

# Capitalism with a 'Human Face': Face-to-Face Charity Fundraising and the Critique of Ideology

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities

2021

Jake Flavell

School of Social Sciences

# Table of Contents

<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Declaration</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Copyright Statement</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>0.1. Topic and Rationale</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>0.2. Research Questions</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>0.3. Research Methods</b> .....	<b>16</b>
0.3.1. Assessing the validity of theory; ‘applying’ the critique of ideology.....	16
0.3.2. Researching capitalism with a ‘human face’, NGOs and F2F.....	20
<b>0.4. Overall Argument and Chapter Outline</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>0.5. Original Contributions</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>Chapter 1 - The Critique of Ideology: Dialectics, Materialism and Critique</b> ...	<b>36</b>
<b>1.1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>1.2. Ideology In-itself: Ideas and Reality, Thought and Being, Subject and Object</b> 42	
1.2.1. Capitalism and Humanity .....	47
1.2.2. Epistemology to Ontology, and the symptom .....	52
<b>1.3. Ideology For-itself: Enjoyment and Being</b> .....	<b>58</b>
1.3.1. Common Sense, Passive Revolution and Hegemonic Bloc .....	60
1.3.2. Taking Epistemology Seriously? Dogma and Dialectics.....	64
1.3.3. Fantasy and Jouissance .....	69
<b>1.4. Ideology Reflected-into-itself: Capitalism, fetishism and the Critique of Political economy</b> .....	<b>73</b>
1.4.1. Psychoanalysis and ‘Political Economy’ .....	74
1.4.2. Marx with, or divided by, Lacan: Value, between <i>Objet petit a</i> and Fetishism.....	80
<b>1.3. Conclusion: Dialectical Materialism and the Critique of Ideology</b> .....	<b>86</b>
<b>Chapter 2 - Humanising Global Capitalism</b> .....	<b>91</b>
<b>2.1. The (re-)occurrence of the ‘human’</b> .....	<b>94</b>
2.1.1. The Critical Pitfalls of Externality, and the Promises of the Symptom .....	107
<b>2.2. NGOs and Ambivalence</b> .....	<b>112</b>
2.2.1. Ambivalence, Jouissance and the Limits of Functionalism.....	120
<b>2.3. From commodity to gift and back; the ambivalent object of capitalism with a human face</b> .....	<b>123</b>
2.3.1. Dialectical Materialism and the Critique of Political Economy .....	128
<b>2.4. Conclusion: Ideologies of the ‘human’, NGO Ambivalence and F2F</b> .....	<b>133</b>

<b>Chapter 3 - F2F In-itself: Symbolisation and Symptom .....</b>	<b>136</b>
3.1. Contradiction and the Chugger .....	138
3.2. Banalisation and Instrumental Necessity .....	147
3.3. The Last Temptation of Home Fundraising .....	154
3.2. Conclusion.....	162
<b>Chapter 4 - Ideology for-itself: Fantasies of Humanity, Enjoyment of Capital .....</b>	<b>166</b>
4.1. The Stabilising Fantasy of Global Human Society and desire for ‘Making a difference’ .....	168
4.2. Destabilising Fantasy and Fundraising for the sake of Fundraising .....	182
4.3. From destabilising enjoyment of Capital, to transgressive enjoyment of inequality .....	196
4.4. Conclusion.....	213
<b>Chapter 5 - F2F reflected into itself: Value and the Gift.....</b>	<b>216</b>
5.1. Ambiguity of the Object (a) .....	220
5.2. Value for/and Money .....	225
5.3. Charity as Fetish and the Golden Goose .....	233
5.4. Conclusion.....	249
<b>Conclusion: The ‘Chugger’ as Revolutionary Subject.....</b>	<b>252</b>
6.1. Original Contributions .....	256
6.2. Implications and Critical Reflections .....	259
6.2.1. Critique and Global Capitalism .....	259
6.2.2. Identifying with the symptom: Chugger as Revolutionary Subject.....	262
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>276</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Participant Consent Form and Information Sheet .....</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Interview List .....</b>	<b>304</b>

Word Count: 84,441

## List of Figures

Figure 4.1.: Smiling Fundraisers in Manchester, p. 168

Figure 4.2.: Front Cover of *The Human Economy*, p. 171

Figure 4.3.: Front Cover of *Relationship Fundraising*, p. 171

Figure 4.4.: Front Cover of *Friends for Life: Relationship Fundraising in Practice*, p. 171

Figure 5.1.: CARE International “how your money is spent” graphic, p. 224

## Abbreviations

BBC – British Broadcasting Company

BID - Business Improvement District

BOND - British Overseas NGOs for Development

CAF – Charities Aid Foundation

F2F – Face-to-Face Fundraising

GATT – General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

HDR - Human Development Report

IoF - Institute of Fundraising

IPE – International Political Economy

NCVO - National Council for Voluntary Organisations

NGO – Non-Government Organisation

PFRA – Public Fundraising Regulatory Association

SOFII - Showcase of fundraising innovation and inspiration

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF – United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund

## Abstract

In this thesis I advance a critique of face-to-face charity fundraising (F2F), a very conspicuous and historically controversial mode of fundraising that was 're-invented' in the late 1990s, mobilising paid fundraisers to actively solicit direct debit payments in public spaces. In doing so, this thesis seeks to further refine and demonstrate the value of a dialectical materialist critique of ideology informed by the 'syntheses' of Marx, Lacan and Hegel developed *inter alia* by Slavoj Žižek. While F2F has notably escaped the attention of critical literatures on development and globalisation, the increasingly significant ideological milieu I locate it in – the growing importance of NGOs to the architecture of the global political economy and the concomitant attempts at global capitalism's 'humanisation' – has been subject to critique. Yet, such critique exhibits a set of distinct theoretical limitations which effect the explanatory and subversive power of their respective frameworks. Namely, they are bound by an unreflexive humanism and epistemological realism, an excessive functionalism/reproductionism, and an insufficient attention to capital, value and form. As such, this thesis stages a critical encounter with a set of phenomena which highlight the deficiencies of extant 'ideology critique' in critical studies on globalisation and development and develops an alternative framework for the 'critique of ideology' which can overcome such deficiencies.

