us to "take off our sandals" and to risk being burned; to not allow it is to maintain the distance and scream "Do not touch me!" put our clothes on, and go into the "green prairie." Avoid the *fantasme* and allow the touch of who or what is emerging – be touched by my own emergence- is the possibility of the surprise. In birth it is the blindness of the other that destabilizes us, his/her inability to return us a look. Furthermore, it is the presence of all his/her flesh that completely weakens my intention. In birth, it is not me seeing, it is not the other – me – seeing but radically he/she not seeing me. There is that fleshy presence that is not seeing us, but appearing, making place and I just have the intuition that it is the

[59] Claude Romano, *L'événement et le monde,* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008), 69ff.

[60] Anne O`Byrne, *Natality and Finitude,* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 6.

[61] Jean Luc Marion, "The Saturated Phenomenon," trans. Thomas A. Carlson *Philosophy Today* 40 (spring 1996): 112.

caress that could give us place together without sacrificing her/his otherness and without leaving her/him in the intemperateness. What happens when the one who is emerging cannot speak? What happens when actually there is one that can speak and another that cannot? A common solution will be to speak about that silence, its meaning, and epistemic range. But, another path – more difficult for our sonic way of communications – is to let the other be from another way of speaking. Will our responsibility be to receive this non-speaker as a call?

Saturation and Birthing

Birth: inaugurates a new possibility for the senses; the opening of our mother's body is the same opening of worldliness. However, it escapes from us. The densest instance that passes through us does not belong to us; it is always calling us outside our reachable ambit. Birth can be considered as a "*phénomène saturé*", in which the flesh of the other comes to us, as an unexpected donation, with its invisible visibility and infinitude. The concreteness of the presence of the other's flesh – and the political responsibilities that this concreteness supposes- does not unveil all the possibilities that are introduced by the new. There is always a rest, the invisibility. The invisible brings with it the useless; the absence of product; to overcome the viscosity of the commodity is an attempt to re-find the true texture of the blood that is combined, in birth, with tears and excrement. The annihilation of the invisible by the hegemony of fetishistic character of commodities and accumulation of wealth leads us to instrumentation and suicide.

Commodities and Flesh

To regress from this situation, to try to move its foundations, supposes not just a containment of our "ontological ingratitude" but a containment of the objects that

constantly try to hide their new flesh or even more to affirm that the invisible has a surplus of invisibility. To the worship of commodities[62] and money that is constantly referred to in Hume and Smith we should not put up a superior object, but instead the scandal of the invisible, the hidden invisible or the double invisible. Is not the hug of the son transient—and yet it remains? Are not the pink crosses of Ciudad Juárez the presence of the absent and killed?[63] The invisible is not a resource but rather a course (*decurso*), and excess. Speaking on the question of visibility and invisibility it is necessary to discuss the following:

> At the first glance, a commodity seems a commonplace sort of thing, one easily understood. Analysis shows, however, that it is a very queer thing indeed, full of metaphysical subtleties and theological whimsies […] It is obvious that man, by his activity, modifies the forms of natural substances so as to make them useful to himself […] But as soon as it [the commodity, JP] itself as a commodity, it is transformed into a thing which is transcendental as well as palpable. [64]

What Marx is discussing here is how the invisible struggles with the invisible. The transcendental (invisible) character of the commodity not only hides the visibility of the workers (they and their labor remain forgotten in the concreteness of the thing) and the general social relationships (that became shadows of things) but, most important, their fleshly condition. Marx, then, raises the discussion about what the social process is that allows a form of invisibility to conceal other form of invisibility. The latter, in this "conflict of invisibilities", remains doubly invisible. The critical analysis of the fetishist character of commodities tries to penetrate into its transcendental world not just to show

---

[62] Karl Marx, *Capital* Vol 1, trans. and int. G.D.H. Cole, addendum and bibliographical note Murray Wolfson, (London & New York: Everyman's Library, 1952, [1972]), 43ff. Following Marx's idea of the fetishistic character of commodities we are proposing here a struggle between invisibilities.

[63] Nancy Pineda-Madrid, *Suffering + Salvation in Ciudad Juárez,* 118-121.

[64] Karl Marx, *Capital,* 44.

that they are "the material expressions of the human labour"[65] but also to go into the invisibility of the human condition: "We are concerned only with a definite social relation between human beings, which, in their eyes, has here assumed the semblance of a relation between things"[66], just "drilling" on the invisibility of the commodity is that we can acknowledge our own invisibility.

The situation is that the combination of all our social relations are impossible to look at completely but they are irreplaceable for the production and reproduction of our concrete life. Just the critique of the invisibility allows us to perceive the invisibility that makes our life possible. But I am also talking here about another invisibility that I would like to call on: the invisibility of all the social relations that occur within us. With this I express that we are not *uni-dimensional,* not even multi-dimensional, but social flesh. We are beyond every role or performance; what we do does not exhaust us and, at the same time, we are inside a carousel of demarcations that begins in our own skin.

6. Invisibility

The dispute between commodities brings us to oblivion and murder. But the invisible, I should repeat is not a sedative; we already commented that it includes its own specific negativity, and it remains with us, and besides that it is a permanent reminder of our instability. Invisibility: is not elliptical, it does not represent anything, could not be represented, and does not locate an essence in our anxious hands. The invisible requires an act of anthropological faith, a faith that is not possible to see but which we can intuit.

[65] Ibid., 47.

[66] Ibid., 45.

Each aspect of a person's identity develops in relation to realities that transcend her or his particularity but also in which she or he transcends: community, race, gender, sexual identity, and so on. For instance, the realities of my own community – its history, its language, the geography in which I feel most at home – all embrace me not only as *past* realities but as things that I continue to relate to, be transformed by, and transform. And yet I never grasp them, just as they never completely define me.[67]

As I have shown the relationship between visibility and invisibility in Hume and Smith supposes the practical suppression of the invisible. Everything that appears is the incarnation of the invisible. The invisible does not have any other mode of exists but that of direct apparition. The visible fully contains and expresses the invisible. Politically this implies that any attempt to go beyond the visible is idolatrous. The mechanism through which Hume and Smith identify the invisible with the visible is an extreme form of incarnation: it consumes everything without leaving open space or future. In losing the invisible the visible becomes a useful thing and loses its capacity of being scandalous.[68]In not recognizing the invisible is committed "an assault on the integrity of the majesty of matter."[69]

Care

Being-in-the world is taking care of things[70] but in birth we are not taking care of, we are received by and taken care of by others. When we are born we are not able to

[67] Mayra Rivera, "Memory of the Flesh: Theological Reflections on Word and Flesh", 86.

[68] Vítor Westhelle, *The Scandalous God: The Use and Abuse of the Cross* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 105-107.

[69] Ibid., 106.

[70] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 61.

move or direct ourselves toward things or others. We have a lack of position or location in the world. The Gospel narratives, especially those that refer to the assassination of infants ordered by Herod[71], show us that in birth we experience being taken, put, left and even killed. We feel the power of whomever comes toward us, perhaps we even expect their coming, but we are unable to repeat that movement. What does this basic weakness that we find in our beginning suppose? Is it in itself, this other mode of being significant? Could this basic event confer a particular shape to economy? I argue that it is especially if we consider that economic theory, since Hume and Smith, presupposes vigor, delicacy and permanent awareness in order to participate in the commerce of society.

The Angel

There are residues in our traditions among everything that has been and still is being said there is a rest, something left over. My attempt is not to displace the shortcomings of this tradition; but to think about it trans-topically. Thinking about the residue, the imperceptible remnant, leads us to open ourselves. It is not always at hand, even if it is present; because of this, to think about the residue is a dance with the potency of the tenuous. The residue is a presence that cuts and unhinges the trajectory of the tradition; ergo gives us the possibility of slowness. To try to think about the tradition from its residues requires keeping close to the abysm and the negative. We are not looking for offal; perhaps it is our "ritual of expectation". The residue is not "our trash" but that which, incredibly, had been in silence. However, this is a bustling silence which allows our voice. Because there is a silence, something present and expecting, is that we could offer our screams. In everything said there remains what should have been screamed but that was postponed, left for us as a legacy and requirement. So then,

[71] See Matthew 2: 16-18.

tradition is, in its most radical sense, that silence which suggests another landscape which is not its own.

What I am suggesting here is that in order to move, not necessarily forward, it is necessary to hear, or more precisely feel the silence. Responding to the residue is definitely a position in which we face the problem of the possible future, but from an interstice: that which remains unsaid and demands us to stop in our tracks. The unsaid, that which has not yet happened, perhaps, only suggested or shouted loudly but despised, is not just in the past but is always among us in the whip and rebel flesh of those who, in this precise moment, are hungry and thirsty (for justice as well). What does it mean to repeat the tradition? It consists in re-embracing it as a part of an effort to discern our necessities and capacities from our (multi) present and with the courage to project ourselves (again not necessarily forward) and not to memorize, remember or understand the past as already happened or dead in time.

Repetition is a particular action towards something that is singular and unique, without equivalence or being duplicated. It refers to the act of deployment, leading to its final consequences, a radical act or event. Every repetition requires a transgression or profanation. From everything mentioned it is understandable that to repeat is the opposite of making a commentary or an aesthetic adaptation. What is repeatable is that which is on the cutting edge. When one is trying to repeat tradition he/she will be unfaithful with its surface but, perhaps and because of this apparent fact, could be faithful.

7. Reading with Flesh

In the case of Tertullian, whose principal concern is the birth of God, birth appears as the same occurrence as the Christian event. If, as he sustains, the testimony of

this new movement supposes a cosmological discontinuity or heterogeneity and not just a new *traditum,* this is primarily due to the great potency of birth. Christianity is a testimony of the potency of this eruption, without it there is just a tradition without truth. Tertullian's idea of truth is rooted in an angel's announcement, more precisely in its absence or concealment.[72] What is this announcement about? Who is capable of hearing it? What is exactly the absence or concealment of the angel? The angel (Gabriele) of birth and its concealment leaves us in the midst of the announcement. Tertullian's distinction between *phantasma* and carnis (flesh)[73] is the affirmation of the possibly redemptive condition of flesh and, furthermore, the impossibility that a redemption could come from an angel or *phantasma.* The angel's announcement is its absence; because in the moment it pronounces the promise of birth it leaves us. After the announcement we just have the flesh of God, our flesh and the flesh of the others[74], the angel remains in silence, there is nothing else it can say to us, except for that silence that is an intense call from the flesh; the angel sent us to the flesh.

