THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MODERN CAPITALISM TO MODERNITY: FOCUS ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

This paper traces the development of Capitalism from its earliest beginnings up to the present time, focusing on how scholars have come to view this unique feature of modernity with regard to its perceived impacts on societal development. Hence, the study is both historical and thematic. Capitalism is an economic system marked by private ownership of property and driven by profit motives. It replaced feudalism as an economic system. Capitalism in this sense has existed for more than one thousand years now. It began in the form of trade capitalism (i.e. mercantilism or mercantile capitalism). Venice in Northern Italy was the first truly capitalist centre in Europe as early as 10th Century A.D. Florence was a popular commercial nerve centre in the late 15th Century Italy with prototypical business men like Datini and Medici (Trivellato, 2020).

Swetz (1989) tells us that the commercial revolution of Italy at this time (notably the increased trade with the Levant and Far East), is not unconnected with the publication of the Italian arithmetic book, The Treviso Arithmetic in 1478 which is the earliest known dated, printed arithmetic book. Actually the Italian Merchants used the computational algorithms contained in this book to solve some problems of commercial arithmetic such as payment for goods received, currency exchange, and the determination of shares of profit derived through partnership arrangements. Hence, the need for more efficient book-keeping and computation also contributed to the appearance of this pioneer book. Other influences include the introduction of Hindu-Arabic numerals and the proliferation of printed material following the invention of movable type.

He describes the rise of mercantile capitalism and the economic beginnings of industrialization in the early Renaissance Venetian Republic. With a new distribution of political power as well as new types of power occasioned by the growth of towns and cities, he says, there came entrepreneurship in trade and manufacture. Commercialism spawned wealth that was reinvested, and modern mercantile capitalism was born, he maintains. As the riches of Venice grew, he observes, the extent of its political powers and expansion also increased such that by 15th Century A.D. the Republic now encompassed two empires with Venice becoming the trade capital of Europe, and one of the richest cities of the then known world (pp. 1-7).

The lesson here is clear: capitalism, from its earliest beginnings, has been known for provoking catalysis with regard to any (positive) historical development of modernity propelled by the former’s quest for profit and economic expansion. Hence, the Renaissance Venice took advantage of the favorable political climate, advantageous geographical location along the Adriatic Sea, and the resilient psychological disposition of her citizens for survival, to make the splendor and glamour of modernity a reality for the first time in Europe. Venetians were free from oppression and domination and this freedom in turn gave impetus to their initiative, innovative and adventurous spirit. More still, Venice’s diplomatic skills ensured for her freedom from the fear of any external intimidations. Thus, capitalism becomes not just the change that underlines modernity, but more importantly the explanation for this change.
The modern (mercantile) capitalism not only instigated economic and political innovations but also motivated scientific inventions, just like the modern (industrial) capitalism has. Hence, the modern (mercantile) capitalism that flourished up till 16th Century is no less capitalistic in nature than the modern (industrial) capitalism that originated since 16th and 17th Centuries. Both tend to have comparable kind of effects on the people and the society. However, some scholars (notably, Karl Marx) will be reluctant to ascribe the term capitalism to any economic activity before the 16th Century.

It was trade that initially opened Europe to the fresh ideas and knowledge which helped free it from feudalism after the fall of the Roman Empire. The travels and adventures of some merchants like Marco Polo, and Fibonacci, brought foreign lands, people, techniques, customs and procedures to the knowledge of Europeans. Hence, the importance of mercantile capitalism was decisive for Europe’s development. Swetz (1989, p. 295) shows that the merchants’ involvement with the collection of data and record keeping impacted heavily on the evolution of modern mathematics; whereas the quest for new markets and greater profits also gave rise to studies in geography and astronomy and led to advances in cartography, navigation and marine architecture. In a similar vein, the cases of steam engine, locomotive, modern computers, internet/electronic banking, genetically modified crops, robotics, generative Artificial Intelligence e.t.c. are all examples of inventions motivated by modern (industrial) capitalist concerns. Nevertheless, the term Modern Capitalism in this work, is specifically used to refer to late modern/contemporary (industrial) capitalism which is shown bellow to have a modern philosophical foundation.

The Philosophical Foundation of Modern Capitalism

Locke (2003, p. 218) articulates what may be regarded as the intellectual forerunner to modern (industrial) capitalism with his doctrine of property right, which specifies the basis for private ownership of property. With this, coupled with other concatenations of events, I mean industrial and scientific revolutions that happened almost contemporaneously, modern capitalism was born in the late 17th Century. According to him, a person’s right to own a property originates from his right to self-ownership which is inalienable. As he says, when a person mixes his labor (i.e. his sweat or ‘blood’) with a part of Nature hitherto not acquired - joining to it something that is his own, he reserves a right to own it as his property. He leaves a proviso though: that there be enough and as good left in common for others. The imbibing of this basic ethic of capitalism among European citizens can be said to be the cause (origin) of modern capitalism.

Against those who oppose this philosophical hypothesis for the origin of capitalism, Giddens (1987, p. 142-3) clarifies that scientific and industrial revolutions are effects rather than cause of modern capitalism. Thus, he insists that the term “modern capitalism” can be used interchangeably with industrial revolution or industrialism or industrial society for one cannot talk of modern capitalism without talking about its manifestations. Thus, modern capitalism is capitalism as practiced within the context of the changes and challenges brought about by industrial revolution which was itself necessitated by the spirit of capitalism as enunciated by John Locke above. Accordingly, Giddens (1987) construed modern capitalism as “one of the most pervasive influences molding the modern world… [it is] regarded as a mode of economic enterprise that has a dynamic tendency to expansion far greater than any prior type of productive order” (p. 1). He believes that commodification of labor-power connects the class system of modern capitalism with industrialism as a form of production. In fact, modern capitalism, for him, is unique due to the “elective affinities” between modern capitalism and industrialism.