The central argument I advance concerns the validity of this approach on three levels; epistemology, explanation and politics, forming a sort of *Borromean knot* of theoretical engagement which implicate – but are nonetheless irreducible to – each other. Such an approach dialectically moves through three levels of ideological phenomena; ideology in-itself as its explicit symbolisation, ideology for-itself as its external materiality and ideology reflected-into-itself as the spontaneous fetishisation of its object. Operationalising this original approach – which reflects its dialectical and materialist commitments – and drawing on original fieldwork I argue that F2F, *qua* exemplary modality of capitalism's 'humanisation', functions as more than an instance of mere false consciousness, rational process of co-option or de-politicisation of neoliberalism. What this approach reveals is that F2F is deeply contradictory phenomena which functions through simultaneously concealing and revealing a central contradiction, itself deeply tied to the commodity-form. While it appears to operate in line with the 'humanitarian' project of shared humanity *against neoliberalism*, it functions through exploiting the immanent breaks in humanity in the pursuit of fundraising (or accumulation) for the sake of fundraising all the while fetishising itself as totally other to capitalism, a fetish of altruistic 'giving', which is nonetheless generated by the commodity-form and ties it ever closer to it. In response, I suggest an 'identification' with the figure of the 'chugger' – F2F's symptomatic point and receptacle of disavowed enjoyment – as a means to break with this formation, combining the Utopian impulse of charity as absolute love, and the 'mugger' as a violent figure of expropriation.

In developing such an argument, I make both empirical and theoretical contributions. First, I contribute to critical literatures on 'commodified consumption' or 'marketised charity/philanthropy' by examining the novel empirical dynamic of F2F, integrating an almost absent discussion of the classic gift/commodity opposition. Second, I contribute to critical literatures on NGOs and their ideological role by theorising their ambivalence *as such* – as at once appearing to both challenge and support neoliberal development – through the representative case of F2F. Third, tying these together, I contribute to the critique of 'humanising' ideologies (and beyond) in critical development and globalisation studies, further refining recent psychoanalytically informed contributions by more closely incorporating themes from Marx's critique of political economy, engaging capitalism as such as opposed to simply 'neoliberalism'.

## Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

## Copyright Statement

- i. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the "Copyright") and s/he has given The University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.
- ii. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made only in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has from time to time. This page must form part of any such copies made.
- iii. The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trademarks and other intellectual property (the "Intellectual Property") and any reproductions of copyright works in the thesis, for example graphs and tables ("Reproductions"), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.
- iv. Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this thesis, the Copyright and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy (see <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=24420>), in any relevant Thesis restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, The University Library's regulations (see <http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/about/regulations/>) and in The University's policy on Presentation of Theses.

## Acknowledgements

My first acknowledgements must go to my two wonderful supervisors, Carl Death and Japhy Wilson. Despite a lot going on in their lives – and a global health pandemic! – they have always been incredibly supportive, available and have helped make the thesis what it is today.

Second, I must acknowledge the supportive role that the Global Political Economy research cluster has played, both academically and personally, during my time completing this thesis. Having spent my entire academic life at the University of Manchester, I could not have hoped to be institutionalised by a better group of people. Special thanks go to Adrienne Roberts, Ian Bruff, Greig Charnock, Tom Houseman and Silke Trommer.

Third, big thanks to my family, by blood and by law, for supporting me in a variety of ways throughout. Special thanks go to my mum and dad Helen and Leon Flavell for all their love and support, Alan Forrest for generously gifting me a computer, and Heather Wilson for telling me that everything is ok after yet another breakdown.

Last but not least, I have to thank my wonderful wife Joanna. I met her during my PhD journey and she managed to make it somewhat bearable. I can't imagine what I would have done if I hadn't had both her academic and personal support throughout the process. Especially towards the end, it has been one of the worst things I've had to endure, and while I frustrate her to no end by my inability to believe in myself or take any compliments, this didn't stop her believing in me anyway.

# Introduction

## 0.1. *Topic and Rationale*

In the summer of 2015, I was in need of a job. I wasn't given as many hours as I would have liked by *The Challenge*, a registered charity tasked with delivering the *National Citizen Service*, and so was in need of quick employment.<sup>1</sup> Having chosen this line of work because it in some sense 'made a difference', I decided to apply for a role as a face-to-face (hereafter F2F) charity fundraiser for Oxfam. A few months previously, during my studies, I had encountered their *Even it Up!* report on 'market fundamentalism' and global inequality (cf. Seery and Caistor Arendar, 2014) which, due to my own 'left' politics, meant they fit the bill. Within a week, I had been interviewed (in a group), trained and was therefore ready to hit the streets. Unfortunately, I wasn't very good. I failed to convince anyone to 'sign-up' to monthly direct debit payments on my first day, and on my second I had rejected some advice from my team leader as I didn't feel comfortable with how forward they wanted me to be. Perhaps as a result of rejecting this advice, I also failed to get any sign-ups on my second day. As soon as I arrived on my third day I was called into the office. The boss seemed worried that I had felt uncomfortable and questioned whether I thought the job was for me. I then responded with something along the lines of 'well maybe I just wait and see at the end of the week how I feel' to which she responded, 'well I'm sorry, but we're going to have to let you go'.