Redemption is fragile and we could not encounter it without passing through, and being permanently aware of, the dense concealment of the angel. Just those who move toward the flesh are in the condition to hear the proclamation of birth. But birth is, despite this necessary inclination toward the flesh, donation, especially our own birth. The angel leaves us between donation and desire; there is no more struggle (Jacob and the angel) or terrified look that gives us a message (Angelus Novus) but a terrible pain and

---

[72] Tertullian *De Carne Christi* II, 1. Plane, natuitas a Gabriele adnuntiatur.

[73] Tertullian, *De Carne Christi* I, 3.

[74] Emmanuel Falque, *Dieu, la chair et l'autre: D' Irénée à Duns Scot* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008).

expectation. The concealing of the angel is necessary; we just can keep the memory of its gesture of radical remoteness. It is precisely within the empty space left by the angel where the possibility of its own redemption is found. It is so, it and the announcement of redemption depends entirely on the fact that this empty space remains empty, that the amazement and pain produced by its absence will not be supplanted by a *phantasma.* The following is an insightful commentary about the concealment of the angel: "This means that what will save the world is not the spiritual, angelic power […] with which humans produce their works […] but a more humble and corporeal power, which humans have insofar as they are created beings."[75]

Tertullian is even more incisive when, perhaps overwhelmed by his own rhetorical ecstasies, declared "*Nullum mandatum de salute angelorum suscepit Christus a patre*"[76] so, it is not just that the angels will not save the world, but its same salvation had been forgotten or, perhaps, postponed. We are humble because we are born beings, although the angels are waiting for us. In its birth even God was put in the middle, in ambient and, as I suggested before, birth does not imply the solution of any dislocation or disruption; on the contrary, it expects to be collocated in a contradictory existence. Because it itself is heartrending and has located us in the frozen. Birth is painful and "lousy". Tertullian enjoys this condition - the awareness of shame - and locates it in a privileged epistemic location. He is prepared to endanger the "cleanliness" and "clearness" of God for the desire to hear and love the birth, the flesh. In order to continue

[75] Giorgio Agamben, *Nudities,* 5.

[76] Tertullian *De Carne Christi* XIV, 2. The father does not instruct Christ the salvation of the Angels.

being unfaithful to Tertullian it is important to remember an observation made by George Bataille (1897-1962):

> We have arranged the world us in such a way that if the "filth" were not constantly thrown out of it, the edifice would rot […] We tear them [our children, JP] away from nature by washing them, then by dressing them. But we will not rest until they share the impulse that made us clean them and clothe them, until they share our horror of the life of the flesh, of life naked, undisguised, a horror without which we would resemble the animals.[77]

One could suggest that received from Tertullian, the birth of God shows shame proudly, in all its grotesque condition. By grotesque I mean that in birth the sublime appears to us completely covered by blood and in its nakedness, it is itself what is giving birth.[78] He tries from different rhetorical movements to not clean or clothe the Verb of God and with that the "edifice" of flesh's perversity entered into a crisis. What should wash us is the birth blood or, more radically, with Tertullian we attend to the suspension of washing and immunity; and lead into the aperture of the caress. *De carne Christi* is an opportunity to rest inside the flesh, naked and full of "filth". This theological book completely dedicated to repeat constantly that we are in the openness, possessing nothing but nakedness to those around us. The edifice is not just the security provided by culture but, in the context of a theological discussion, a God which is too fresh, dressed and "human". The otherness of God is manifested precisely in its decision to destroy the "human person" with its offensive dirtiness.[79] The apparition of an unexpected difference is the disperse matrix of the Christian imagination. This strange condition, which is the

---

[77] Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share* Vol. II, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Zone Books, 1993), 63.

[78] I picked up this image from Michelle Osterfeld Li, *Ambiguous Bodies: Reading the Grotesque in Japanese Setsuwa Tales* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009), 113-115.

[79] The image comes partially from Mary Douglas "Preface to the Routledge Classics Edition" *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the concept of Pollution and Taboo* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), xviii.

conflict of all conditions, its absence, is obligating a way of thinking that can only come true in its nakedness in which flesh cannot be rejected or divided into vicious and immune flesh.

Finales

Let's return to idea of the end of the "humanity" and the end of "God". This end is actually a beginning, an opening thanks to which it is possible to go on our search. With Tertullian we are in a territory in which it is possible to not try to activate the notion of "humanity" or "God" but bring them into its depletion. This means the opening to a new (conflictive) passion, politics and joy. But it is necessary to stay in the end and not to try to quickly get to the other side, stay in its happening, which is what Tertullian brings to us. In this end one can embrace not only the animals that we are but also, according to Bataille, those that we fear or with which we are fascinated.

God is flesh and because of that our glory is cannot be understood as the process of simply controlling or cleaning. Something, however, is still missing in these discussions –the ignorance of the residue- and this is the question about the possibility of God giving birth. Moreover, what kind of God cannot give birth? I am proposing an exploration into this residue, an exploration that procures to be repetitive. As lead by the maelstrom Tertullian affirms that:

> Crediderat Eua serpenti: credidit Maria Gabrieli. Quod illa credendo deliquit, ista credendo correxit. 'Sed Quod illa credendo deliquit, ista credendo correxit. 'Sed Eua nihil tunc concepit in utero ex diaboli uerbo'. Immo concepit. Nam exinde ut abiecta pareret et in doloribus pareret, uerbum diaboli semen illi fuit. Enixa est denique diabolum fatricidam. Contra Maria eum edidit, qui carnalem fratrem Israël, interemptorem suum, saluum quandoque praestaret. In uuluam ergo dues uerbum suum delutit, bonum fratrem, ut memorian mali fatris eraderet. Inde

> prodeundum fuit Christo ad salutem hominis, quo homo iam damnatus intrauerat.[80]

From this passage, which deserves a thoroughly critical discussion, I would like to stop and comment briefly on the phrase "In uuluam ergo dues uerbum suum delutit". Following the translation of Ernest Evans the phrase says: "So then, God brought down into the Womb [vulva, JP] his own Word"[81], the transitional *ergo* is related clearly to the idea that Mary believed the Angel (*credidit Maria Gabrieli*) and because of that God chose her.[82] Is not the past action, reflected in the verb brought down, a form of giving birth? When God gave its word was it not giving birth? Is not Tertullian's carnal ontology the ontology of the God that gave birth? God took out something from itself, something that was/is different from it. In the act of "brought down" the same smell of fluids like those that we smell in the giving birth appear. Here we are talking, in a strict sense, about a first birth. Tertullian does not meditate on the action of bringing down[83]. This action requires one to open oneself or to have a deep cut. The verb brought down indicates an effort, energy expenditure, fatigue and emptiness. All of this makes transit possible, one which is just apparently short, from one part of the body (upper) to another part of the body (lower) specifically to an orifice. Due to the carnal effort required, in

---

[80] Tertullian *De Carne Christi* XVII, 6.

[81] Tertullian, *Treatise on the Incarnation*, ed. and trans. Ernest Evans (London: S.P.C.K, 1956), 61.

[82] For a criticism of God's « choosing » of Mary see Jane Schaberg, *The Illegitimacy of Jesus: A Feminist Theological Interpretation of the Infancy Narratives* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); Gerd Lüdemann, *Virgin Birth? The Real Story of Mary and Her Son Jesus,* trans. John Bowden (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1998).

[83] Jean Pierre Mahé translates: "Ainsi Dieu fit descendere son prope Verbe dans le sein dans le sein d'une femme" see Tertullien "La Chair du Christ" Tome I, trans. introduction, text critique and commentary Jean Pierre Mahé *Sources Chrétiennes* 216 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1975), 283. His translation (Dieu fit descendere) also implies the action of take out something from oneself but not necessary inside oneself.

birth the regulation of the fluid's circulation suffers a weakening that transforms every muscular contraction in a shower of fluids.

Besides these factors, is the lack of control of that which is being pushed out. Every push implies less and less control and more ambivalence. He/she who is emerging takes the energy, cuts the flesh, and suspends the regular anabolic activities of the body. The verb brought down designates fundamentally a catabolic action, one in which the energy is reduced. The economy of birth is not productive; it consists in the donation and removal of energy that could not be recovered.

When one suggests that God gave birth, he/she is indicating a destabilization in its same composition, a lack of security and, at the same time, a different power texture. The act of giving birth includes an accumulation and expenditure of great power. But this power is not constant or permanent; it is particular in that it is finite. It is used for a period of time and then is exhausted. The power of giving birth could not be permanently emulated. After the expenditure of energy/power implicated in birth it is necessary that others give God energy/care. In this case Mary did not just give birth to Jesus; she took care of God as well, even without asking for it.

In birth there is also a loss of verticality and the sensation of vertigo that re-collocates the entire world. The change from verticality to horizontality supposes not just a change of perspective or the form we are present or absent to others, but a new form to take space and to perceive the temporality. While we are in vertical position, especially walking, we have the sensation that we are going toward the space. We feel that everything is motionless and is available. Verticality is the position of every empire enterprise, "time is money" means: you should be vertical. Otherwise when we are

horizontally collocated the sensation that we feel and the experience of the relation with others that we have vary importantly. While one is lying, things are approaching or not and one is expecting. The space, then, does not belong to us but because we are within it our motion is possible. The vertigo of God consists in this new disposition in the space (cosmos) in which it is not just a creator but also who awaits and desires. And this clearly supposes a radical transformation of Hume's and Smith's theology. There is, as well, a paradox in the vertical position of the biped mammals that we are: we just barely – and through an object capable to reflect us – can see our backs and that is our first limitation. We lost or leave behind, almost always, half of our body. This signifies, among other questions, that we are, almost all the time, susceptible to be surprised from behind. So, the existence of position referring to God implies also the possibility, for us, to touch its back. We are able to bring a novelty to God.

Passing Through

The Verb came out from God, so it lost something that was within it or with it or perhaps it lost itself. It is the birth of the Verb and its passing through the vaginal canal, mouth, rectum or other orifice of God; its naked and exposed body of God unveiled for us in this rapid action of *brought down.* This is the first solitude of God and its tears are still warm. However, this is a particular solitude, specifically, one that turns against itself. It is precisely because of this detachment, by the act of taking out, that there is companionship– friendship.