Guest (1977) further clarifies on the sense that the term ‘industrial revolution’ carries. “Let us bear in mind that when we speak of the Industrial Revolution”, he says, “we do not mean the mechanical inventions themselves, but the changes which they have produced in the social and industrial life of the people of the globe” (p. 156). From this comment, the universal character of modern capitalism is already highlighted. Thus, the capitalist state in one part of the world (say: Europe) is presumed to be roughly the same with capitalist state in another part of the world (say: Africa), all other things being equal. This is because modern capitalism by its nature has the tendency of blindly following the same laws of economic development everywhere it finds itself – a fact that has been popularly well demonstrated by economists some of whom one shall examine their thoughts shortly.
This change occasioned by capitalism globally is aptly described by Russell (2004) as the changes and challenges that attended to the rise of industrialism. As he remarks: “machine production profoundly altered the social structure and gave men a new conception of their powers in relation to the physical environment… The imagination of modern people is deeply affected by the pattern of social organization suggested by the organization of industry in the nineteenth century. On the one hand there are the captains of industry, and on the other the mass of workers” (pp. x, 660). So this rise of industrial production and its capacities for economic growth are essential to the meaning of and discourse on modern capitalism. Note that ‘Modern Capitalism’ as a form of economic activity is different from ‘Modern Capitalist Society’ as a type of overall societal order. Nevertheless, ‘modern capitalism’ can be used to refer to both a mode of production and a form of social order. The social order intended here is such that includes as its developmental imperatives: progressive expansion of the forces of production, industrialization, bureaucratization, globalization, scientific advancement, militarization and the like (Giddens, 1987, p. 134-5). And this is the sense I have used the term throughout this paper.

Now, beginning from John Locke, scholars have been concerned about the question of social justice with regard to the processes and dynamics of modern capitalist enterprise and the kind of social order it occasions as well as its implications for societal development. Thus, the critics of modern capitalism have focused chiefly on the changes brought about through industrial revolution to the capitalist society, and on the challenges such changes pose to the development of modern society. Examples of such changes include better means of communications that have brought nations closer to one another; the new socio-economic relations suggested by employer (captains of industry) - employee (mass of workers) divide; change in settlement patterns due to the emergence of mega cities, metropolitan and cosmopolitan towns; growth of business consciousness among the people; creation of new markets for the disposal of surplus wares; change in international relations policy and practice for economic purposes and so on and so forth. However, the critiques offered here follow the line of philosophical arguments on how far modern capitalism has deviated from or kept faith with its original Lockean ethic (its original law of development).

Some Philosophical Criticisms of Modern Capitalism

Marx (1970, p. 714) gives a monumental and well celebrated account and critique of modern capitalism. He believes that man must engage in economic exchanges and relations to provide for his subsistence in the society. Thus, he recognizes the importance of modern capitalist production. For him, every other thing – including human art and literature – is dialectically reducible to this material reproduction of the society. He, however, criticizes modern capitalism for functioning to alienate the essentially human act implied in its law of development. This he refers to as reification. “Reification takes human acts or properties, objectifies them, and then treats them as independent of the human world. In a capitalist society, for example, money is the reification of the human labor and is in the end used against the laborer” (Moore & Bruder, 2005, p. 183). Marx (1970) believes that reification is powered by ideology. He maintains that the way out is through the abolition of private ownership of property, an ideology, which he considers as the root cause of class conflict, class antagonism and social retrogression. In other words, he votes for the abolition of modern capitalism.

Weber (1998, p. 88), unlike Marx who is positive but radical, is pessimistic and fatalistic in his account of the social challenges of modern capitalism. He reacts against industrial revolution by contending that the rationalization and bureaucratization associated with it tend to vitiate humanity’s agency and happiness. He fears that the increasing rationalization of the society would produce a bureaucratized society with absolutely no latitude for a change in the way of doing things. He describes such a (future) society as iron cage. For him, there would be no solution to the dilemma occasioned by the iron cage of bureaucraty since a completely rational society is inevitable and bureaucracy is the most rational form of societal arrangement. Bureaucracy is a type of organizational or institutional management that is rooted in legal-rational authority. In capitalist society, bureaucracy consistently increases due to increasing rationalization of the society – that is, the passage of rational ideas into culture (Cragun & Cragun, 2010). For Weber, therefore, bureaucracy is the bane of modern capitalist society. And he sees no solution regarding this.
Against this backdrop, Durkheim (1983, p. 94) calls for a full entrenchment of the elements of social solidarity and a sense of community in social life as means of assuaging the tendency to general unhappiness concomitant with modern capitalist development. He is opposed to the egoistic individualism found in the utilitarian tradition in British social thought. He argues that in pre-industrial societies, people maintained their social solidarity through a mechanistic sense of community and through their religious affiliations; and that that contributed a great deal to their happiness. For him, social solidarity fosters religious affiliation. However, in the industrializing society, he thinks, the phenomenon of specialization means that the elements of solidarity would suffer as workers would become individualistic. He nevertheless, proffers a solution to the problem of decreasing social solidarity namely through organic solidarity and conscientious attempts to find camaraderie through one’s place of employ.

This is to say that in industrialized societies, social solidarity would be maintained by the interdependence of specialists on one another. It also implies that in industrialized societies, labor unions, professional associations, NGOs, civil groups, and the like would function to foster friendship in place of religious brotherhood obtainable in pre-industrial societies. Hence, he is not pessimistic and fatalistic about the social challenges of modern capitalism like Marx Weber.

In a similar vein, Dewey (2008, p. 478-79) attacks modern capitalism for tending to promote individualism. He argues that modern capitalism’s tendency to individualism amounts to an affront on moral values. According to him, moral values should be primarily defined in terms of human interests harmoniously arranged. This is his principle of ethical naturalism. Going by this principle, he posits that the concern for the formation of moral standards and ideals cannot be isolated from science, hypothesis and action without some disastrous consequences; for they equally form part of the real world in which we must actually conduct our lives. In a more serious sense, he maintains that moral knowledge is generated through the same method as the natural science, namely hypothesis and experiment. He strongly holds, therefore, that the content of moral judgment is determined by social conditions rather than by individual self-interests.

In short, John Dewey was directly involved in the progressive movement and other efforts to ameliorate the conditions produced by the capitalism of early 20th Century North America. “These included the exploitation of child labor, the creation and maintenance of utterly inhumane living and working standards in cities and factories, and the coercive threat of unemployment that made such conditions inevitable and inescapable for large numbers of people” (Stingl, 1997, pp. 105-6). Dewey maintains that modern capitalism must be restricted in order for social interests to be harmoniously arranged. “The failed experiment of unrestricted capitalism showed that a purely individualistic moral ideal was incapable of producing a set of social interests harmoniously arranged” (Stingl, 1997, p. 97).