Despite the shock from my first ever sacking, this didn't surprise me much. I knew about the reputation of F2F, and I was very much a cynical Marxist. I remember wryly grinning to myself when the interviewer, after questioning the motives of

---

<sup>1</sup> The *National Citizen Service* is a government funded programme in the UK aimed at community based personal and social development of young people in line with the then coalition government's *Big Society* initiative.



large businesses engaging in corporate social responsibility, glibly declared in reference to their F2F operation that ‘well, we have to make a profit off you’. Indeed, introduced to the UK in 1997 (after its ‘re-invention’ in Austria two years previously), this ‘new’, ‘unique’ and ‘innovative’ mode of fundraising – in which paid fundraisers clad in charity attire would approach potential donors in public spaces in the attempt to get them to ‘sign-up’ to monthly direct debit donations – had gone from being ‘loved’ by people (SOFIL, 2009) to being hit by ‘a raft of bad publicity’ (Vaughn, 2004). Despite, or perhaps because of, its considerable success – as of 2019 more people are asked to give on the street than on television or direct mail in the UK (Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), 2019) – the practice had ‘mushroomed’ (Napier, 2002) after only a few years, becoming not only a ‘regular sight on many high-streets but also a nuisance to many passers-by who object to being asked to sign-up for direct debit donations’ (Baldwin et al., 2003). In Britain specifically, within a short space of time these vivacious (often) young people had earned a particularly memorable nickname: ‘chuggers’, a portmanteau of ‘charity’ and ‘mugger’. While the name ‘face-to-face fundraising’ doesn’t seem to distinguish it from the more traditional ‘tin rattling’, what did change – and what allowed the practice to ‘mushroom’ – was precisely the introduction of ‘capitalism’. F2F’s novelty, its ‘reinvention’, revolved around the fact that it employed (and in my case quickly sacked) paid fundraisers often through the medium of private, for-profit agencies.<sup>2</sup> However, despite this, it was still seemingly all in the service of *charity*, in fulfilling a wide range of social goals or ‘good causes’ (Baldwin et al., 2003). As such, the left-leaning magazine *The New Statesman* titled an early article on the subject as ‘when capitalism works for good’ (Vaughn, 2004).

---

<sup>2</sup> Baldwin et al. (2003) move from describing them as a nuisance to describing how F2F’s emergence was in some sense down to the ‘mushrooming’ of professional fundraising firms.

This is a thesis about F2F, but it is also about the broader ideological milieu in which ‘capitalism works for good’. At around the same time as F2F’s emergence, the governing consensus on the direction of the global political economy – ‘neoliberalism’ – began to witness a crisis of legitimacy. The strategies of deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation had led to the so-called ‘lost decade’ of development and began to be challenged by an emerging ideology which revolved around the centrality of a more ‘human’ development. From the United Nations Children’s Fund’s (UNICEF) publication of *Adjustment with a Human Face* (Cornia et. al., 1987), to the inception of the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Human Development paradigm, and the subsequent turn-of-the-millennium calls for globalisation or capitalism *with a human face* (cf. Stiglitz 2002) such a challenge teemed with representation in anthropomorphic terms.<sup>3</sup> Chief among these advocates were many so-called non-governmental organisations (NGOs), typically *humanitarian* and non-profit organisations – albeit notoriously difficult to pin down – which would (and still currently) utilise this re-invention of F2F.<sup>4</sup> As such, while in this thesis I aim to develop a sustained critical analysis of F2F – drawing on original fieldwork – I also seek to shed light on the broader totality it inhabits, which (as I more fully demonstrate in Chapter 2) is precisely the movement to ‘humanise’ global capitalism, or to give it a ‘human face’. In this sense, F2F appears as an exemplary combination of the capitalist process par excellence (*qua* consumption of labour-power in production of surplus) with a very literal ‘human face’. However, through this critical analysis I also aim to perform a more theoretically motivated enquiry.

---

<sup>3</sup> This process – its genesis, content and so on – of ideological ‘humanizing’ and its relation to F2F will be more fully developed in Chapter 2. While I by no means ascribe an absolute identity to all these elements – for both empirical and theoretical reasons – I nonetheless demonstrate a minimum degree of consistency such that they can be considered as part of the same process.

<sup>4</sup> These include, among others, UNICEF, Oxfam, Save the Children, Action Aid and CARE International. ‘NGO’ is notoriously difficult to pin down, and some might even contest the examples I give above. But as will become clear, this comprises one of the thesis’ contributions. For the moment, I am only trying to draw a connection between an ideological movement (*qua* ‘humanising’ capitalist development) and F2F, which then inevitably involves discussion of the organisations which use F2F.

Despite the regularity of such ‘human’ metaphorical devices, mobilised across the political spectrum for both positive and negative reasons, and the substantial normative sway both reference to the ‘human’ and its primary disseminators, NGOs, hold (cf. Davies, 2019), this ideological constellation is typically reduced to a buzzword, often enveloped in academic scare quotes, and rarely gets further examination. For its critics, it tends to function as a marker of some anaemic reformism, as a type of *ideology* which ultimately maintains global capitalism as the upmost horizon of globalisation and development. While I don’t aim to dispute this, I do aim to contest the precise character of this ideology, and the method by which it is critically interrogated. As such, while this thesis strengthens and refines the empirical mapping and subversion of this ideology through the concrete case of F2F, it also intervenes on the level of theory – on questions of epistemology, ontology, subjectivity, dialectics, materialism and their explanatory and subversive implications – developing a framework for a ‘critique of ideology’ informed by the dialectical and materialist ‘syntheses’ of Lacan-Hegel-Marx developed *inter alia* by Slavoj Žižek.<sup>5</sup> This task is as urgent as ever given the permutations of contemporary capitalism and the concomitant effects on critique. As Jason Read has recently argued, the ‘rise of neoliberalism has led to capitalism being defended on primarily anthropological grounds’ (2016, p. 312); on the presupposed originary rationality

---

<sup>5</sup> I must admit that I do not always deal directly with Marx, Lacan or Hegel but rather the ‘dialectical materialist’ movement of thought which thinks them together, or what Gabriel Tupinamba refers to as the ‘general space of thinking it has founded’ (2015, p. 160), which of course is practically embodied in the critique of ideology (also cf. Žižek 2008a, p. xxxi, 2008d, p. 2). As such, alongside Žižek I draw on Samo Tomšič, Alenka Zupančič, Mladen Dolar, Glyn Daly, Fabio Vighi, Fredric Jameson and Gavin Walker among others. While Marx, Lacan and Hegel will be referenced this is only insofar as these are moments which the character of such a ‘general space of thinking’ is manifest. As Robert Pfaller has argued in reference to Althusser’s apparent deviations from Marx, the task is not to articulate the ‘true Marx’ but the ‘best Marx’ (2015, p. 26). And, I’d argue, this can similarly be applied to Lacan and Hegel. Such a commitment is also reflected in the use of ‘dialectical materialism’. While the apparent reference to ‘dialectical materialism’ conjures up the rigid, closed and dogmatic ‘official’ philosophy of nature of the Soviet Union, this could not be further from the form of dialectical materialism defended in this thesis and by no means exhausts how it can be developed. In fact, as I will argue, it is very much the *historical* materialists which suffer from a rigid, closed and dogmatic ‘philosophy’, and that it is *dialectical* materialism which finds a resolution to this problem.

and self-interest of the human being *qua* homo economicus or human capital. However, 'as capitalism has become anthropological so has its critique' (ibid), thus rendering the 'anthropologisation' or humanisation of global capitalism both an empirically crucial terrain of engagement but also of deep theoretical significance.