Every companion, if it is so, supposes a differentiation between those who are there for each other. The verb "brought-down" designates the suspension of an intimate relationship, a form of "alterity inside", necessary to go into openness through which the

Verb can extend until the point of the tactile (touch) dissemination. While the Verb is within the Womb of God it is primordially sonic. It exists because it is sound, its waves, tones and intensities reach us through our ears. We can even touch, in the texture of other flesh, its decibels. The Verb is never absent but when it came down from God its sonority decreases and its skin availability is intensified. Because the Verb turned radically touchable, God's sonority is intensified and its sonic wages turned particularly liquid. This liquid sonority allows a fading of its presence and, as I mentioned before, sonority is also touchable. The sound has the quality of a high elastic velocity and thanks to that its harmonies could be transmitted to wide spaces. Because of birth we also could taste God, specifically its birth blood. The flow of its blood, is not just present in the Eucharistic, but also in our circulatory system which irrigates air in our lungs, or stops our bleeding. Because of birth God became dislocated because birth introduces a change in the sensorial abilities or capacities.[84] God became more sensitive because it gave birth. This sonority of God that I am mentioning it is not from its *logos* but its screams while it was giving birth. There is also silence of God that appears to us as a transitory smelliness.

Ripped Veil

Brought down implies both separation and encounter. In this case when the Verb comes from the bloody orifice of God it is received by a community in which it takes place. The God that gave birth has had its veil ripped, stained with blood. If one believed in Tertullian's God, God itself rebelled against it in the moment in which left its veil, opened its legs and pushing brought down its Verb. Let's believe in Tertullian's words:

[84] Michel Serres, *Variations sur le Corps: Le texte* (Paris: Éditions Le Pommier, 2002).

"*Denudasti puellam a capite, et tota iam sibi uirgo non est, alia est facta"*[85], since God, in its own shower of blood, has had to unveil itself completely in order to give birth, will be different from itself forever. So the God that once was, now is constantly changing into others because of its carnal excess shown by the act of giving birth. *Creatio ex sanguis:* creation and salvation are composed from the mixture of our and God's blood. This is labor's blood, hard, warm, and fused with excrement and urine. It is painful blood that unveils and hides. It is not the blood of sacrifice or murder; but they are linked, they are inseparable. Faith comes, also, through the smell of birth blood.

8. Caress

Birth is hidden from us; moving away inevitably, entering into thick fog. There is, apparently, nothing of it within our reach. We have just the rumor from others, its hermeneutics. Birth appears properly as that which resists the conceptual apprehension or, more precisely it is completely unveiled and, in spite of that, results intimate and irreplaceable to us. To think birth represents the challenge to overcome a radical paradox. The paradox of a disclosure that, precisely for its seminal character, appears just as conceptually unreachable. Although, since it did happen to us and we were, without intentionality, put into the world we could not be in silence about our beginning.

I would like to suggest in a path opened by Tertullian that, because we are born, we are sent to the caress, not as an ontological structure but as a political possibility. This is the possibility of not being, as Ernesto Guevara (1928-1967) said reminding Hobbes, wolves for others. The politics of caress, understood in its political-economic reach,

[85] Tertullian *De Virginibus Velandis,* III, 5.

struggle against a world in which "One can win only at the cost of the failure of others".[86] The caress is not already finalized and it is not easy, the road until the flesh of the other, even if it appears longitudinally close, is politically difficult. Ernesto Guevara, with an intensity that I am looking for, said once:

> At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality. Perhaps it is one of the great dramas of the leader that he or she must combine a passionate spirit with a cold intelligence and make painful decisions without flinching […] In these circumstances [the solitude of the revolutionary, JP] one must have a large dose of humanity, a large dose of a sense of justice and truth in order to avoid dogmatic extremes, cold scholasticism, or an isolation from the masses. We must strive every day so that this love of living humanity is transformed into actual deeds, into acts that serve as examples, as a moving force.[87]

Guevara's comment included an implicit assertion: revolutionaries are those who intensely and permanently love. And this is so because without love, which does not exclude for him the armed struggle, the revolution turns into bureaucracy, cold procedures which conceal the "living humanity". To love is a form of producing a revolution within a revolutionary process; it is not enough but vital, because it "leads us" directly to the flesh – the surplus living- and to the necessary abolition of the socio-philosophical conditions that prevent love. These conditions are produced and reproduced socially and are manifested in all our relationships in the form of different dominations.

Cold and Birth

The absence of an adequate speech performance to explain – perhaps I should say the inadequacy of a pure explanation – about what, in birth, appeared to us and the

[86] Ernesto "Che" Guevara, "Socialism and Man in Cuba," in *Che Reader: Writings on Guerrilla Strategy, Politics and Revolution* ed. David Deutschmann, (Melbourne and New York: Ocean Press 1997), 199.

[87] Ibid., 213.

apparent silence of who appears without name and finite infinitude obligates us to the re-beginning. To learn again the sounds, textures, fragrances and colors that make the world habitable to us. Birth requires us to touch, to be touched, to expose ourselves publicly, to be available. It is the proximity of flesh that protects us from the frozen, it is the sharing our fluids that gives us pleasure and our hands that donate repose to others. The caress is an adventure inasmuch to restore and fulfill the apparently habitual. To caress the other is fundamental, to let the other take care of us and this is so for at least two reasons. In birth it is the blindness and lack of speech of the other that allows me to re-begin my existence.

9. Economy of the Flesh

The theological tradition have emphasized that flesh is damaged and damaging. In order to sustain the idea of God´s incarnation throughout the centuries theologians have explained that Christ's birth and flesh was not contaminated by flesh's impulses, viciousness, or inclinations. In this regard, theological reflection has function as a machine of immunization. It had repeated a condemnation to flesh in order to develop its Soteriological and Christological narratives. Flesh was the monstrous that have to be economized. God's internal life was understood as clean from flesh. As a result of this position Spirit has become as the basic principle of government. One has to live according to the Spirit and accept its materializations. Hume's and Smith's also assume flesh to be a zone, element, and surplus of life that has to be considered an economic object. Their investigations on human nature and economy constantly return to the question on how to subsume flesh within the productive body. Thus, they develop an economy of flesh without creating a rupture with theological discussions. Moreover, they

fully developed a theology of flesh that is expressed through and through in their philosophy.

My proposal in this chapter was to initiate a reflection capable to interrogate the tradition of the economy of the flesh. First, I started with a consideration of birth as an alternative entrance to think economy and theology. The concentration on death, closure, and permanency has obtruded the space to think the necessity and possibility of an economy founded on care. Second, from this perspective I offered a reading of Christ's birth. My reading emphasizes God's full assumption of flesh as well as its radical exposure in order to propose an understanding of incarnation not as a form of strict incorporation but participation and love. It is possible to think in an economy of flesh that does not negate or subsume flesh but aspires to protect the possibilities and dangers of the new. The new is both a promise and political project it requires social mobilizations and the interrogation of epistemic models. More than a theological development I have tried to embrace songs and screams that have not yet passed through us.

CONCLUSION

A golpes alejás lo que no fue y te fue.

Juan Gelmán.

I began this investigation with a serious joke: only theology can grasp the absurdities of political economy because theology is even more absurd than political economy. Thus, theology does not possess any other thing but its naked madness. And even it cannot be understood as theology's property. Theology resembles Smith's bare man, a sad song, the voice of Sarah Vaughan (1924-1990) refracted and forgotten. The joke also contained an insult, a dismissal. Political economy and theology meet each other in the territory of shadows and precariousness which, if one follows the joke, is the evidently natural territory of theological speculation. If one asks: Is Marx alive? The response is undeniably that he lives in the ridicule of theology. Another question can be asked: Is theology alive? Certainly it is, in the seriousness of political economy. The jokes continue from Tertullian to Marx. The particularity of these mockeries is that they do not stop until they reach the tenebrous or horrendous. The horrendous itself contains a sardonic and painful humor. It introduces the abnormal, abject, and delirious in order to express limit situations. The metamorphosis, decompositions, and atrocities are deployed to confront us with the irrationality of the rationalized or the exchange of reason for obedience. Our laughing at the horrendous is itself an insightful joke. For the "critique of political economy" is also the reconsideration of theology: it requires that one get involved in debates that resist in our midst. The ridiculous link that unites economy and nature (heaven and earth) is effectively flesh. The political economy is not ashamed to reenact the economy of the flesh.

I followed the joke's consequences by examining a complex of questions that I tried to transform into problems. First, the origins of political economy were clearly formulated within a theological realm. Moreover, the articulation of political economy and theory of nature was possible thanks to the a priori of God. It was from this "perspective" that it was possible to imagine a totality almost without fissures. The only fissure was, to make us laugh, the "original debt of the flesh." Because of that the transition between Butler's corporeal disciplines to Hume's autobiography is the prolegomena to a philosophy of money, and the doctrine of international trade is a theological anthropology. The first object of political economy is the body and the first content of philosophy is the diarrhea of the philosopher. The concentration on the body is explained by the assumption that the body is such because it is composed or, more precisely, inhabited by flesh.

The flesh is an indispensable, constitutive aspect of the human being and also the enemy of her happiness, the stalker that menaces commercial society. Flesh is imagined as something that fluxes and exceeds the rules of connivance in society because it dreams another world. Because of it, Hume's and Smith's philosophical scenario has as its center the personae of Hume. He condenses the achievement of the economy of the flesh: reversing the anguish of the pilgrim, Hume's philosophical personae resists until its death without attempting to become another. As a part of the same theatrical presentation, Hume and Smith sanctioned that the conditions of possibility of their philosophical lives were neither possible nor desirable to overcome. Thus, they make slavery and kidnapping compatible with politeness and measured conversation.

Second, the "original debt of flesh" transformed their philosophies into Spiritual Police. At the core of this comprehension of the philosophical practice is the conflict between spirit and flesh. The spirit's movement condenses and actualizes itself in its multiple incarnations. The Spirit is nature and nature is the spirit incarnated. The functioning of the "spiritual body" requires immunization and security. Hence, Hume and Smith identified sexual and rank divisions not simply as social conventions but as a form by which to pay the interests of flesh's debt. Flesh appears to be the multitude (the poor laborers) and the inconsistency of women. Therefore, it is understood as an undetermined, viscous, and mad monstrosity that has to be both controlled and congratulated. Hume and Smith do not simply offer hell, but instead they promise we will be part of the Kingdom of God. The only prerequisite that the amorphous mass of workers, savages, and women has to fulfill is to give their flesh to the spirit of the time. The eroticism of the spirit is also its cruelty. To live according to the spirit signifies to the multitude to live on the brink of death since the fruits of Hume's and Smith's spirit are death and suicide. The "Spiritual police" fully express themselves in Hume's motto: always be a man—which is the same as to say: always reject the rage that situationally or structurally produces the so-called common life. In this precise sense God becomes a fetish.