Whereas Dewey denounced unrestricted modern capitalism because it promotes individualism, Rand (1996, p. 924-5) extols it for much the same reason. Yet, both claim to be an ethical defense of modern capitalism. She argues that there is no conflict between private ambition and public benefit. In fact, she called for the “virtue of selfishness.” For her, modern capitalism promotes individual creativity, focus and rationality and thereby leads to self-fulfillment and happiness. Therefore, according to her, there should be no government interference in people’s business. Rand believes that everybody should strive for success without obstructions; that excellence should be your goal. To achieve this, she thinks, we should have the spirit of heroes, prime movers in our different spheres of life, and ultimately absolutely work for our own interest. In this way, you are not objectively hindering other people from achieving their own success at least. She describes this as the morality of rational self-interest. Rand (1996, p. 926) posits individualism, thus, as the supreme philosophy of existence and the supreme code of morality. In this sense, she depicts modern capitalism as the only moral economic system there is. Rand (1996, p. 935-6) bases this idea on her ‘new’ moral philosophy: the morality of rational self-interest.

Adam Smith, with his laissez-faire capitalism, falls somewhere between John Dewey and Ayn Rand. He neither criticizes the individual nor the collective with regard to modern capitalism. Rather, he tries to show how the one is naturally linked to the other. Smith (2003) praises and encourages division of labor as an economic strategy that is productive of excellence, competence, and specialization in the growth and
development of the society. He believes that the division of labor leads to the material well being of both the laborer and the society in general. He is convinced that “the greatest improvement in the productive power of labor and the greatest part of the skill, dexterity and judgment with which it is anywhere directed or applied seem to have been the effects of the division of labor” (Smith, 2003, p. 3). He believes that the division of labor holds the key to the wealth of nations. He holds that the division of labor is a rational procedure founded on the basic human propensity for economic exchange. According to him, division of labor is not a conscious socio-economic creation/arrangement of the society. However, the society can key in to (or better, take advantage of) that innate human drive to share roles and tasks in order to create wealth (Smith, 2003, p. 13).

So, his praise of modern capitalism is based on the fact that it, more than every other economic system, encourages division of labor. Smith (1982, p. 570-71), however, concedes that it is the self-interest of man that has given rise to division of labor. For him, self-interest involves a kind of clever economic and psychological calculations on the part of both parties involved in an exchange, with the result that the richer person would turn out to be the one who is more subtle, ruthless, and smatter (Smith, 2003, p. 14). Nevertheless, Smith is reluctant to carry his gospel of self-interest to the sphere of social policy and practice. Consequently, he employs the concept of “the invisible hand” to show how our pursuit of self-interest can produce unintended beneficial effects on the community indicating that after all self-interest is not anti-social (Smith, 2007, 373-80). But, this tends to be an amoral critique of modern capitalism since the invisible hand (being blind and non-purposeful) can as well produce unintended negative consequences on the community and persons. The appeal to the invisible hand raises a serious question mark on human agency in Smith’s philosophy.

Accordingly, Foster (2001, p. 13) carries out a critique of modern capitalism from an ecological dimension condemning this amoral, irresponsible, and narrow-minded outlook to the processes, changes and challenges of modern capitalism. He blames modern capitalism and its economists for being blinded by the craze for expansion and accumulation of wealth to the neglect of the full human dependence on nature. He criticizes orthodox economics for its limited perspective on ‘scarce good’. He stresses that the idea of ‘scarce good’ should not be limited to market commodities but must be extended to include ecological scarcities. His argument is that if economics is for the good of man, then it should also take account of the environmental influences that obviously control the lives of men and women as well as those of other species. He equally argues that economic expansion in the spirit of modern capitalism cannot possibly be pursued indefinitely in a finite environment. For him, there is a serious tension between global capitalism and global environment. His solution: unless we put the need of future generation into consideration while taking capitalist investment decisions, we are bound to face “ecological and social crisis that will rapidly spin out of control, with irreversible and devastating consequences for human beings and for those numerous other species with which we are linked” (Foster, 2001, p. 15).

However, Sekine (1997, p. 213) tends to discountenance such apprehensions concerning the devastating potentials of modern capitalism as inferred by Foster. He says that modern capitalism has an inherent stabilizing mechanism based on ‘idealization of use-value.’ It is, for him, a controlling measure against the excesses of modern capitalism. Hence, he denies that there can ever be a purely ripped modern capitalism from which, as Marx claimed, socialism might be born. This is because, according to him, modern capitalist tendency to indefinite expansion is always met with counter tendencies which can only be controlled by the idealization of use-values. His argument is that the logic of capital does not operate in vacuo – its operation necessarily involves human beings together with their material use value needs and wants. Therefore, use-values are the stabilizing elements in every capitalist system. One question that Sekine fails to raise, not to talk of answering, is whether use-values will always be moral, responsible and broad-minded.

Nevertheless, Sekine’s argument is in sharp contrast to the view of Schumpeter (2008, p. 61) who thinks that modern capitalism in its tendency to ‘creative destruction’ could destroy itself. He sees modern capitalism as something delicate - far more fragile, difficult to develop and sustain than people think. According to him, ceaseless innovation in the form of creative destruction come with heavy social costs, ranging from loss
of family fortunes, consumerism, crisis of over-production, unemployment, to alienation of social strata. He is convinced that socialism is the heir apparent to every capitalist arrangement. “Thus the modern corporation, although the product of the capitalist process, socializes the bourgeois mind; it relentlessly narrows the scope of capitalist motivation; not only that, it will eventually kill its roots” (Schumpeter, 2008, p. 156). He criticizes modern capitalism’s excessive rationalization of everything which he describes as unromantic, un-heroic and un-humanistic (Schumpeter, 2008, p. 160). His critique of modern capitalism is reminiscent of Marxist telling criticisms of the modern capitalist system.

Paradoxically, Sen (2010, p. 267) evolves a path-breaking approach to the contradictions of modern capitalist societies in which he teaches that in a critique of modern capitalism, one should not focus on the free market mechanism as the framework for development. He is appalled by the situation whereby in a world of unprecedented opulence, millions of people living in rich and poor countries are still un-free. For him, the quality of our lives should be measured not by our wealth but by our freedom. According to him, freedom logically involves markets, just social arrangement, political institutions, open public discussion, evaluation and happiness. His point here is that modern capitalism flourishes better when it is humanized. On this front, he makes a case for “exploring the extension of institutional arrangement beyond the limits of the pure market mechanism” (Sen, 2010, p. 269).