More generally, apart from the subject matter, this thesis is also concerned with the relationship between theoretical perspectives, method, and the empirical social 'reality' it seeks to shed light on. Indeed, as figures as apparently opposed as both Althusser and Hegel have highlighted, there is no innocent reading (Althusser and Balibar, 1970) nor any presuppositionless beginning (Hegel, cited in Lange 2016, p. 240-243); these presuppositions inflect our reading of any given phenomena, curtailing both the capacity to *understand and explain* as well as *subvert or break* with such a given regime (this commitment is reflected in the substantial theoretical engagement in Chapter 1). Certainly, as I will go on to argue in this thesis, the lack of substantial attention given to this *ideology* has its roots in the precise ways the literatures engage the 'critique of ideology' and their various problematic theoretical presuppositions. In line with the common-sense understanding of the term 'ideology' as referring to sets or systems of *ideas*, the typically (historical) *materialist* critique of such an ideology has treated it as a case of mistaken cognition, or worse, a purposeful manipulation of reality which meets the ends of a particular politics.<sup>6</sup> The critique of ideology has thus often followed a process in which it is juxtaposed with some Other truth, some Other region of reality or its 'objective' condition (cf. Cammack 2017, Lebowitz 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010, Selwyn 2014, 2017, Veltmeyer and Rushton 2012, Veltmeyer and Wise 2018). Even when drawing on more heterodox figures within the materialist tradition, such as Antonio Gramsci, in order to give a conscious place to the ideological in critical social

---

<sup>6</sup> Materialism is often taken to be a philosophical position which prioritizes 'matter' as the primary substance of reality and as such, has typically rejected a focus on 'ideology' as a sign of its main adversary, idealism (cf. Marx 1845, Burnham 2006).

analysis, the same problems, albeit in a different guise, still remain (cf. Bieler and Morton 2003, 2018, Cutler 2005, Gill 1993, 1995, Jessop and Sum 2006, McSweeney 2014, Munck 2010, Ramos 2006, Robinson 2005a, 2005b, 2013, Rupert 2000). However, there exists a subterranean current within materialist approaches to the critique of ideology which treats such a transparent material and objective reality as itself an illusion. Instead of proceeding by exposing a subjective misperception to some objective truth, it sees such subjective delusion written into objective reality itself. The task of a materialist ideology critique is thus not to produce a greater or more accurate representation of objective reality to render its ideological representation suspect, but instead to explore the contours of the ideological representation itself, and how it emerges in, through and against 'objective' reality. But of course, this implies substantially distinct conceptualisations of the standard philosophical – and implicitly methodological – categories of subject and object.

Psychoanalysis has been of crucial import to this discussion. Unlike its fellow materialists of the more explicitly historical/Marxian variety, for psychoanalysis the subject (of ideology and of the critique of ideology) is inextricably bound to the non-rational passions and drives of the human body such that there is no pure and authentic discourse which positively represents the real in its totality, no meta-language unmarred by the irrational drives of the human body. In other words, as Samo Tomšič has stated, '*every* discourse is a discourse of enjoyment' (Tomšič 2019a, p. 10). However, such enjoyment, otherwise translated as *jouissance*, doesn't represent another instance of some objective positivity behind or underneath the subjective illusions of ideology, discourse and so on.<sup>7</sup> Rather, while it figures as a passionate support of ideology, it 'implies that there is no meta-discourse or meta-language...no "pure" language of being beyond the "dirty" language of enjoyment'

---

<sup>7</sup> As will become clear, while I use enjoyment and *jouissance* interchangeably, enjoyment should not be understood in common-sense terms. In fact, enjoyment in this sense can be just as painful as it is pleasurable.

(Tomšič 2019a, p. 10), showing up negatively in the ruptures of ideological discourse as opposed to in an undistorted outside. For psychoanalysis therefore, the primary epistemological distinction is not between illusion and reality, or subjective misperception and objective verity, but between the always already symbolically and imaginarily constituted 'reality' and its failure to live up to itself, its negativity. 'Reality' is riven by gaps, inconsistencies, and incompleteness which shouldn't be treated as the result of failed attempts to grasp it but should be taken to indicate something incomplete or excessive in reality itself. Such inherent inconsistency, incompleteness or negativity appears in many distinct, yet interlinked, figures throughout this thesis (symptom, *jouissance*, *objet petit a*) as do the processes of its 'ideological' mystification (defence, displacement, disavowal, fantasy, fetish), many of which derive from psychoanalytic concepts, and their interpretation in light of Hegelian dialectics.