Third, Hume is a theologian in the most intense sense. His philosophy presupposes that God is fully incarnated in the "general laws of nature and society". Accordingly, the "science of man" is theology and economic theory without contradictions. Natural theology is rational because everything that exists is rational. Believing in God is rational because God's rationality is purely immanent. God's

incarnation Hume takes as primordial fact whose consequences have to develop not within the realm of God's internal life but uniquely within its visible body. Nonetheless, for Hume the invisibility of God is visible in the movements of its spirit. From this perspective it is possible to affirm that Hume proposes that God has to consume human flesh in order to sustain the unity of its world. The way in which God consumes flesh is Hume presents in his early philosophical anxiety. In it, he presents flesh as a clash between rationalities. Hume's dubieties about the rationality of his personae he addresses as an idolatrous inclination and as rebellion to the Lord. Therefore, Hume's embracing is the economic act in and through which he becomes a subject. The freedom of Hume's subject, once he becomes sick, aged, or useless, can be manifested fundamentally through suicide. The wretched, that monstrosity within the monstrous multitude, is understood by Hume as a disease, as a danger to God's body. Consequently, Hume's philosophy understands flesh not only as *hybris* but also as sickness. The political economy indeed wants to decide when a life is worthy to be lived. But it does so from the theological perspective of the required immunization of God's body from flesh. God's gift of freedom is suicide. Once again, God has to be immunized from flesh in order to perform its economy.

Fourth, Smith partially follows Hume in that he separates from him in one fundamental respect: for Smith God remains invisible. But this God is not the omnipotent God of Boyle. Smith's invisible God intervenes in history only to extend its immanent logic. Properly considered, Smith's moral philosophy and economic theory have to be comprehended as a theology of incarnation. This theology of incarnation assumes the full incarnation of God in commercial society. Thus, what has to be incarnated is flesh within

bodies. Smith's moral philosophy presents the different steps of this incarnation: initially there is sentimental chaos (flesh) that through spiritual exercises is confronted with its vacuum and futility. Then, it is confronted not with singular and particular institutions but directly with God. In Smith's theology of incarnation the decision of being a unit, a member, and a vigilante of oneself is presented within an agonistic scheme: if one decides to multiply or break oneself, one has to understand that this is tantamount to erecting God as one's enemy. The confrontation between the fleshy being and God is of decisive importance for Smith's notion of wealth. Because only the one that obeys God can be also a self-interested and useful member of the economic body.

From this standpoint Smith argues that it constitutes a virtue to give oneself up to rationality. Thus, the Glory of Smith's God is the suffering of the multitude. The multitude's God, for both Smith and Hume, is a social and political buffoon--someone or something that does not have philosophical seriousness or rigor but that prompts ridicule. It is a fool that tricks. Because of that neither Hume nor Smith are atheist. The question of God, or as they understand it, of religious practices is a "public problem." Consequently, the administration of Gods is part of the primitive accumulation's secrets that are always visible though covered by rags.

Fifth, I tried to assume some of Hume's and Smith's challenges and then expand them. There are some aspects of their philosophical texture or certain labyrinths that they trace but abandon that should be further explored. Style is not, as they both proved, a mere extravaganza but a political position and a "non-subjected" disposition. I argued that in order to navigate, to use a Swiftian image, through Hume's and Smith's economy of the flesh there are two basic discussions that I should initiate. One is the discussion

about flesh and the other the discussion about birth. I did not try to formulate a theology of the flesh; instead I proposed a speculation (an investigation looking for clues) about how intense meditation on birth could transform my understanding of flesh. Also, I am interested in how a fleshy consideration of birth could transform my understanding of God's incarnation. Accordingly, I was not trying to grasp the nucleus or structure of birth but to receive the furiousness of its elusiveness in order to formulate the following questions: If instead of thinking from the perspective or realm of death we think from the event of birth, might it be possible to question an economic theory that assumes as a danger the unexpected and not incarnated novelties?

Clearly, in order to pose questions about the necrophilia of political economy we cannot think of birth from the theological model of immunity. Birth has to be embraced as a fleshy occurrence, and hence as disorder, exposure, poiesis, and risk tensioned by mortality. Flesh has to be considered as the possibility of possibilities that cannot be separated from body performances but that is not completely vanished if the body delays its apparition or even if it despairs. In this regard, flesh is not considered as an intrinsically damaged part of our image of God but as damageable life that has to be cared for and caressed. From this perspective I proposed a reading of the incarnation that focuses on contagion without damnation: God itself giving birth without protecting itself with veils. In the midst of God's birth blood I attempted to make a joke about Hume's and Smith's impeccable God. Beware of the jokes.

If one of the knots of political economy is the theological idea of "original sin," then I should affirm that the destruction (understood it as transformation through the renovation of reason) or *destructio* of the idea of flesh's debt is an adequate introduction

to produce an economy that perhaps our language is dreaming about. The aforementioned *destructio* can no longer be an attempt to rescue any sort of imagined pristine and unpolluted center of the Christian tradition. We have to fully accept the socially damaging and monstrous character of the flesh and to not expect salvation from it. Only in reinforcing our own horrendousness can we finally cut into pieces the invisible and visible hands that still are chopping out flesh. Beware of the laughable monstrosity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

David Hume's Bibliography

A Treatise of Human Nature. Edited by David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009 [1739-1740].

An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding and Other Writings. Edited by Stephen Buckle. Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 2007 [1748].

An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals. Edited by Tom L. Beauchamp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 [1751].

A Dissertation on the Passions / The Natural History of Religion. Edited by Tom L. Beauchamp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009 [1757].

History of England. From the Invasion of Julius Cesar to the Revolution in 1668. 6 Volumes. New York: John B. Alden, Publisher, 1885 [1754-1762].

Dialogues on Natural Religion. Edited by Dorothy Coleman. Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 2006 [1779].

Letters of David Hume. 2 Volumes. Edited by J. Y. T. Greig. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932.

"Hume's Early Memoranda, 1729-1740: The Complete Text." Edited by Ernest Campbell Mossner. *Journal of the History of Ideas* 9, no. 4 (October, 1948): 492-518.

New Letters of David Hume. Edited by Raymond Klibansky and Ernest C. Mossner. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011 [1954].

Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary. Edited by Eugene F. Miller. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987.

Adam Smith's Bibliography

The Theory of Moral Sentiments. Edited by D.D. Raphael and A.A. Macfie. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1984 [1759] [1776].

Lectures on Jurisprudence. Edited by R.L Meek, D.D. Raphael, and L.G. Stein. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982 [1762-1766].

Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. Edited by J.C. Bryce. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983 [1763].

An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of Wealth of Nations. Edited by Edwin Cannan. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976 [1776].

A Catalog of the Library of Adam Smith. Edited by James Bonar. Oxford-New York: Macmillan and Co., 1894.

Essays of Philosophical Subjects. Edited by W. Wightman and J.C. Bryce. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980 [undated].

The Correspondence of Adam Smith. Edited by Ernest Campbell Mossner and Ian Simpson Ross 2nd Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.

Reference

Corpus Christianorum Series Latina. 176 Volumes. Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 1954-present.

Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils. Vol. 1. (Nicaea I – Lateran V). Edited by Norman P. Tanner, S.J. (London and Washington, D.C: Georgetown/Sheed & Ward, 1990).

Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina. 221 Volumes. Edited by Jacques Paul Migne. Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1844-64.

Books

Adorno, Theodor. *Negative Dialectics*. Translated by E.B. Ashton. New York: The Seabury Press, 1973.

Agamben, Giorgio. *Nudities*. Translated by David Kishik and Stefen Pedatella. California: Stanford University Press, 2011.

_____. *Il regno e la Gloria: Per una genealogia teologica dell´economia e del governo*. Homo Sacer II, 2. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2009.

_____. *Lo que queda de Auschwitz: El archivo y el testigo: Homo Sacer III.* Traducido por Antonio Gimeno Cuspinera. Valencia: Pre-Textos, 2000.

Ainslie, Donald. "Hume's Anti-*Cogito*." In *Hume Readings*, edited by Lorenzo Greco and Alessio Vaccari, 91-120. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2012.

Althaus-Reid, Marcella. *The Queer God*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.

Alves, Rubem. *Tomorrow's Child: Imagination, Creativity, and the Rebirth of Culture*. Wipf & Stock: 2011 [1972].

Anderson, Perry. *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism*. London-New York: Verso, 2000 [1974].

Andrew, Donna T. *Aristocratic Virtue: The Attack on Dueling, Suicide, Adultery, and Gambling in Eighteenth-Century England*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013.

Arendt, Hanna. *The Human Condition*. Chicago & London: Chicago University Press, 1998 [1958].

Ariès, Phillipe. *The Hour of Our Death*. Translated by Helen Weaver. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981 [1977].

Arrighi, Giovanni. *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the Twenty-First Century*. London and New York: Verso, 2008.

Aspromourgos, Tony. *The Science of Wealth: Adam Smith and the Framing of Political Economy*. London-New York: Routledge, 2009.

Assmann, Hugo. editor. *Carter y la lógica del imperialismo.* San José: EDUCA, 1978.

_____. *La idolatría del mercado*. San José: DEI, 1997.

Aurelio Agustín. "Del pecado original." In *Obras Completas de San Agustín*. Vol.VI. Madrid: BAC, 1949.

Baier, Annette C. *Death and Character: Further Reflections on Hume*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2008.

Baroncelli, Flavio. *Un inquietante filosofo perbene: Saggio su David Hume*. Firenze: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1975.

Barrios, José Luis. *El cuerpo disuelto: Lo colosal y lo monstruoso*. México, D.F: Universidad Iberoamericana, 2010.

Barth, Karl. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Translated by Edwin C. Hoskyns. London: Oxford University Press, 1950 [1921].

Bataille, Georges. *The Accursed Share*. Vol. II. Translated by Robert Hurley. New York: Zone Books, 1993

Battersby, C. "An Enquiry Concerning the Humean Women." In *David Hume Critical Assessments* Vol. 6, ed. Stanley Tweyman, 255-264. London-New York: Routledge, 1995.

Baucom, Ian. *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005.

Baudrillard, Jean. *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*. Translated by Charles Levin. St. Louis: Telos Press, 1981.