Certain human values need to be developed in any economy for it to be positively transformed. Some of these values include: trust, honor, codes of behavior or rule-based behavior patterns, commitment, justice, regard for culture and prudence, common good, sympathy (i.e. fellow feeling) etc. Sen (2010, pp. 273-74) encourages us to take advantage of the different ways through which social values do emerge in order to promote reasoned social change. These include: (1) reflection and analysis, (2) convention (i.e. concordant behavior), (3) public discussion, and (4) evolutionary selection. He concludes that modern capitalism needs healthy system of values and norms which are based on human capabilities in order to be successful.

Sen (2010, pp. 296-99) projects capabilities as the best basis for thinking about the goals of development. In a nutshell, this idea despises the GNP per capita approach because it obscures underground distributional inequalities (which particularly adversely affects women), and because it fails to disaggregate and separately consider important aspects of development (e.g. health and education). He considers the equality of resources thesis (which is inherently linked to the GNP per capita approach) as deficient because it fails to recognize the differing levels of resources different individuals need in order to perform equally as others due to their differing abilities to convert resources into actual functioning. Similarly, this idea is contrasted to the rival idea of utility as a measure of development, which (in Sen’s view) blurs the heterogeneity and non-commensurability of the different dimensions of development. The idea of utility also reduces the goal of development to a state or condition of persons (e.g. a state of satisfaction), and thereby compromises the importance of agency and freedom in the development process. He emphasizes equality of capabilities as a central political value.

Nussbaum (2003) supports Sen’s idea that capabilities are critical to any theory of social justice. However, she finds Sen’s “perspective of freedom” too vague for a normative conception of social justice. In her view, “we [should] specify a definite set of capabilities as the most important ones to protect… Some freedoms limit others; some freedoms are important, some trivial, some good, and some positively bad” (Nussbaum, 2003, pp. 35-6). Nussbaum endorses Sen’s arguments above, but claims that they are not concrete for purposes of public policy on development.

Martha Nussbaum connects the capabilities approach closely to the idea of human rights. She argues that “the language of capabilities gives important precision [concerning some disputed issues about right] and supplementation to the language of rights… The capabilities approach has the advantage of taking clear positions on these disputed issues, while stating clearly what the motivating concerns are and what the goal is” (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 37). She combines the capabilities analysis with the language of rights in addressing constitutional, political, social, developmental and legal issues. She demonstrates this in her list of capabilities. In other words, she does not dismiss the need for rights even in face of capabilities. For one thing, she accepts that the language of rights imports the idea of an urgent claim based upon justice as of a
fundamental entitlement. Again, she believes that rights language is important because of the emphasis it places on people’s choice and autonomy. Nussbaum’s list of the Central Human Capabilities represents an improvement on Sen’s version of capabilities approach. In fact, for her, that is one clear distinction between her development ethics and that of Sen (Nussbaum, 2003, p.40).

Her list of the Central Human Capabilities involves ten capabilities without which no society can be regarded as a fully just society and without which no individual person can be said to be living a life with dignity. These capabilities include (1) Life (2) Bodily Health (3) Bodily Integrity (4) Senses, Imagination, and Thought (5) Emotions (6) Practical Reason (7) Affiliation (8) Other Species (9) Play (10) Control Over One’s Environment. For her, the specific and detailed requirements of these capabilities can differ across nations and cultures since the content of these capabilities are construed to be “open-ended and subject to ongoing revision and rethinking in the way that any society’s account of its most fundamental entitlements is always subject to supplementation (or deletion)” (Nussbaum, 2003, pp. 41-2).

Among African Thinkers, these thoughts of Sen and Nussbaum are echoed from the point of view of coping with the socio-economic challenges of postcolonial Africa and achieving a sustainable development of the continent. These challenges include poverty, unemployment, hunger, and underdevelopment, as well as ethnicism, neo-imperialism, traditional family system, and cultural integrity. Hence, for the most time, African Thinkers’ considerations of modern capitalism overlap with their socio-political vision for the independent Africa.

Azikiwe (1979, p. 174) proposes a neo-welfarist economic system for Nigeria. Neo-welfarism for him is an eclectic and pragmatic blend of the best elements from capitalism, socialism and welfarism. It is a welfarism that is new in the sense that it adopts ideologies that are “truly Nigerian, manifesting Nigerian qualities, some of which are democratic according to her institutions, welfarist in her economical background, altruistic in socio-logical life and religiously animistic” (Nwoko, 1988, p. 203).

Azikiwe’s neo-welfarism is predominantly capitalist. Noticing that Azikiwe is rather more indebted to modern capitalism than to other economic systems in his ideology for Nigeria, Nwala (1988) termed Zik’s neo-welfarism “a humanized capitalism in which the state will assume specific responsibilities so as to insulate citizen from the bogeys of hunger, disease, ignorance, fear and want” (p. 28). Zik’s attraction to modern capitalism is due to some of its starling qualities such as “diffusion of power, specialization of labor based on a free-market economy, competition as an incentive to efficiency, the capacity for risk-bearing and the provision of a minimum standard of social security” (Idike, 2000, pp. 247-8). Nwoko (1988) describes Azikiwe’s neo-welfarism as follows: “it permits private enterprise, but invites the state to participate and collaborate in their management, control and sponsorship in order to achieve the best welfare for the people. It will produce a planned, mixed and indigenously nationalized economy” (p. 204).

Azikiwe (1979, pp. 20-1) refuses to adopt modern capitalism completely due to the fact that he recognizes in it the tendency to reward the worker’s labor unjustly and disproportionately in relation to capital and entrepreneur, and to encourage unhealthy competition and individualism. Olisa (1989, p. 89) remarks that Azikiwe establishes his political philosophy upon economic laissez faire and welfarist capitalism. Ejiofor (1989, p. 130) adds that Azikiwe considers socialism to be unattractive and ineffective for the reality of Africa’s nationalist struggle and future dreams. In fact, Azikiwe largely rejects socialism because, he claims, it is not pragmatic (Ejiofor, 1989, p. 133). Here, and in the case of many other African nationalist leaders, we see a critique born out of largely theoretical considerations but with little or no practical/policy experience at the societal level.