However, alongside these influences, the critique of ideology developed and defended in this thesis also insists on the critical importance on the articulation of this legacy with Karl Marx's critique of political economy. Indeed, while the approach defended in this thesis is positioned as critical of certain (Marxian) materialist modes of ideology critique from the perspective of psychoanalysis and Hegelian dialectics, it is also positioned as critical of certain psychoanalytic modes of ideology critique from the perspective of Marx. While psychoanalytic interventions have quite rightly opposed themselves to the aforementioned materialist epistemological frame of 'Marxist political economy' (cf. Bousfield 2018, Fridell 2014, Kapoor 2013, 2020, MacDonald 2018, Sioh 2014), this has been too hasty in dismissing some crucial elements from within the Marxian tradition. In fact, Marx's *critique* of political economy departs in many ways from the image of 'Marxist political economy', both in terms of how it construes critique (cf. Bonefeld 2001) and in the importance placed on the essential, and *ideological*, function of

appearance, illusion, or social mediation. Indeed, as Žižek noted at the very beginning of his first book on ideology, there is a ‘fundamental homology between the interpretive procedure of Marx and Freud’ insofar as each attempt to ‘avoid the properly fetishistic fascination of the “content” supposedly hidden behind the form’ (2008a, p. 3). Rather, what analysis aims at is not the truth behind the appearance, ‘the content hidden by the form (the form of commodities, the form of dreams) but, on the contrary, *the “secret” of the form itself*’ (2008a, p. 3). The value-form of the commodity – as at once both a particular quality, a use-value, and an abstract quantity, an exchange-value, autonomized from its concrete material substance – expounded in the first chapter of *Capital* contains a theory of ‘political economy’ which centralises the ideological dynamics of linguistic representation, appearance and abstraction. And crucially, this can, and should, be read as a process which deceives by mystifying a structural negativity, antagonism or contradiction rather than an intransigent objective reality. In the process of this all-too-hasty rejection, psychoanalytic ideology critique has eschewed crucial resources from the *critique of political economy*, in some cases leading its proponents into the same tendencies of the very Marxists they differentiate themselves from.<sup>8</sup> In this thesis, I seek to rectify this, developing a dialectical and materialist ‘critique of ideology’ through an encounter with a phenomenon which reveals the limitations of existing approaches. Such an approach is firmly positioned within the Marxian tradition of ideology

---

<sup>8</sup> The work of Japhy Wilson (2018) (sometimes with Manuel Bayon (2017)) and Özselçuk and Madra (2005, 2007, 2010) represent an anomaly, but they don’t formalise this into a framework as such. They represent an anomaly because they articulate the encounter between Marxian and Lacanian theory in terms of the former’s value theory which, as I go on to argue, is the crucial point of epistemological rapprochement between the two, and guards against the tendency to repeat the problematic tendencies in the aforementioned modes of materialist ideology critique. Moreover, while the typically *psychoanalytic* approaches of those cited in the main text – with whom I share much in common – correctly oppose themselves to the aforementioned ‘too Marxist’ mode of ideology critique, such an opposition is typically underdeveloped (assumed, but never fully shown) with the contribution of psychoanalysis outlined primarily through a more extensive critical encounter with ‘post-structuralist’ discourse analysis (cf. De Vries 2007, Kapoor 2020, Wilson 2014, 2016). My thesis takes a different tack, placing a confrontation with Marxian ideology critique – and the closely related theoretical questions concerning materialism, dialectics and critique – front and center. This not only greatly furnishes what is an, albeit uncannily accurate, oversimplification, but since I intend to defend a critique of ideology which gives the critique of political economy a conscious place, but nonetheless distances itself from certain Marxian epistemologies, spelling out the difference is vital.

critique, albeit traversed by the epistemological, methodological and conceptual innovations of Lacanian psychoanalysis and Hegelian dialectics.

## **0.2. Research Questions**

The central research question guiding this thesis is: *‘To what extent can the “Critique of Ideology” explain and subvert ‘human’ ideologies of globalization and development, and what does it reveal about how F2F functions?’* This is supplemented by three subsidiary questions which correspond to the unfolding of this thesis. The first two correspond to Chapters 1 and 2 respectively, and the third corresponds to the three empirical chapters (3, 4, and 5) on F2F and its various ideological moments:

- i. What is a dialectical materialist ‘critique of ideology’, and how does it relate to other approaches? (Chapter 1)
- ii. What has been the significance of ‘human’ ideologies in globalisation/development discourse, how does it relate to F2F and what does this reveal about the limitations and possibilities of ‘critique’? (Chapter 2)
- iii. How does F2F function ideologically? (Chapters 3, 4 and 5)

## **0.3. Research Methods**

### **0.3.1. Assessing the validity of theory; ‘applying’ the critique of ideology**

It should be clear by now that the brand of ideology critique developed and defended here by no means corresponds to a methodological realism. The subject of ideology critique cannot be evacuated from its process, but is an active force in the practical application of its method. However, as I will more thoroughly cover in epistemo-conceptual and explanatory terms in Chapters 1 and 2 respectively, this should not be taken to simply represent a retreat from realism in favour of a



methodological *reflexivity* on behalf of the researcher. Rather, as Jesse Proudfoot has argued, while recognising the ‘subjectivity of the researcher...[as] an essential component of the research itself’ (2015, p. 1138) is absolutely crucial, this ‘opens a door’ (2015, p. 1139) to another form of specifically *psychoanalytic* reflexivity. It is not enough to simply integrate our conscious subjectivity into the research process. This, I’d argue, ultimately represents an *idealist* move which ascribes centrality to consciousness and mind over the body and matter. Rather, we must also pay attention to the *unconscious* processes of both the research and its object. The unconscious here doesn’t refer to the opposite of consciousness, or else such psychoanalytic reflexivity ends up reducing the critique of ideology to the aforementioned ‘materialist’ opposition between the subjective delusions of ideology and the objective characteristics of reality. Rather, as Mladen Dolar has emphasised, ‘the unconscious is a gap, and meaning is a stopgap...one makes the holes, the other fills them in’ (2012, p. 5). Psychoanalytic reflexivity then, as adopted in this thesis’ mode of ideology critique, is attendant to such gaps and holes, but in their relation to what ‘fills them in’, as they can only be discerned in and through such meaning. As has been hinted at so far, and will be more fully encountered in the conclusion, this has also involved an encounter with the holes in the author’s own conscious positions on the subject matter (see Section 6.2.2.).