_____. *The Mirror of Production*. Translated by Mark Poster. St. Louis: Telos Press, 1975.

Bellarmine, Robert. *On Temporal and Spiritual Authority: On Laymen or Secular People, On the Temporal Power of the Pope. Against William Barclay, On the Primary Duty of the Supreme Pontif*. Edited by Stefania Tutino. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2012 [1608].

Bell Jr., Daniel M. *The Economy of Desire: Christianity and Capitalism in a Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2012.

Belluci, Dino. *Science de la Nature et Réformation: La physique au service de la Réforme dans l'enseignement de Phillipe Mélanchthon*. Roma: Edizioni Vivere In, 1998.

Benjamin. Walter. *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*. Translated by Harry Zohn. Edited by Hanna Arendt. New York: Schocken Books, 2007 [1955].

Berry, Christopher J. *Hume, Hegel, and Human Nature*. The Hague/Boston/London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982.

Bingemer, María Clara. "La trinidad a partir de la perspectiva de la mujer. Algunas pautas para la reflexión." In *El rostro femenino de la teología.* San José: DEI, 1986.

Birth, Death, and Femininity: Philosophies of Embodiment. Edited by Robin May Schott. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010.

Bissonette, Vincent. "The Most Cruel Misfortune:" Suffering Innocence in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*." In *New Essays on Adam Smith's Moral Philosophy*, edited by Wade L. Robison and David B. Suits, 137-150. Rochester, New York: RIT Press, 2012.

Blackburn, Robin. *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation, and Human Rights*. London and New York: Verso, 2011.

Boltanski, Luc & Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*. Translated by Gregory Elliot London – New York: Verso, 2007 [1999].

Bonfil Batalla, Guillermo. *México profundo: Una civilización negada*. México, D.F: Grijalbo-Conaculta, 1990.

Borges, Jorge Luis. "El Sur." In *Obras Completas* I: 1923-1949. Buenos Aires: Emecé editores, 2005.

Boyd, Richard. "Manners and Morals: David Hume on Civility, Commerce, and the Social Construction of Difference." In *David Hume's Political Economy*, ed. Carl Wennerlind and Margaret Schabas. London-New York: Routledge, 2008.

Boyle, Robert. *A Free Inquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature*. Edited by Edward B. Davis and Michael Hunter. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996 [1686].

Brown, Marvin T. *Civilizing the Economy: A New Economics of Provision*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Brown, Peter. *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012.

Brown, Wendy. *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

Bunyan, John. *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Edited by W.R. Owens. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2003 [1678].

Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Inquiry*. Edited by Adam Phillips. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 [1757].

_____. *A Vindication of Natural Society or, A view of the Miseries and Evils arising to Mankind from Every Species of Artificial Society. In a Letter to Lord by a late Noble Writer, The Second Edition with a New* Preface. London: Printed for R. and J. Dodsley, in Pall-Mall; and Sold by M. Cooper, in Pater-noster-row, 1757.

Bürmann, Mario. *Das Labor des Anthropologen: Anthropologie und Kultur bei David Hume*. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2008.

Burrus. Virginia. *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* London and New York: Verso, 2009.

Bynum. Caroline Walker. *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion.* New York: Zone Books, 2011.

Cabantous, Alain. *Blasphemy: Impious Speech in the West from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century*. Translated by Eric Rauth. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

Calvin: The Institutes of the Christian Religion. Vol. II. Edited by John T. McNeill. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960 [1559].

Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment. Edited by Alexander Broadie. Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Campbell, George. *A Dissertation on Miracles: Containing an Examination of the Principles Advanced by David Hume, ESQ. In An Essay on Miracles*. Edinburgh: Printed for William Creech, Peter Hill, and John Ogle; and T. Cadell & W. Davies, London. G. Caw, Printer, 1812 [1763].

Camporesi, Piero. *La carne impassibile*. Milan: Saggiatore, 1983.

Carvalho, José Murilo de. *A formação das almas: o imaginário da República no Brasil*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1990.

Casassas, David. *La ciudad en llamas. La vigencia del republicanismo comercial de Adam Smith*. Barcelona. Montesinos, 2010.

Chalier, Catherine. *Traité des larmes: Fragilité de Dieu; fragilité de l` âme*. Paris: Editions Albin Michael, 2003.

Chaplin, Simon. "The Divine Touch, or Touching Divines: John Hunter, David Hume, and Bishop of Durham's Rectum." In *Vital Matters: Eighteenth-Century Conception of Conception, Life, and Death*, edited by Helen Deutsch and Mary Terrall, 222-245. Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2012.

Charbonnel, Nanine. *Comme une seul homme*: Corps Politique & Corps Mystique. 2 Volumes. Lons-Le-Sauner: Aréopage, 2010.

Christensen, Jerome. *Practicing Enlightenment: Hume and the Formation of a Literary Career*. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987.

Clarke, Pete. "Adam Smith, religion and the Scottish Enlightenment." In *New Perspectives on Adam Smith's The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, edited by Geoff Cockfield, Ann Firth and John Laurent, 47-65. Cheltenham, UK / Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2007.

Cohen, Ed. *A Body Worth Defending: Immunity, Biopolitics, and the Apotheosis of the Modern Body*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009.

Comblin, José. *La Doctrina de la Seguridad Nacional*. Santiago de Chile: Arzobispado de Santiago-Vicaría de la Solidaridad, 1979.

Conway, Anne. *The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*. Edited by Allison Coudert and Taylor Corse. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1690].

Couliano, Ioan P. *I miti dei Dualismi Occidentali: Dai sistemi Gnostici al mondo moderno*. Milano: Jaca Book, 1989.

Courtemanche, Eleanor. *The 'Invisible Hand' and British Fiction, 1818-1860: Adam Smith, Political Economy, and the Genre of Realism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

D' Aquino, S. Tommaso. *Commento alle Sentenze de Pietro Lombardo*. Vol. 9. Edited by Roberto Coggi. Bologna: Edizione Studio Dominicano, 2001.

Debravo, Jorge. *Milagro abierto*. San José: Editorial Costa Rica, 2009.

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*. Edited by John Richetti. London: Penguin Books, 2003 [1719].

Deleule, Didier. *Hume et la naissance du libéralisme économique*. Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1979.

Deleuze, Guilles. *Empirisme et subjectivité: Essai sur la nature humaine selon Hume*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2007 [1953].

Dernange, François. *Le Dieu du Marché: Éthique, économie et théologie dans l'œuvre d'Adam Smith*. Genève: Labor et Fides, 2003.

Diderot, Denis. "L' Interpétration de la nature (1753-1765). Idées III." In *Oeuvres Complètes* Tome IX. Edition critique et annotée, présentée par Jean Varloot. Paris: Hermann, 1975.

Dolar, Mladen. *A Voice and Nothing More*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 2006.

Dorrien, Gary. *Economy, Difference, Empire: Social Ethics for Social Justice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.

Drummond, John J. "Imagination and Appresentation, Sympathy and Empathy in Smith and Husserl." In *Intersubjectivity and Objectivity in Adam Smith and Edmund Husserl*,

edited by Christel Fricke/Dagfinn Føllesdal, 117-137. Piscataway, NJ: Ontos Verlag, 2012.

Duchrow, Ulrich and Franz J. Hinkelammert. *Transcending Greedy Money: Interreligious Solidarity for Just* Relations. New York: MacMillan Palgrave, 2012.

Dussel, Enrique. *Las metáforas teológicas de Marx*. Estella: Verbo Divino, 1993.

Dwyer, John. *The Age of Passions: An Interpretation of Adam Smith and Scottish Enlightenment Culture*. East Linton, Scotland: Tuckwell Press, 1998.

Early Responses to Hume's Life and Reputation I. Volume 9. Edited by James Fieser. London: Thoemmes, 2005.

Early Responses to Hume's Life and Reputation II. Volume 10. Edited by James Fieser. London: Thoemmes, 2005.

Economics and Religion: Are they Distinct? Edited by H. Geoffrey and A.M.C. Waterman. Boston/Dordrecht/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994.

Elguea, Javier. *Razón y Desarrollo: El crecimiento económico, las instituciones y la distribución de la riqueza espiritual*. México, D.F: El Colegio de México, 2008.

Ellingson, Ter. *The Myth of the Noble Savage*. Berkeley: University of California, 2001.

Emesa, Nemesius of. "On the Nature of Man." In *Cyril of Jerusalen and Nemesius of Emesa*, edited by William Telfer, 238-257. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954.

Engels, Frederick. "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy." In *Karl Marx/Frederick Engels Collected Works*. Vol. 3: 1843-1844. New York: International Publishers, 1975 [1843].

Equiano, Olaudah. *The Interesting Narrative of the Life Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African written by himself*. London: Printed and Sold by the Author, NO 10, Union-Street, Middlesex Hospital, 1789.

Equipo Seladoc, *Panorama de la teología latinoamericana:* IV Iglesia y Seguridad Nacional. Salamanca: Sígueme, 1980.

Esposito, Roberto. *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*. Translated by Timothy Campbell. Minnesota and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.

Falque, Emmanuel. *Dieu, la chair et l'autre: D' Irénée à Duns Scot*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008.

_____. *The Metamorphosis of Finitude: An Essay on Birth and Resurrection*. Translated by George Hughes. New York: Fordham University Press, 2012 [2004].

Fleischacker, Samuel. *On Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations: A Philosophical Companion*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Flew, Anthony. "Can Religion be Rational?" In *Religion and Hume's Legacy*, edited by D.Z. Phillips and Timothy Tessin, 193-206. New York: Claremont Graduate University, 1999.

_____. *Hume's Philosophy of Belief: A Study of his First Inquiry*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1961.

Folbre, Nancy. *Greed, Lust & Gender: A History of Economic Ideas*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Force, Pierre. *Self-Interest Before Adam Smith: A Genealogy of Economic Science*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Forman-Barzilai, Fonna. "Smith's Anti-Cosmopolitanism" *The Adam Smith Review* Vol. 5. Edited by Vivienne Brown and Samuel Fleischacker, 145-160. London-New York: Routledge, 2010.

_____. *Adam Smith and the Circles of Sympathy: Cosmopolitanism and Moral Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Foucault, Michel. *Naissance de la biopolitique. Cours au Collège de France 1978-1979*. Paris: Seuil/Gallimard, 2004.

Freydberg, Bernard. *David Hume: Platonic Philosopher, Continental Ancestor*. New York: SUNY Press, 2012.