Contrary to Azikiwe, Awolowo (1978) maintains that the state exists solely for the purpose of driving man’s economic interests forward and solving economic problems. Consequently, he adopts socialism because, according to him, it offers the possibility of economic growth without dependency. As he notes: “All the three organs of state – the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, as well as all social institutions are designed by him (i.e. man) to ensure a congenial atmosphere for his economic advancement and prosperity and to regulate economic regulations” (Awolowo, 1978, pp. 54-5). He criticizes modern capitalism saying
that it is incurably exploitative and oppressive. He further rejects modern capitalism because it is, as he claims, an incorrigibly plan-less system in which everybody is after his own selfish-interest. He maintains that this attitude is bound to impoverish the helpless masses to enrich a few (Awolowo, 1968, pp. 168-69). He, further, remarks that the injustice which arises from production, exchange and distribution are too inherent and deep-seated in modern capitalist system for such injustices to be eliminated or even satisfactorily minimized.

Awolowo extols the virtues of socialism and recommends it as the path to progress for Africa. He interprets Karl Marx's schema of the transition from capitalism to socialism and to communism as implying a transition from the “state” to the “community”. This means that the individualistic, egoistic and the capitalist exploitative life associated with the state will be transcended, whereas the egalitarian, collective, and the public-service oriented life associated with the typical community will be embraced. The egalitarianism referred to here, according to Awolowo, points not to equality of talents for all men, but equality of opportunity for people to develop their varying talents as much as they could. For him, it is under this condition that everyone could be fit to better contribute to and be rewarded from the good of the society. Thus, he stresses that “socialism recognizes differences in innate talents or latent ability. It never claimed equality of talents for all men, nor has it ever demanded that it is possible to make all men equal as to their respective abilities” (Awolowo, 1978, p. 64). Thus, he highlights and extols the following features of socialism as congenial for societal development: its classless nature, the unity of men, the public ownership of land and other means of production, its technique of planning and discipline, and its principle of service according to ability and reward according to need. Consequently, he asserts that “socialism seeks to wean every citizen from the evil of greed and self-interest whilst capitalism weds him more firmly to them . . . Although capitalism feigns to provide material well-being for all; socialism is the sure and indefeasible winner” (Awolowo, 1968, p. xiv).

Awolowo considers modern capitalism to be particularly dangerous for Africa. Apart from the reason of its exploitative tendency, he thinks that it is going to aggravate the unpalatable effects of slavery and colonization on Africans. He recalls with regret the fact that “every multi-ethnic state in Black Africa today is the creation of one colonial power or another” (Awolowo, 1978, p. 56). In his opinion, the coercion, dehumanization, lack of freedom, lack of sovereignty, political fragmentation and underdevelopment concomitant with colonization can only be advanced if we (Africans) embrace modern capitalism. Therefore, he unreservedly rejected modern capitalism arguing that: “For Africa in particular, the adoption of capitalism can only perpetuate, albeit in subtle disguises, the dehumanization, heartless exploitation and division into antagonistic camps, which Africans had suffered during the periods of slavery and colonization” (Awolowo, 1978, p. 61).

Awolowo (1978, p. 69) is convinced that in order to turn the destiny of Africa to the path of development, we must, through constitutional means, entrench socialism as an ideology in all facets of life including education, health, agriculture, the environment, politics, economy etc. The constitution must in a special way take into account the permanent needs of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-national characters of the African states. He, however, warns that Africa does not need to adopt blindly all the characteristic principles of socialism like Marx and Engels enunciated them. For instance, Awolowo thinks that Africa does not need a revolution, dictatorship of the proletariat and the extermination of the bourgeoisie. His reason for this is simple: capitalism in Africa is still at the infancy level; scientific socialism is recommendable for states with extreme capitalist economic culture like those of USSR, Eastern Europe, and China. For him, Africa can achieve the same or even far better result merely through constitutional means.

Similarly, Nkrumah (1964, p. 78) makes a case for socialism both as a political system and as a socio-economic system for Africa. ‘Consciencism’ is a search into the African conscience in order to address African conditions especially in the light of extraneous socio-political and religious forces weighing on Africans and casting a question mark on African personality (Nkrumah, 1964, p. 79). In doing this, he finds the following principles as contiguous with African personality: egalitarianism of human society, sovereignty as belonging to the people, unity of effort and purpose, materialism, and freedom (Nkrumah, 1964, p. 80). He criticizes modern capitalism as enslaving and oppressive. He further notes that, globally, it leads to unequal development of modern capitalist countries and fosters economic conflict between the rich and poor countries.
(Nkrumah, 1962, p. 38). To overcome these problems of modern capitalism, he opts for Socialism much in the same manner that Marx envisions it, though without rejecting religion and with the consciousness of our African personality. This may be roughly designated as African Socialism.

The idea of criticizing modern capitalism, not just as an economic system but as a development issue, is specially cherished by postmodernist thinkers, cultural anthropologists and critical theorists. Postmodernist thinkers, for example, look at the contemporary society as de-structured, de-centered, and dehumanized. Postmodernism celebrates, rather than laments, the idea of fragmentation, provisionality and incoherence in modern capitalist social system. It is contrasted with modernism which criticizes and laments the loss of unity, coherence and meaning in modern capitalist social system and blames this loss largely on misguided capitalist practices. Postmodernism lays great emphasis on marketing, selling, and consuming commodities, not on producing them. It de-emphasizes humanist considerations about modern capitalism, and, in its place, emphasizes pessimism and emptiness that modern capitalist production creates. In other words, it believes that modern capitalism serves no purpose; man merely markets and consumes commodities from modern capitalist production, and that’s all. It holds that it is in vain to search for any “other” objective truths about modern capitalism; all that you can have is subjective individual attitudes to modern capitalism simply deemed as consisting of marketing and consumption.

Postmodernist outlook to modern capitalism forecloses any “reasoned” avenue to progress and perfection for the society. It is against any attempt to create “order” out of chaos; it holds that no order can emerge from disorder (or chaos). It believes that any such attempt tends to hide or masks something real and true. Hence, it celebrates any situation as it finds it. Under this construal, contemporary capitalism presents itself as an exercise in marketing and consumption and nothing more; and nothing “extra” should be done or said about it. Hence, Klages (Klages, 2012) describes contemporary capitalism as “consumer capitalism (with the emphasis placed on marketing, selling, and consuming commodities, not on producing them), associated with nuclear and electronic technologies and correlated with postmodernism” (n.p).