Such a materialist form of reflexivity – one that inscribes the unconscious dimensions of subjectivity into the research process – practiced by the critique of ideology developed here, is, however, also dialectical. It is of no surprise that Dolar’s meditations on the nature of the unconscious comes alongside a thesis on its relation to Hegelian dialectics. Indeed, as Samo Tomšič has emphasised, drawing on Andrew Cole, unlike what he calls ‘hermeneutic interpretation’ which ‘privileges the production and the economy of sense’ and meaning, dialectical interpretation focuses on the negativities and gaps in such economies of sense, and

‘circulates precisely around this gap’ (2014, also cf. Zupančič 2017, p. 67). In other words, while such a dialectical and materialist critique of ideology shares some methodological similarities with the more popular method of discourse analysis – it is based on analysing discourse, as ‘meaning-in-use’, and what it produces, explicitly locating both its subject and object within such formations (cf. Laffey and Weldes 2004, p. 28) – its focus diverges insofar as it focuses on the gaps in discourse; its inconsistencies, contradictions and limits. Indeed, while enjoyment is ‘extra-discursive’ (cf. Proudfoot 2010), it can be tracked in moments when discourse is thrown out of joint, or when there is something ‘dirty’ about it (Tomšič 2019a, p. 10).

This epistemo-methodological innovation is crucial in how I avoid the potential epistemological pitfall of circularity which might arise in answering my central research question. Indeed, is there not a danger of presupposing the explanans in the explanandum? In other words, if method prefigures its object to some extent, on what grounds can I assess the extent to which the critique of ideology helps explain and subvert this ideological formation?

The answer lies in the importance of *immanent critique* to the approach developed and defended in this thesis. Rather than external critique, which operates in terms of ‘unproductive exercises in comparing apples and oranges’ (Johnston 2018, p. xi), it proceeds by boring holes in its subject material, whether in the form of exposing alternative ‘ideology critics’ unacknowledged (and dogmatic) assumptions which conflict with their explicit convictions (i.e. their implicit idealism despite explicit materialism), or in engaging with the strict empirics of ‘human’ ideologies and F2F. In Chapters 1 and 2, while I highlight the extent to which this critique of ideology and its attendant concepts appear fruitful for both explanation and subversion of the given ideological edifice, this proceeds not simply through the juxtaposition of

the concepts I employ with theirs' – itself a problematic procedure employed by these approaches – but through identifying a *limit* or *tension* point which is worked through. Indeed, as Frank Ruda notes, 'Žižek's dialectical materialism does not allow for an abstract (and external) presentation (because it can only be practiced)' (2016, p. 152).

While I employ various critical concepts associated with the Marx-Lacan-Hegel syntheses, these should not be seen as external or 'master' concepts which function as homogenous descriptors of that which I seek to shed light on. Nor should this thesis be read as a 'proof' of this approach. And nor should this approach be taken as a reified 'framework' which can be indiscriminately applied to anything. Rather, it seeks to make critical sense of something which cannot be accounted for within existing schemas, the value of which is demonstrated in this gap. Questions of extent are always relative to others; I highlight F2F and capitalism with a human face as blind spots in extant approaches not from the strict perspective of a more profound knowledge of the object but by a negative procedure of showing how the object fails to be apprehended in terms of existing conceptual frameworks. It thus deploys a new language not to represent the unrepresentable in terms of its positivity, but to represent the negative-unrepresentable, that which existing approaches resist by introducing various figures of full positivity or fundamental ontology.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Throughout I use the terms 'full positivity' and later, 'fundamental ontology' interchangeably. I derive the former primarily from Ernesto Laclau in his varied ruminations on the limitations of Marxian epistemology (1996), and the latter from Theodore Adorno's critique of phenomenology and the 'fundamental ontology' of Heidegger. In each case they refer to 'positive statements on the nature of the real' (Morgan 2017, p. 15), or some essential description of a fundamental reality.

### 0.3.2. *Researching capitalism with a 'human face', NGOs and F2F*

Having established the theoretical concerns of this thesis in the previous section, which themselves are distinctly 'methodological' in character, I now set out the evolving process by which I went about gathering the empirical material. Insofar as it explores the ideological phenomenon of the 'human' turn in development/globalisation through F2F, the thesis draws on two closely related, but distinct, empirical strands, one concerning NGOs and 'human' ideologies more broadly, and another concerning F2F specifically. In the first instance, the 'human' turn is discerned through a survey of key primary documents such as UNICEF's *Adjustment with a Human Face* and its key authors' retrospective reflections on it (cf. Cornia et. al. 1987, Jolly 1991, Jolly and Santos 2016, Stewart 2007), subsequent Human Development Reports (HDR) (primarily its first instantiation (UNDP 1990) and its 1999 publication, which doubles down on the 'human' reference by referring to globalisation with a 'human face' (UNDP 1999)), NGO publications and policy statements. The NGOs which form the basis of the research are those that use F2F in Manchester including Oxfam, UNICEF, CARE International, Amnesty International, Save the Children. This is complemented by a survey of authoritative secondary literature. This includes the engaged 'NGO' debates surrounding their 'counter-hegemonic' potential (cf. Bebbington et. al. 2008, Banks and Hulme 2012, Banks et. al., 2015), various histories, handbooks and authoritative portrayals of NGOs and the evolution of the global political economy (cf. Barnett 2011, Davies 2013, 2019, Dogra 2012, Fassin 2011, Lewis 2010, Khoo 2017, Saunders 2009) and academic texts on the intellectual lineage of the so-called 'human economy' (cf. Hart et. al., 2010).<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, I conducted two interviews with NGO management

---

<sup>10</sup> This particular edited collection is very telling – and will be referenced throughout – as it draws together many of the key themes and ideological motifs which form the main empirical aspects of this research including NGOs, Polanyi, Mauss, gift economies, anti-neoliberalism, human economy, and 'economics with a human face' (Hart et. al., 2010).

experts which were originally intended to be more relevant to F2F, but in fact applied more to this particular aspect of the research. While they were able to offer some more vague conjectures on F2F, they were very helpful in understanding the particular elements of NGOs and such a 'humanised' capitalism, something that will be developed in Chapter 3.