Gallardo, Helio. *Elementos de política en América Latina*. San José: DEI, 1986.

_____. *Fundamentos de formación política: análisis de coyuntura*. San José: DEI, 1988.

_____. *América Latina/Honduras: Golpe de Estado y aparatos clericales*. Bogotá: desde abajo, 2010.

_____. *Crítica social del evangelio que mata. Introducción al pensamiento de Juan Luis Segundo*. Heredia, C.R.: EUNA, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, 2009.

Gallego, Agustín González. *Antropología Filosófica, del "subjectum" al sujeto*. Barcelona: Montesinos, 1988.

Garret, Don. "Reasons to act and believe: Naturalism and Rational justification in Hume's philosophical project." In *Hume Readings*, edited by Lorenzo Greco and Alessio Vaccari, 21-40. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2012.

Gaskin, J.C.A. *Hume's Philosophy of Religion*. New York: Harper and Row, 1978.

Gaukroger, Stephen. *The Collapse of Mechanism and the Rise of Sensibility: Science and the Shaping of Modernity 1680-1760*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Gerbi, Antonello. *La disputa del Nuovo Mondo. Storia di una polemica. 1750-1900*. Milano-Napoli: Ricardo Ricciardi, 1955.

_____. *La nature delle Indie Nova: Da Cristoforo Colombo a Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo*. Milan: Ricardo Ricciardi, 1975.

Guevara, Ernesto "Che". "Socialism and Man in Cuba." In *Che Reader: Writings on Guerrilla Strategy, Politics and Revolution,* edited by David Deutschmann. Melbourne and New York: Ocean Press 1997.

Glancy, Jennifer. *Corporal Knowledge: Early Christian Bodies.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Göçmen, Doğan. *The Adam Smith Problem:* Human Nature and Society in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations*. London – New York: Tauris Academic Books, 2007.

Gordon Marshall, *Presbyteries and Profits: Calvinism and the Development of Capitalism in Scotland 1560-1707*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Gorz, André. *L´Immateriel*. Paris: Editions Galileé, 2003.

_____. *The Immaterial*. Translated by Chris Turner. London, New York, Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2010.

Granados, José. *Teología de la carne: El cuerpo en la historia de su salvación*. Burgos, España: Monte Carmelo, 2012.

Griswold, Jr, Charles L. *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Grüner, Eduardo. *La oscuridad y las luces: Capitalismo, cultura y revolución*. Buenos Aires: Edhasa, 2010.

Guerrini, Anita. *Obesity & Depression in the Enlightenment: The Life and Times of George Cheyne*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000.

Haakonssen, Knud. *The Science of a Legislator: The Natural Jurisprudence of David Hume & Adam Smith*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989 [1981].

Hanafi, Zakiya. *The Monster in the Machine: Magic, Medicine, and the Marvelous in the Time of the Scientific Revolution*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000.

Harley, Ryan Patrick. *Adam Smith and the Character of Virtue*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Harris, James A. "Hume's Use of the Rhetoric of Calvinism." In *Impressions of Hume*, edited by M. Frasca-Spada and P. J. E. Kail, 141-160. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005.

Hartman, Saidiya. *Lose your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2007.

Hartnack, Justus. *From Radical Empiricism to Absolute Idealism* Lewiston/Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986.

Hegel, G.W.F. *The Encyclopedia Logic. Part I of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences with the Zusätze*. Translated by T.F. Geraets, W.A. Suchting, H.S. Harris. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Translated by Joan Stambaugh. Albany: SUNY Press, 2010 [1927, 1953].

Helvétius, Claude-Adrien. *De l´Esprit*, texte revu par Jacques Moutaux. Paris: Fayard, 1988 [1758].

Hénaff, Marcel. *Le prix de la vérité: le don, l´argent, la philosophie*. Paris: Seuil, 2002.

Herdt, Jennifer. *Religion and Faction in Hume's Moral Philosophy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Herzog, Lisa. *Inventing the Market: Smith, Hegel, and Political Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Hilton, Boyd. *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

Hinkelammert, Franz J. *Crítica a la razón utópica*. San José: DEI, 1984.

_____. *Economía y revolución*. Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico, 1967.

_____. *El grito del sujeto*. Del teatro mundo del evangelio de Juan al perro mundo de la globalización. San. José, DEI, 1998.

_____.editor. *El huracán de la globalización*. San José: DEI, 1999.

_____. *Democracia y totalitarismo*. San José: DEI, 1987.

_____. *La fe de Abraham y el Edipo* occidental. San José: DEI, 1991.

_____. *Sacrificios humanos y sociedad occidental: Lucifer y la bestia*. San José: DEI, 1991.

Hirschman, Albert O. *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph*. Twentieth Anniversary Edition. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Edited by Edwin Curley. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett, 1994 [1651].

Holden, Thomas. *Specters of False Divinity: Hume's Moral Atheism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Hölderlin. Friedrich. *Poems of Friedrich Hölderlin*. Translated by James Mitchell. San Francisco: Ithuriel's Spear, 2007.

Hont, Istvan and Michael Ignatieff. "Needs and justice in the *Wealth of Nations*: an introductory essay." In *The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, edited by Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Hunter, John. *Observations on Certain Parts of the Animal Oeconomy*. London: Printed and Sold at N.13, Castle-Street, Leicester-Square; and by Mr. G. Nicol, Pall Mall; and Mr. J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1792 [1786].

Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains. Edited by Christopher Fox, Roy Porter, and Robert Wokler. Berkeley: University of California, 1995.

Israel, Jonathan I. *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights 1750-1790*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 237.

Institutes of the Christian Religion 1541 French Edition. Translated by Elsie Anne McKee. Grand Rapids, Michigan / Cambridge, U.K: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009.

Jahan, Sébastien. *Les renaissances du corps en Occident (1450-1650)*. Paris: Éditions Belin, 2004.

Jennings, Willie James. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2010.

Jonas, Hans. *The Gnostic Religion: The Message of the Alien God and the Beginning of Christianity.* Boston: Bacon Press, 1958.

Justman, Stewart. *The Autonomous Male of Adam Smith*. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993.

Kandinsky Complete Writings on Art. Edited by Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo. Boston: Da Capo Press, 1982.

Kantorowicz, Ernst H. *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957.

Kojima, Hiroshi. *Monad and Thou: Phenomenological Ontology of Human Being*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000.

Kuiper, Edith. "Adam Smith and his Feminist Contemporaries." In *New Voices on Adam Smith*, edited by Leonidas Montes and Eric Schliesser, 40-60. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Laqueur, Thomas. "The Dead and Dying Body for Hume to Now." In *The Future of Flesh: A Cultural Survey of the Body,* edited by Zoe Detsi-Diamanti, Katerina Kitsi-Mitakou, and Effie Yiannopoulou, 43-60. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009.

Laval, Christian. *L' Homme Économique: Essai sur les racines du néoliberalisme*. Paris: Gallimard, 2007.

Le Goff, Jacques. *Marchands et banquiers du Moyen Âge* (Paris : PUF, 2001.

_____. *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages.* Translated by Patricia Ranum. New York : Zone Books, 1988 [1986].

Le Jallé, Éléonere. *L´autorégulation chez Hume*. Paris: Presses Universitaries de France, 2005.

Leclaire, Serge. *On tue un enfant: Un essai sur le narcissime primaire et la pulsion de mort*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1975.

Livingston, David. *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life*. Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1984.

_____. *Philosophical Melancholy and Delirium: Hume's Pathology of Philosophy*. Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1998.

Lombard, Peter. *The Sentences* Book 3: On the Incarnation Of the Word. Translated by Giulio Silano. Toronto and Ontario: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2010 [c. 1150].

Loon, Hans Van. *The Dyophysite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009.

Lordon, Frédéric. *Capitalisme, désir et servitude: Marx et Spinoza.* Paris: La fabrique éditions, 2010.

Losurdo, Domenico. *Liberalism: A Counter-History*. Translated by Gregory Elliot. London-New York: Verso, 2011 [2006].

Lubac, Henri de. *Corpus Mysticum: l'eucharistie et l'Église au Moyen âge. Étude historique*. *2 éd., rev. et augm.* Paris: Aubier, 1948.

Luxemburg, Rosa. *The Accumulation of Capital*. Translated by Agnes Schwarzschild. London and New York: Routledge, 2003 [1913].

Macpherson, C.B. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011 [1962].

Mahé, Jean Pierre. *Sources Chrétiennes* 216. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1975.

Mandeville, Bernard. *The Fable of the Bees*. Edited by Phillip Hart. London: Penguin Books, 1989[1714, 1723, 1724].

Marchi, Neil de. "Exposure to strangers and superfluities: Mandeville's regimen for great wealth and foreign treasure." In *Physicians and Political Economy*, edited by Peter Groenewegen, 48-66. London-New York: Routledge, 2001.

Marx, Karl. *Capital.* Vol 1. Translated and introduced by G.D.H. Cole, addendum and bibliographical note Murray Wolfson. London & New York: Everyman's Library, 1952, [1972].

_____. "The Poverty of Philosophy." In *Karl Marx/Frederick Engels Collected Works,* Vol. 6: 1845-1848. (New York: International Publishers, 1976 [1847].

_____. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Vol. 1. Translated by Ben Fowkes. New York: Vintage Books, 1977 [1867].

_____. *Grundisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (Rough Draft). Translated by Martin Nicolaus. London: Penguin Books, 1993 [1857-58].

Mbembe, Achille. *Necropolítica* seguido de *Sobre el gobierno privado indirecto*. Traducción y edición a cargo de Elisabeth Falomir. Madrid: Melusina, 2011.

_____. *On the Postcolony*. Translated by A. M. Berrett. Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 2001.

McIntosh, John R. *Church and Theology in Enlightenment Scotland: The Popular Party, 1740-1800*. East Linton, Scotland: Tuckwell Press, 1998.

McMurtry, John. "Understanding Market Theology." In *The Invisible Hand and The Common Good*, edited by Bernard Hodgson, 151-182. Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer, 2004.

Mediaeval Commentaries on the Sentences *of Peter Lombard.* Vol. I. Edited by G.R. Evans Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2002.

Mediaeval Commentaries on the Sentences *of Peter Lombard*. Vol. II. Edited by Philipp W. Rosemann. Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2009.

Meek, Ronald L. "The Scottish contribution to Marxist sociology." In *Adam Smith: Critical Responses*. Vol.VI, edited by Hiroshi Mizuta, 15-30. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

_____. *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

Meeks, M. Douglas. *God the Economist: The Doctrine of God and Political Economy*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Colin Smith. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.