Postmodernism holds that there is no eternal value or truth whatsoever to be discovered about anything at all. Relating this idea to modern capitalism, postmodernists criticize the way modern societies go about creating categories labeled as “order” or “disorder” in an effort to achieve social stability as amounting to “totality”. Postmodernism is against the idea of totalizing the social system under any guise whatsoever; it is against grand narratives in general. It believes that the society, with all its institutions and practices (including modern capitalism), does not need to represent any global, permanent and objective truth (nature or character). Postmodernist conception of modern capitalism focuses on local goals, and experiences of modern capitalism which, however, defies theorization since local situations are often construed as fluid and unpredictable.

Gellner (1983) characterizes the contemporary capitalist era as the age of universal high culture. According to him, “universal literacy and a high level of numerical, technical and general sophistication are among its functional prerequisites” (Gellner, 1983, pp. 35-6). The educational system, in the contemporary capitalist era, has become large and indispensable due to its role as the society’s standard bearer. To this end, he says, industrial man is loyal only to a culture which only education can initiate him into (Gellner, 1983, p. 37). Since, education is now for all, nobody, not even teachers or priests, can claim privileged access to information and knowledge. So, individuals are easily replaced by others within the entire spectrum of the social system. A man’s education, Gellner maintains, confers his identity on him; and, the limit of the culture within which he was educated determines the world within which he can, morally and professionally, operate. A man’s employability, dignity, security and self-respect are typically and largely dependent on his education, Gellner insists.

Given the centrality of education in an industrial society, culture now becomes school-transmitted, no longer folk-transmitted. For Gellner, it is only the educational machine (or infrastructure) that is capable of providing the wide range of training required for the generic cultural base. The place of education in an industrial society is so large, indispensable and expensive that it is only the state that is strong enough to control such an important and crucial function. Education ensures “the manufacture of viable and usable
human beings” (Gellner, 1983, p. 38). It is no more village or clan or kin group that makes (i.e. shapes) a man; an industrial man is shaped chiefly by education. Now, if the state must assume a sole control of education, it then means that the state must be necessarily linked with the culture of that society. This is the meaning of nationalism – a political principle which says that the political and the national unit are (or better should be) congruent. Accordingly, Gellner sees the transition to industrialism as a transition to an age of nationalism. He believes that it is during the transition to industrialism that nationalist imperative makes itself felt for the first time. Exo-socialization, the production and reproduction of men outside the local intimate unit, Gellner says, is now the norm, and must be so.

Gellner argues that the imperative of exo-socialization is the main clue to why state and culture must now be linked, whereas in the past their connection was thin, fortuitous, varied, loose, and often minimal. Now it is unavoidable. That is what nationalism is about, and why we live in an age of nationalism (Gellner, 1983, p. 39). The point Gellner is making here is that the process of industrialization of any society, at its high stage, demands nationalism. As he wittingly put it: “As a character in No Orchids for Miss Blandish observed, every girl ought to have a husband, preferably her own; and every high culture now wants a state, and preferably its own” (Gellner, 1983, p. 51). Gellner’s critique of modern capitalism is much needed by Africa and the third world as it is needed by the advanced nations.

Just as every high culture wants a state, so also every economic system wants a political system. This is the point of Merrill (1995). He points out the danger inherent in defining modern capitalism merely as an economic system without highlighting the political underpinnings of such a system. For him, it is the socio-political dimension of an economy that determines whether it is capitalist, or not, and not the mere presence or absence of those economic indicators of capitalist development. Conventionally, the following economic indexes are known to be synonymous with capitalist development: the expansion of trade, increased technological innovation, the rise of individualism, and the growth of wage labor. But Merrill’s argument is that these economic indexes must be shown to be a result of an economic system whose destiny is politically controlled by capitalists for them to be adjudged true signs of capitalist development.

Merrill’s emphasis is that non-capitalist motivations can still give rise to expansion of trade (based, for instance, on commercial forms of exchange like barter and inheritance), innovation in technique or process (embedded, for instance, in a people’s quest to conquer their enemies in war), the rise of individualism (not as an impetus to acquire private property, but as an effect of a relatively widespread distribution of property), and the growth in the number of wage laborers (occupying a decisive market position and enjoying considerable political power as a means of increasing the financial opportunities available to the many).

The issue at defining modern capitalism, Merrill insists, is not with its market exchange character but with who controls the lion’s share of the benefits of this market exchange. Hence, an economic system might have all the trappings of a capitalist economy and yet it is non-capitalist (or rather, anti-capitalist) in so far as the different participants within the system share more equitably the dividends of these economic indexes. In short, reducing modern capitalism to a series of economic indexes, as most historians do, Merrill says, ignores the role of politics in political economies. Modern capitalism, properly speaking, is not just an economic system based on market exchange, private property, and wage labor as well as sophisticated financial instruments. Such features are necessary conditions for the existence of modern capitalism, but they are not sufficient to distinguish it from other market economies. Merrill (1995, pp. 322-23) strongly holds that Modern capitalism, more precisely, is a market economy ruled by, or in the interests of, capitalists.

So, for Merrill, modern capitalism is simply any model of market economic production in which the policies and ways of organizing production are politically arranged to benefit capitalists at the expense of others. Going by this understanding of modern capitalism, Merrill claims that most American patriots considered the War of Independence precisely as anti-capitalist enterprise. This is because their aim was, according to him, to establish democracy – a specific political economic framework that accords each and every American equal freedom and opportunity to prosper economically and to share the dividends of the American commonwealth (Merrill, 1995, pp. 323-24). He points out that the most effective opponents of modern capitalism criticized not just the capitalist processes themselves, but the failure of the supporting political economic framework
to democratize those processes. This is because, he believes, the ills of modern capitalism stem usually from its political underpinnings. Thus, Merrill believes that there are many different market economies, not all of which ought to be called capitalist. “To call them so necessarily denies essential intellectual ground to all attempts to create market economies that were not capitalist or not dominated by the interests and priorities of the monied classes... If we can ever come to accept capitalism as merely one market economy among many, we may finally be able to write the real history, not only of capitalism but also of markets” (Merrill, 1995, pp. 325-26).