In the second instance, researching F2F has involved a combination of three mutually supplementing sources: first, since F2F has garnered much public attention, there are not only multiple anonymous and non-anonymous confessionals on the internet, but the phenomenon has been covered across almost all major news outlets (In *The Guardian* e.g. Anonymous 2015, 2016a, 2016b, Thornton 2002, in *The Financial Times* e.g. Fickling 2009, on *The BBC* e.g. Napier 2002, Kelly 2011, Williams 2020, in *The Daily Mail* e.g. Keogh and Kelly 2018), including an undercover investigation from *The Telegraph* (Duffin and Mendrick, 2012), along with the dedicated charity or 'third sector' online news sources (e.g. *The Third Sector*, *Civil Society*). The website SOFII (*Showcase of Fundraising Innovation and Inspiration*) and the associated *Commission on the Donor Experience* (specifically project 11f on Face-to-Face Fundraising cf. Butler, 2017) were also consulted, alongside specific NGO websites for their F2F operations. Moreover, blogs, books and videos of fundraising experts such as Ken Burnett (e.g. 2002, 2013) and Daryll Upsall (e.g. Fundraising Podcast 2012) who both who were involved with F2F from the beginning (cf. SOFII 2009) were consulted. These have been particularly crucial for the introductory research into F2F 'in-itself', insofar as they most effectively communicate the 'explicit' or immediate 'dictionary definitions' of what F2F is.

Second, to delve deeper into the way these articulations on F2F, and their tensions, are negotiated, I carried out eleven interviews between 2018-2019 with figures which were involved either directly in F2F at all levels (fundraisers, team leaders,

fundraising experts, fundraising company owners/managers) or in the questions of F2F's regulation (city council representatives, fundraising regulators, city centre governance officials). This was sufficient for my purposes, not only given the wealth of confessionals and public discussion concerning F2F but also since when I got to this point, I reached saturation. These were semi-structured, and while there were some variations depending on who I was interviewing, they were typically autobiographical, with the questions beginning with who they were, why they got into F2F, their experience of the job, and some of the 'tactics' they mobilised, which typically brought up the question of its negative reputation. The interviews developed organically, with some dyadic interaction, but often in the form of another question from my side. Either this functioned to further interrogate some particular aspect I had discovered from a previous interview (an early interview with an ex-fundraiser for instance, after they mentioned the emotional, apolitical and often sexualised nature of the interaction meant I often deliberately asked about this to corroborate the original interview) or it functioned to probe an apparent disjuncture (for instance, a regular feature was the apparent 'ambivalence' of the phenomenon). While I paid attention to the particular psychoanalytically relevant 'extradiscursive' (cf. Proudfoot, 2010) idiosyncrasies of the interviewees – their mumbles, anguish, excitement and so on in speech – the primary emphasis was placed, just like the psychoanalytic session, on attempting to discern 'the Other already in their own speech' (Wright 2016, p. 135), the 'broader discursive currents' (Hook 2013, p. 49) and the tensions within.

Third, I spent eight non-consecutive days (in Manchester, F2F is limited to Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays) during 2018-2019 for between two and four hours circulating the various F2F sites in Manchester city centre, observing fundraisers, speaking to fundraisers and speaking to members of the public whom they interacted with. I spoke to approximately five fundraisers and five members of

the public per day, and while I started by trying to speak specifically to the topic-relevant NGO fundraisers (i.e. those from Oxfam, UNICEF, Amnesty International, Action Aid, Save the Children, CARE International) and those solicited by them, I realised that not only did they often work for a variety of different charities but there seemed to be unity in their general approach (which was also confirmed in interviews). As such, eight days was sufficient for these purposes. Indeed, while this involved discovering aspects discussed above – as when I divulged that I was a researcher they often were keen to dismiss the negative press – it was primarily designed to observe the ‘material’ aspects of the F2F ritual. While a few short direct quotes were generated by five ‘informal interviews’ during these brief encounters with fundraisers and their potential donors, the primary aim of this activity was to explore the tactics they would use to stop passers-by, and the ways they would engage with them.

Alongside interviews and desk research over the internet, this helped me develop a broad understanding of F2F’s culture and context, allowing a more general picture of the practice to emerge. While the vast majority of this data is specific to the UK, particularly Manchester, and future research might fruitfully explore F2F in different contexts, I would expect similar themes to repeat themselves. F2F is worldwide (cf. SOFII, 2009), with international conferences where companies, charities and regulatory bodies share best practice (cf. Face2Face Conference ,2020). Indeed, while the term ‘chugger’ is to the best of my knowledge specific to the UK, I argue that it articulates a lay critique of F2F which captures something essential to the practice.

#### 0.4. Overall Argument and Chapter Outline

The overall argument of the thesis is that a dialectical materialist critique of ideology, grounded in the ‘syntheses’ of Hegel-Marx-Lacan developed *inter alia* by Slavoj Žižek, provides an important corrective to existing critiques of human ideologies within globalisation and development on three deeply interconnected levels; epistemological, explanatory and subversive. As will become clearer as the argument develops, these form a sort of theoretical *Borromean knot*; a topological figure in which three rings interlink in such a way that the removal of one forces the whole chain to fall apart. First, it avoids the epistemological limitations of extant approaches, both ‘Marxist’ and ‘Psychoanalytic’. While the latter rightly identifies itself as a corrective to the ‘objectivist’ tendencies of Marxist ideology critique and highlights its capacity to ‘supplement’ classic Marxian analyses of capitalism, it could be strengthened by a closer consideration of the *dialectical* relations between Marx and psychoanalysis, particularly surrounding the relation between the value-form and signification or language as modes of social mediation, and thus ultimately the nature of *critique*. As I argue, without this point of intersection, psychoanalytic critique risks reproducing the same ‘objectivist’ epistemology it explicitly opposes itself to (see Section 1.4.1.). Second, moving beyond this epistemological paradigm allows for a more thorough *explanation* of such ideological phenomena in a way that others have not. While psychoanalytic approaches (again, quite rightly) oppose and go beyond the deeply reductionist and overly functionalist approach to ideology critique practiced by more ‘orthodox’ and ‘Gramscian’ Marxists – emphasising the critical epistemological and explanatory roles of signification and *jouissance* in ideological functioning – the neglect of Marxian dialectics within psychoanalytic ideology critique creates three similar explanatory issues particularly pertinent to the given topic of this research. Without reference to Marx’s critique of political economy they, first, tend to centre



*neoliberalism*, missing the broader specificity of *capitalism*. Second, there is the tendency toward replicating the ‘reductionism’ of the ‘objectivist’ epistemology of ‘orthodox’ and ‘Gramscian’ Marxists, reducing capitalism with a human face to a mere false representation covering over some positive reality. And third, they risk reproducing the ‘functionalism’ or ‘reproductionism’ of the latter, in which ideology neatly guarantees the continued functioning of the system.