Mignolo, Walter D. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Durham and London: 2011.

Millar, John. *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*. Edited by Aaron Garret. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2006 [1771].

Miranda, José Porfirio. *El Ser y el Mesías*. Salamanca: Sígueme, 1973.

Mo Sung, Jung. *Desejo, Mercado e Religião*. Petropolis: Vozes, 1997.

Monod, Paul Kréber. *Solomon's Secret Arts.* The Occult in the Age of Enlightenment. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013.

Monteiro, João Paulo. *Novos Estudos Humeanos*. São Paulo: Discurso, 2003.

_____. *Teoria, Retórica, Ideologia*. São Paulo: Ática, 1975.

Mossner, E.C. *The Life of David Hume*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980 [1954].

Muramatsu, Shigemi. "Andrew Fletcher's criticism of commercial civilization and his plan for European federal union." In *The Rise of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment,* edited by Tatsuya Sakamoto and Hideo Tanaka, 8-21. London-New York: Routledge, 2003.

Murphy, Tim. *The Politics of Spirit: Phenomenology, Genealogy, Religion*. New York: SUNY Press, 2012.

Nazianzus, Gregory of. *The Five Theological Orations of Gregory of Nazianzus*. Edited by Arthur James Mason. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1899.

Nevett, Thomas. *The Rational Oeconomy of Humane Bodies, wherein the nature of the chyle, blood, lymph, and other juices, is discove'd...* London: Printed, and sold by T. Parkhurst and J. Robinson, 1704.

Newton, Sir Isaac. *Principia. Vol II: The System of the World*. Translated by Andrew Motte. Revised by Florian Cajori. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: California University Press, 1934, 1962 [1686] [1729].

Nyland, Chris. "Women's Progress and the 'End of History.'" In *The Status of Women in Classic Economic Thought*, edited by Robert Dimand and Chris Nyland, 108-126. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Pub. 2003.

O' Neill, John. "The Political Economy of Recognition" *The Adam Smith Review* 6, edited by Fonna Forman-Barzilai, 129-151. London-New York: Routledge, 2011.

O`Byrne, Anne. *Natality and Finitude*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010.

O' Gorman, Edmundo. *La invención de América.* México: FCE, 2006 [1958].

Oeconomies in the Age of Newton. Annual Supplement to Volume 35: History of Political Economy. Edited by Margaret Schabas and Neil De Marchi. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003.

Oslingtone, Paul. "Divine Action, Providence, and Adam Smith's Invisible Hand." In *Adam Smith as Theologian*, edited by Paul Oslingtone, 61-75. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Osterfeld Li, Michelle. *Ambiguous Bodies: Reading the Grotesque in Japanese Setsuwa Tales*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009.

Oz-Salzberg, Fania. *Translating the Enlightenment: Scottish Civic Discourse in Eighteenth Century Germany.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1995.

Petty, William. *A Treatise of Taxes & Contributions, shewing the Nature and Measures of Crown Lands, Assessments, Customs, Poll-Money, Lotteries, Benevolence, Penalties, Monopolies, Offices, Tythes, Raising of Coins, Harth-Money, Excize, etc. With several intersperst Discourses and Digressions concerning Warres, The Church, Universities, Rents & Purchases, Usury & Exchange, Banks & Lombards, Registries for Conveyances, Beggars, Ensurance, Exportation of Money & Wool, Free-ports, Coins, Housing, Liberty of Conscience, etc.* The Same being frequently applied to the present State and Affairs of Ireland. London: Printed for N. Brooke, at the Angel in Cornhill, 1662.

_____. *Political Survey of Ireland with the Eftablifhment of that Kingdom, when the late Duke of Ormond was Lord Lieutenant ; And alfo an exa^ LIST of the prefent Peers, Members of Parliament, and principal Officers of State. To which is addeJ, An Account of the Wealth and expences of England, and the Methodof raifing taxes in the moft equal manner; Shewing likewife that England can bear the Charge offour Millions per Ann. when the occaflons of the Government require it,* The Second Edition, carefully correfted, with Additions. London: Printed for D. Browne, at the Black Swan, W. Mears, at the Lamb; F. Clay, at the Bible and Star, all without Temple- Bar; and F. Hooke at Flower-de- Luce, against St. Dunfants Church in Fleet Freet, 1719.

Phillipson, Nicholas. *Adam Smith: An Enlightened Life*. New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 2010.

_____. "Propriety, property and prudence." In *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain*, edited by Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner, 302-320. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Pineda-Madrid, Nancy. *Suffering + Salvation in Ciudad Juárez*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.

Polanyi, Karl. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2001 [1944].

Poovey, Mary. *Genres of the Credit Economy: Mediating Value in Eighteenth-and Nineteenth Century Britain*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2008.

Porter, Roy. *Flesh in the Age of Reason*. New York: Norton, 2005.

Raffe, Alasdair. *Religious Arguments in Scotland,* 1660-1714. New York: Boydell Press, 2012.

Ranft, Patricia. *How the Doctrine of the Incarnation Shaped Western Culture*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013.

Raphael, D.D. *The Impartial Spectator*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Redon, Odile. "Aspects économiques de la discrimination et de la marginalisation des femmes XIIIe - XVIIIe siècles." In *La Donna Nell' Economia Secc. XIII*-XVIII, a cura di Simonetta Cavaccioni, 441-460. Prato: Le Monier, 1989.

Religion, Economics, and Social Thought: Proceedings of an International Symposium. Edited by Walter Block and Irving Hexham.Vancouver: The Fraser Institute, 1982.

Rendall, Jane. *The Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment*. London: Macmillan, 1978.

Reuling, Hanneke. *After Eden: Church Fathers and Rabbis on Genesis 3:16-21*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006.

Rieger, Joerg. *Globalization and Theology*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010.

_____. *No Rising Tide: Theology, Economics, and the Future*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009.

Rigotti, Francesca. *Il filo del pensiero: Tessere, scriviere pensare*. Bologna: Societa editrice il Mulino, 2002.

Rivera Pagán, Luis. *Evangelización y violencia: La conquista de América*. San Juan: Ediciones Cemí, 1990.

Rivera, Mayra. "Memory of the Flesh: Theological Reflections on Word and Flesh." In *Creating Ourselves: African Americans and Hispanic Americans on Popular Culture and Religious Expression*, edited by Anthony B. Pinn and Benjamín Valentín, 69-89. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009.

Rivers, Isabel. *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment II. Shaftesbury to Hume*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Roca, J. García. *Positivismo e ilustración: la filosofía de David Hume*. Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 1981.

Romano, Claude. *L'événement et le monde*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008.

Ross, Ian Simpson. *The Life of Adam Smith*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Rothschild, Emma. *Economic Sentiments.* Adam Smith, Condorcet, and the Enlightenment Cambridge, MA/ London: Harvard University Press, 2002.

_____. *The Inner Life of Empires: An Eighteenth-Century History*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011.

Russell, Paul. *The Riddle of Hume's* Treatise: *Skepticism, Naturalism, and Irreligion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Saint-Tierry, Guillaume de. *De Natura Corporis et Animae*. Texte et Tradution M. Lemoine. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1988 [c.1145].

Santner, Eric L. *The Royal Remains: The People's Two Bodies and the Endgames of Sovereignty*. Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2011.

Schabas, Margaret. *The Natural Origins of Economics*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Schaberg, Jane. *The Illegitimacy of Jesus: A Feminist Theological Interpretation of the Infancy Narratives*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.

Schmitz, Hermann. *Der Leib*. Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2011.

Schopenhauer, Arthur. *Parerga and Paralipomena*. Vol. II. Translated by E.F.J Payne. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000.

Scornaienchi, Lorenzo. *Sarx und Soma bei Paulus: Der Mensch zwischen Destruktivität und Konstructivität*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008.

Sebastiani, Silvia. "'Race', Women, and Progress in the Scottish Enlightenment." In *Women, Gender, and Enlightenment*, edited by. Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor, 75-96. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

_____. *The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, Gender, and the Limits of Progress*. Translated by Jeremy Carden. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Segundo, Juan Luis. *Teología abierta para el Laico adulto 2:* Gracia y condición humana. Buenos Aires: Carlos Lohlé, 1969.

Serres, Michel. *Variations sur le Corps: Le texte*. Paris: Éditions Le Pommier, 2002.

Shahar, Shulamith. "The Regulation and Presentation of Women in Economic Life (13th Century - 18th Centuries)." In *La Donna Nell' Economia Secc. XIII-XVIII*, a cura di Simonetta Cavaccioni, 501-522. Prato: Le Monier, 1989.

Shapiro, Michael J. *Reading "Adam Smith": Desire, History and Value.* Newbury Park, London, New Dehli: Sage Publications, 1993.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Edited by J. Paul Hunter. New York-London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2012 [1818].

Sigrist, René. *La Nature à l' épreuve: Les débuts de l'expérimentation à Genève*. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011.

Sina, Mario. *L' Avvento della ragione. "Reason" e "above reason" dal razionalismo teologico inglese al deismo.* Milano: Vita e Penseiro, 1976.

Smith, Andrea. *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2005.

Smith, Donald C. *Passive Obedience and Prophetic Protest: Social Criticism in the Scottish Chruch 1830-1945*. New York: Peter Lang, 1987.

Smith, N. Kemp. *The Philosophy of David Hume*. London: Macmillan, 1949 [1941].

Soto, Diego. *El Espejo encantado: mito, fatalidad y carnalidad*. Heredia: Escuela Ecuménica de Ciencias de la Religión, 2010.

Spinoza, Baruch. "Ethics: Demonstrated in Geometric order and divided into Five Parts, which Treat." In *The Collected Works of Spinoza*. Vol. 1. Translated by Edwin Curley. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Stackhouse, Max L. *Public Theology and Political Economy: Christian Stewardship in Modern Society*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1991 [1978].

Streminger, Gerhard. *David Hume. Der Philosoph und sein Zeitalter*. München: C.H.Beck, 2011.

_____. *David Hume. Sein Leben und sein Werk*. Paderborn: Schoeningh 1994.

_____. *Der natürliche Lauf der Dinge.* Essays zur Adam Smith und David Hume. Marburg: Metropolis, 1995.

Sunderland, David. *Social Capital, Trust and the Industrial Revolution, 1780-1880*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.