With Merrill’s trenchant clarification on the classical economic critique of modern capitalism, which emphasizes the political underpinnings of capitalist economy, the ground is now ultimately prepared for the critical theory approach to the critique. Adorno (2012) believes that contemporary society should be called an industrial society rather than late capitalism. This is because, he believes, industrial development has made the concept of modern capitalism, the difference between capitalist and non-capitalist states, and indeed the critique of modern capitalism, outmoded. He believes that the reason why Marx’s predictions about modern capitalism’s imminent self-destruction and consequent global economic collapse have not been realized is because modern capitalism has discovered resources within itself in the name of industrial development. Moreover, such technological developments have made the relations of production to be far more elastic than Marx had suspected. For him, however, there is no need “to draw a defining line between late capitalism and industrial society” (Adorno, 2012, n.p.). According to him, to do this will amount to simplification, ignoring “their relationship which expresses for its part the contradiction which characterizes the current era” (Adorno, 2012, n.p.). This relationship points to the paradox of development or progress: that modern capitalism discovers resources within itself, but not without attendant and concomitant problems.

Adorno and other critical theorists, apart from Habermas, are pessimistic about the paradox of progress. He, for example, believes that the development of contemporary society defies any coherent theorizing. He conceives the contemporary society as flatly irrational. He sees no way of escape out of the domination imposed by the contemporary economic process. He regards the passing of the direction of economic processes into the hands of political power as one of the indexes of the irrationality – something that Merrill rather praises above. He thinks that the productive forces of the contemporary economic system have provoked domination, centralization, and violence against nature. He claims that the productive forces have suppressed relations of production. Hence, the contemporary society is in the state of un-freedom; and there can be no meaningful development in such a situation. To him, this is absurd!

The absurdity lies in the fact that the contemporary society professes freedom but remains unfortunately and heavily dominated by the very means through which she wishes to demonstrate her freedom namely technical rationality. As he remarks: “this has created the illusion that the universe has its ideal as the status quo and universal employment, not the liberation of heteronymous work... That the extended arm of humanity can reach to distant and empty planets, but that it cannot create peace on Earth, highlights the absurdity toward which the social dialectic is moving” (Adorno, 2012, n.p.). Hence, he laments that in contemporary industrial societies, a technological veil has placed a sort of limit on the self-realization of the economic system. He believes that the reason no really convincing objective theory of society has emerged is because of the inherent irrationality in the technological development of the contemporary society. According to Adorno (2012), the regression of society runs parallel to that of its thinking. In short, he thinks that the contemporary society has developed itself into a totality due to the fact that modes of procedure, which resemble the industrial ones, are extending by economic necessity into the realms of material production, into administration, the distribution sphere and culture.

Fortunately, Jurgen Habermas sees a way out of (a remedy for) this absurdity. His critique of modern capitalism shows that the contemporary society is not irrational; that it is not absurd. By this is meant that no matter how intricately sophisticated the contradictions of modern capitalist society might be, it can still be captured and resolved within a coherent convincing objective theory. He establishes, employing his immanent critique, how this so-called irrationality of the contemporary capitalist system can rediscover rationality within itself. Thus, Habermas makes the whole question of the critique of modern capitalism a question of
rationality. Where Adorno sees technological veil and absurdity, Habermas sees communicative window for change and emancipation. Hence, language with its internal logic remains the hallmark of Habermas' critique of modern capitalism. Thus, his idea of critical theory is epitomized in his theory of communicative action and rationality (Habermas, 1984, pp. 201 - 289).

Strictly, Habermas conceives critical theory as a critique of knowledge. He sees knowledge as a property of human species. The person, who knows, possesses conceptually that which he knows. Habermas identifies an intrinsic connection between our knowledge and our human interest. For him, our knowledge always bears on that which interests us. According to Habermas, there are three primary generic cognitive areas in which human interest generates knowledge, namely technical, practical and emancipatory areas of human interests. These areas determine categories relevant to what we interpret as knowledge. Hence, he terms them 'knowledge constitutive'. They determine the mode of discovering knowledge and whether knowledge claims can be warranted. They define cognitive interests or learning domains, and are grounded in different aspects of social existence: work, interaction and power respectively. Whereas Adorno emphasizes technical knowledge, Habermas focuses on practical and emancipatory knowledge.

Habermas, thus, uses the critique of knowledge as a platform for his critical theory. As he says: “the analysis of the connection of knowledge and interest should support the assertion that a radical critique of knowledge is possible as social theory” (Habermas, 1998, p. vii). Accordingly, he applies the insights from these differentiated domains of knowledge for a critique of modern capitalism. For example, the idea of what determines appropriate action according to the three domains of knowledge can be used to critique the human society. In technical knowledge, for instance, effective control of reality determines what is or is not appropriate action. In practical knowledge, it is understanding of meaning rather than causality that determines what goes or does not go for appropriate action. Then, in emancipatory knowledge, perspective transformation (or better: change of behavior) as a result of critical self-awareness, directs what counts or does not count as appropriate action. Therefore, Habermas’s conception of critical theory is as a theoretical background for a rational reconstruction or critique of modern capitalist societies.

By communicative action, he means an action oriented towards mutual understanding in the social milieu (Habermas, 1984, pp. 320-21). In this sense, communicative action is different from instrumental action which is action oriented towards success in the non-social world, and from strategic action which is action oriented towards success in the social world. In fact, according to him, the communicative action complements the lifeworld by reflecting (or better reproducing) it in language. And this, for him, is one of the major distinctions between communicative actions on the one hand and instrumental or strategic actions on the other (Habermas, 1984, pp. 337). Habermas believes that any conception of reason for social critique which is not founded on communicative rationality is a degenerated form of reason. Communicative rationality approach, he believes, is the only account of modern capitalism that does not yield manipulation and violence. So, the mission of his critical theory is to identify manipulation and violence in all its guises within the modern society and to suggest ways in which they can be uprooted and eradicated. For him, communicative action and reason are not things that we can either choose or fail to choose; they are posited for us in keeping with our social being-ness. And they are best suited as a framework for a critique of modern capitalism.

Summary and Conclusion

We have seen in the foregoing exploration a critique of modern capitalism from the classical economic perspective to the societal development perspective, then the national, cultural, nationalism (combination of national and cultural perspectives) and finally critical theory approaches. The classical economic perspective sees capitalism as generating alienation via reification and promoting state bureaucracy as well as causing anomie and general unhappiness among peoples. The societal development perspective avers that the modern capitalist processes generally ignore the concern for the formation of moral standards and ideals resulting in the society not being harmoniously arranged; it also encourages selfishness and negative individualism. Its efficiency in creativity and productivity is written off by its abysmal neglect of human agency and unbridled ecological degradations in its total forgetfulness of human values, capabilities and social justice. The national
perspective draws attention to the fact that modern capitalism exacerbates the woes of the erstwhile colonial states of the African continent and stands as an obstacle to their true national flourishing through imperialism and neo-colonialism.