Sutherland, Kathryn. "Adam Smith's Master Narrative: Women and the *Wealth of Nations*." In *Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations: New Interdisciplinary Essays*, edited by Stephen Copley and Kathryn Sutherland, 97-121. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995.

Swain, Kathleen M. *Pilgrim's Progress, Puritan Progress.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Symonds, Deborah A. *Weep Not for Me: Women, Ballads, and Infanticide in Early Modern Scotland*. University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.

Tamez, Elsa. *Contra toda condena*. La justificación por la fe desde los excluidos. San José: DEI-SEBILA, 1991.

Tanner, Kathryn. *Economy of Grace*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.

Tarkovsky. Andrey. *Sculpting Time: The Great Russian Filmmaker Discusses His Art*. Translated by Kitty Hunter-Blair. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987.

Taubes, Jacob. *Occidental Eschatology*. Translated by David Ratmoko. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009 [1947].

Taylor, Mark Lewis. *The Theological and the Political: On the Weight of the World*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.

Tertullian's Treatise on the Incarnation. Edited and Translated by Ernest Evans. London: S.P.C.K, 1956.

Tertullian's Treatise on the Resurrection. Edited by Ernest Evans. London: SPCK, 1960.

The Economic Writings of Sir William Petty. Together with the Observations upon the Bills of Mortality more probably by Captain John Graunt. Ed. Charles Henry Hull. Vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899 [1699].

The Invention of Tradition. Edited by Erich Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 2012 [1983].

The Science of Giambattista Vico. Translated by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984 [1744].

The Works of Bishop Butler. Edited and Introduced by David E. White. New York: University of Rochester Press, 2006.

The Works of John Knox. Vol. 4. Edited by David Laing. Edinburgh: Printed for the Bannatyne Club, 1855 [1556-1558].

The Works of John Milton. Vol.II. Part I. Edited by Frank Allen Patterson. New York: Columbia University Press, 1931.

The Works, Political, Metaphysical, and Chronological of the Late Sir James Steuart of Coltness, Bart. Now First Collected by General Sir James Steuart, Bart, his son. In Six Volumes. Vol I. London: Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, Strand, 1805 [1767].

Third Earl of Shaftesbury, Anthony. *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. Vol. I. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001 [1732, 6th Edition].

Thompson, E. P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York: Pantheon House, 1964.

Tinker, George E. *Spirit and Resistance: Political Theology and American Indian Liberation*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004.

Tinland, Franck. *L' Homme Sauvage: Homo ferus et Homo sylvestris de l' animal à l' home*. Paris: L' Harmattan, 2003.

Todeschini, Giacomo. *Un trattato francescano di economia politica: il De emptionibus et venditionibus, De usuris, De restitutionibus di Pietro di Giovanni Olivi*. Roma: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1980.

_____. *I mercanti e il tempio. La società cristiana e il circolo virtuoso della ricchezza fra medioevo ed età moderna*. Bologna: il Mulino, 2002.

_____.*Il prezzo della salvezza. Lessici medievali del pensiero económico*. Roma: La Nuova Italia Scientifica, 1994.

_____.*La ricchezza degli ebrei. Merci e denaro nella riflessione ebraica e nella definizione cristiana dell'usura alla fine del Medioevo*. Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1989.

Toneatto, Valentina. *Les banquiers du seigneur, évêques et moines face à la richesse (IVe-début IXe siècle)*. Rennes: Presses Universitaries de Rennes, 2012.

Torrance, Thomas F. *Scottish Theology: From John Knox to John Campbell*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996.

Torre, Jose R. *The Political Economy of Sentiment*. London: Pickering and London, 2007.

Townes, Emilie. *Breaking the Fine Rain of Death: African American Health Issues and a Womanist Ethic of Care*. Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2006.

_____. *Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006.

Valentin, Benjamin. *Mapping Public Theology: Beyond Culture, Identity, and Difference*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002.

Vidal, Fernando. *Les sciences de l´ âme XVIe-XVIIIe* siècle. Paris: Éditions Champion, 2006.

Vidales, Raúl. *Cristianismo anti-burgués*. San José: DEI, 1978.

Viner, Jacob. *Religious Thought and Economic Society*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1978.

_____. *The Role of Providence in the Social Order: An Essay in Intellectual History*. Princeton: American Philosophical Association, 1972;

Vliet, Jason Van. *Children of God: The Imago Dei in John Calvin and His Context*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009.

Wakefield, Priscilla. *Reflections on the present condition of the female sex; with suggestions for its improvement*. London: printed for J. Johnson; and Darton and Harvey, 1798.

Walker, James. *Theology and Theologians of Scotland 1560-1750*. Edinburgh: Knox Press, 1982 [1872].

Waterman, A.M.C. *Political Economy and Christian Theology since the Enlightenment: Essays in Intellectual History*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004.

Weber, David J. *Bárbaros: Spaniards and Their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005.

Weber, Max. *Economy and Society*. Vol. I. Edited by Guenther Roth and Clauss Wittich. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1978.

Westhelle, Vítor. *The Scandalous God: The Use and Abuse of the Cross*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006.

Whatley, Christopher A. *Scottish Society, 1707-1830: Beyond Jacobitism, towards industrialization*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000.

White, Iain. *Scotland and the Abolition of Black Slavery, 1756-1838.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006.

Whytt, Robert. *Observations on the Nature, Causes, and Cure of those Disorders which have been commonly called Nervous, Hypochondriac, or Hysteric, to which are prefixed some remarks on the Sympathy of the Nerves*. Edinburgh: Printed for T. Becket, and P. Du Hondt, London; and J. Balfour, Edinburgh, 1765.

Williams, Eric. *Capitalism and Slavery*. Introduced by Colin A. Palmer. North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1994 [1944].

Williams, Norman Powell. *The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin*. London-New York-Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1929.

Wilson, David B. *Seeking Nature's Logic: Natural Philosophy in the Scottish Enlightenment*. Philadelphia: Penn State UP, 2009.

Women in the Eighteenth-Century: Constructions of Femininity. Edited by Vivien Jones. London-New York: Routledge, 1990.

Yang, Yong-Sun. *Economies of Salvation: Adam Smith and Hegel*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2012.

Zuinglii, Huldrych. *Opera Completa Editio Prima Volumen Tertium*. Curatibus Melchiore et Io. Schulthessio. Turici, Zürich: Schulthessiana, 1832.

Zupančič, Alenka. *The Odd One In: On Comedy*. Cambridge, Mass - London: The MIT Press, 2007.

Journal Articles

Baier, Annette C. “Good Men’s Women; Hume on Chastity and Trust.” *Hume Studies* 5, no.1 (1979): 1-19.

Butler, Annemarie. “Hume on Believing the Vulgar Fiction of Continued Existence.” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 27, no.3 (2010): 237-254.

Bynum, William F. “The Anatomical Method, Natural Theology, and the Functions of the Brain.” *Isis* 64, no. 4 (December, 1973): 444-468.

Costelloe, Timothy M. “In every civilized community': Hume on belief and the demise of religion.” *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 55, no. 3 (June 1, 2004): 171-185.

Dimand, Robert W., Evelyn L. Forget and Chris Nyland, “Retrospectives Gender in Classical Economics.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18, no. 1 (Winter, 2004): 229–240.

Esposito, Roberto. “The *Dispositif* of the Person.” *Law, Culture and The Humanities* 8, no.1 (2012): 17-30.

Firth, Ann. “From Oeconomy to `the Economy': Population and Self-Interest in Discourses on Government.” *History of Human Sciences* 11, no. 3 (November, 1998): 19-35.

_____. “Moral Supervision and Autonomous Social Order: Wages and Consumption in 18th Century Economic Though.” *History of Human Sciences* 15, no. 1 (February, 2002): 39-57.

Guimarães, Lívia. “The Gallant and the Philosopher.” *Hume Studies* 30, no.1 (April, 2004): 127-148.

Hunt, Margaret. “Imperialism and the Traveler’s Gaze in Eighteenth-Century England.” *Journal of British Studies* 32, no. 4 (October 1993): 333-357.

Kleer, R. “Final Causes in Adam Smith’s *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 33, no. 2 (1995): 275-330.

Levey, Ann. “Under Constraint: Chastity and Modesty in Hume.” *Hume Studies* 23, no.2 (November, 1997): 213-226.

Manzer, Robert .“The promise of Peace? Hume and Smith on the Effects of Commerce on Peace and War.” *Hume Studies* 22, no. 2 (November, 1996): 269-382.

Marshall, David. “Adam Smith and the Theatricality of Moral Sentiments.” *Critical Inquiry* 10, no. 4 (June 1984): 592-613.

Mullen, Shirley A. “David Hume and a Christian perspective on history: insights from an unlikely ally.” *Fides et Historia* 35, no. 2 (June 1, 2003): 49-60.

Palter, Robert. “Hume and Prejudice.” *Hume Studies* 21, no. 1 (April, 1995): 3-24.

Penelhum, Terrence. “Butler and Hume.” *Hume Studies* 14, no. 2 (November, 1988): 251-276.

Pitson, Tony. “The Evident Connexion: Hume on Personal Identity.” *Philosophy* 87, no. 1 (2012): 127-132.

Quesada, Josep Básques. “La Ilustración escocesa: Un depósito de intuiciones para el neoconservadurismo?” *Revista de Estudios Políticos* 118 (2002): 143-180.

Robertson, John. “The Enlightenment above National Context: Political Economy in Eighteenth-Century Scotland and Naples.” *The Historical Journal* 40, no. 3 (September 1997): 667-697.

Schulz, Heiko. “Das Ende des common sense: Kritische Überlegungen zur Wunderkritik David Humes.” *Zeitschrift für neuere Theologiegeschichte* 3, no.1 (1996): 1-38.

Skinner, Andrew. “Economics and History – The Scottish Enlightenment.” *Scottish Journal of Political Economy* 12, no. 1 (1965).

Stanley, Liz. “The Writing of David Hume’s My Own Life: The Persona of the Philosopher and the Philosopher Manqué.” *Auto/Biography* 14 (2006): 1–19

Tamez, Elsa. “El Dios de la gracia versus el “dios” del mercado.” *Concilium* 287 (2000): 139-48.

_____. “Libertad Neoliberal y libertad paulina.” *Pasos* (1997).

Tasset, J. L. “Suicidio y fiesta del Yo: el suicidio como transgresión moral definitiva. A propósito de «On Suicide» de David Hume.” *Τέλος. Revista Iberoamericana de Estudios Utilitaristas* Vol. I, no. 1 (Febrero, 1992): 149-166.