Following the postmodern culture of the contemporary era, the cultural perspective argues that late modern capitalism fuels the postmodern culture of fragmentation, provisionality and incoherence. Other ‘virtues’ of postmodernism that modern capitalism promotes include consumerism, pessimism, relativism, emptiness, unreason, void, and disorder. This perspective contends that the real problem with modern capitalism is had when efforts are made to counter these postmodern virtues under any guise. The combination of cultural and national perspectives gives rise to the nationalism thesis which argues that modern capitalism has made universal high culture necessary and indispensable through the educational system driven by its principle of exo-socialization. Education becomes the bridge that links the national and the cultural spheres of human existence thanks to the forces of modern capitalism. Thus, modern capitalism has launched humanity unto the age of nationalism whereby every high culture now wants a state it can call its own. The critical theory perspective is divided between two camps. The one says that the contradictions of modern capitalist society defies any possible theorization, whereas the other says that these contradictions can be captured and theorized in a critical social theory of modern capitalist society. The former is pessimistic, while the later is optimistic.

To conclude this paper, a highlight of some philosophical perspectives on development is imperative. First, a certain measure of optimism is basically required in any philosophical perspective on development; for without it one would be ending the project of development at its very beginning. Second, human agency should be given a pride of place in every philosophical consideration of development. This is simply because it captures the concern for freedom and responsibility which are impossible without the autonomy of persons as moral agents. Third, the question of social justice calls to mind the collectivity of autonomous individual persons towards achieving some development goals. Here, the concern for education, equality, and human capacities become evident. Fourth, democracy or any other consensual political arrangement which serves as a framework for prosecuting social justice is to be factored into the equation. This will enable the commitment to social justice to be enduring and self-sustainable.

Fifth, a theory of social change suggests itself in every philosophical exploration of development, modern capitalism and modernity. This is true since one must have an anchor or a handle with which to examine and understand these phenomena. The most important elements in this regard are the internalist core (the endogenous ingredients for change), particular dimension (the specific explanation of change for a given society), discontinuity (a rupture with the adverse state of affairs that cries for change), understanding (emphasis on self-understanding as the springboard for self-reflexion which builds the individual capacity for grasping the underpinning epistemology of change), among others. In short, any theory of social change must have three elements: structural determinants of social change, processes and mechanisms of social change, and direction of social change (Hans & Smelser, 1992). Sixth, the care for international insertion into the global community in a comparatively advantageous manner must be promoted. This emphasizes internationalization in trades, culture, technology and politics and so on.

Related to the above philosophical perspectives are some important values that mingle with those perspectives for a better result. The most important among them include education, morality, rationality, creativity, human capacity building, decolonized (natural) human rights, peace, social contract and social harmony, happiness, national identity, collectivism and regionalism, interculturality, agriculture, humanity, political, cultural and ecological integrity, science and technology, national security, health and wellbeing of citizens. Whatever the philosophical theory or framework that is called, it is right and sound if it parades these perspectives and values including their corollaries for a genuine and sustainable development of the human society. In other words, theoretical pluralism is a welcome norm in economic thoughts about modernity. The reduction of modern capitalism to modernity (or modernization) is an aberration of some sort. Theoretical pluralism allows for diverse approaches/methods to development other than modern capitalism. Zhao (2022) emphasizes that “in recent decades, economic history research has demonstrated that Western
capitalism, like that of England, is not the inevitable and sole path for realizing economic modernization” (p. 60). There can various nuances on modern capitalism depending on the level of emphasis given to elements like inequality, competition, individualism, taxation, government and administration (Baradat, 2008, pp. 80 - 105); and, indeed, there are varied degrees of deviations from the ‘standard’ neoclassical modernization theory that assumes the state and the market as maintaining an antagonistic relationship to each other (i.e. ‘the free market economy’). For example, Jahan and Mahmud (2018) state that there are four major types of capitalism, namely: state-guided capitalism, oligarchic capitalism, big-firm capitalism, and entrepreneurial capitalism. Without this possibility of variations, China’s economic miracle and those of the Asian Tigers will be dismissed as myth and the development efforts in some African countries conceived in terms of self-realization and self-capacitation will turn to an illusion.

Therefore what matters in a philosophical perspective on development, is not the underpinning theory but the overarching ideology and the development goals. Against this backdrop, Schimank (2015) describes modernity as a functionally differentiated capitalist society capable of accommodating both capitalist and non-capitalist economic arrangements for divergent development purposes. Today, scholars wonder about the future of capitalism and its enduring relationship with democracy. In this optic, fears are raised as to what would come after or what the fate of modernity would be. Delanty (2019), however, thinks that “a likely future trend will be less the end of capitalism than the harnessing of ‘super-capitalism’ and that there are limits to the accumulation of capital” (p. 10). Consequently, the idea of modernity as progress is bound to change; or, put differently, it might be possible to view modernity no longer as progress by default. Nevertheless, Mouzakitis (2017) opines that it will be impossible to disentangle the idea of progress from modernity entirely; the best one can do, according to him, might be to adopt Eisenstadt’s model of *multiple modernities* focused on different responses to the different theoretical and practical challenges imposed by the prevailing Eurocentric notion, framework and model of modernity as universal. “In this respect, it challenges to a considerable degree the assumption that social change could be theorized in general from the standpoint of progress or evolution and that this progress is represented by the specific *progression* of cultural, social, scientific, economic, and political institutions in the western world” (Mouzakitis, 2017, p. 8).

The philosophical approach to this challenge is always recommended since it focuses on the meta-theory of modernity including modern capitalism, social change, social being of society, development prerequisites and their contradictions, not merely on the basic tenets or theories of modernity as such. It adopts “broader civilizational perspectives”, to use the phrase of Arnason (2001, p. 124), in the study of modernity and societal development. In the tradition of Agbakoba (2003, 2019, 2021, 2022) this approach will consider the following themes about modernity and societal development: political identity formation, universal and particular dimensions of development, epistemic orientations to development, decoloniality and contestations of knowledge, interculturality, heterosis, transcolonization, philosophical reconstruction, determinism and social behavior, teleological, causal and historical explanations, ideology critique, value inquiry, and so on and so forth. With all these and more, one acquires a holistic and comprehensive perspective and is thereby better equipped to philosophically engage the challenge of modernity and societal development.

References