Lastly, such ‘syntheses’ of Hegel-Marx-Lacan strengthens the *subversive* aspects of ideology critique. Beyond the classic Marxist predilection according to which the question of how ‘capitalism functions is of immediate practical relevance for every anti-capitalist movement’ (Heinrich 2012, p. 8) the approach developed and defended in this thesis, through its focus on revealing *negativity* and its mystification, also provides the mechanisms by which we can locate strategic points to instigate a break with such a formation. In other words, rather than revealing a more essential truth or objectivity which is rigidly and repetitively asserted as the ground for subversion, ideology critique which orients itself to the negative moments of a given ideological formation – its gaps, cracks and inconsistencies – identifies points which can be leveraged subversively, directly countering the myriad and varied attempts of an ideological edifice to mystify its immanent negativity. It thus follows its object, responding to its adversary at every turn. While present throughout, in the conclusion I reflect on the practical implications of such a critique and argue that it moves us substantially beyond other approaches.

In order to forcefully, and concretely, demonstrate the extent to which such an approach can both *explain* and *subvert* such a formation, this thesis develops other more specific arguments regarding its empirical subject matter, illuminating it without falling into the traps of other approaches. While unfolding the critical epistemological, explanatory and subversive *potential* of a dialectical materialist

critique of ideology in Chapters 1 and 2, and its suitability to make critical sense of a phenomenon whose significant peculiarity seems to bypass existing approaches, this is *realised* through its mobilisation in analysing F2F. In other words, the more explicitly theoretical argument expressed above only fully realises its validity in terms of 'concrete analysis of concrete situations' (Ruda 2012, p. 293). After isolating F2F as a representative of NGO *ambivalence* in Chapter 2, as a particular site of dialectical contradiction crucial to this ideological movement manifesting both the dream of common humanity and the practice of its disintegration, I mobilise the method and concepts of such a critique of ideology detailed in Chapter 1. This analysis reveals that F2F, *qua* modality of capitalism's 'humanisation', is organised around a central contradiction – between its 'social purpose' of 'doing good' and its need to make a profit – which is displayed at the same time as it is obfuscated. It isn't simply unaware, subjectively misperceiving its own objective conditions, nor rationally co-opted by a malignant force, but actively-yet-implicitly exploits the moments in which its governing illusion of shared humanity breaks down; in the hypersexualised aspects of the encounter, in the paternalistic fantasies of the Westerners power and wealth vis-à-vis their beneficiaries, and in the increasingly precarious *labour* of its employees. Yet, at the same time, it relies on a very real illusion of itself as totally other to the logic of capitalism and its ideal subject-type, as embodying the purely altruistic spirit of charity. However, as I argue, this should not be conceived simply as charity's functional integrity to capitalism, as something which 'decaffinate[s]' it by 'cover[ing] over [its] grimy foundations' (Kapoor 2013, p. 3). Rather, charity sustains an illusion of a beyond to capitalism which is created by the very obstacle in the way of the beyond– the value-form – and ties us ever closer to it.

A central mechanism for the development of this argument resides not simply in the relaying of its content but importantly in the unfolding of its form; in other

words, the logical structure of the thesis, or its *mode of presentation*, which is particularly important for dialectical thought (cf. Cole 2014, p. 152). In both Chapters 1 and 2, as well as between the subsequent three empirical chapters ‘applying’ the approach defended here to F2F, I organise the argument according to Žižek’s ‘Hegelian’ reconstruction of ideology around three moments (Žižek 1994, p. 10-15); first ideology in-itself as explicit doctrine, second ideology for-itself as its external materialisation, and third ideology reflected-into-itself as ideology’s ‘spectral’ or idealised supplement to materiality. While instrumentally useful in organising my empirical data, I argue it also effectively reflects its epistemological commitments into the very form of the argument’s exposition. Whether historical or logical (cf. Arthur 2004, Jameson 2002), dialectics has always required an emphasis on process and on carefully tracing the particular steps in argumentation, which are not simply methodological but also ontological. It plays a crucial role in both staying with the negative, unfolding and unravelling a central contradiction in and through its mystification, and in practicing both the *materialist* and *dialectical* dimensions of this mode of ideology critique, both within and between chapters. The structure allows for the development and presentation of an argument in terms of a *process* which moves not through a gradual incremental set of steps towards a final moment of reconciliation but through sudden breaks, cuts, negations and reversals aiming at contradiction itself. For instance, in Chapter 1 it brings out the twists and turns in the concept of ideology, negating modes of ideology critique sustained by ‘Marx’, only to negate the negation and arrive at a certain Marxian materialism mediated by the epistemological lessons of Lacanian psychoanalysis and Hegelian dialectics. In Chapter 2, it provides the means through which the essential character of NGO ambivalence – not as an epistemological limitation or failure to properly capture the thing but as ontological, as an indication of the incomplete/inconsistent character of the thing itself – is developed. And from Chapters 3-5, its movement corresponds again to a negative-critical procedure

within and between chapters, while also 'boring a hole' (Zupančič 2017, p. 63) continuously deeper into F2F, unfolding or unravelling the central contradiction, with its 'perpetual changing of places...and a perpetual transformation of one [element of the contradiction] into the other' (Jameson 2011, p. 132) that runs throughout.

In Chapter 3, I engage F2F on the 'immediate' ideological level of explicit doctrine, arguing that it is symbolically constituted by a contradictory unity of two opposed determinations. On the one hand, it represents the almost 'transcendental' humanitarian activity of 'making a difference' and 'doing good', allowing the organisations which mobilise it to communicate their values and gain supporters. On the other hand, it represents an extremely cost-effective mode of fundraising. The tension between these two crucial determinations, condensed neatly in the figure of the 'chugger'. Yet, despite such a *symptomatic* contradiction renders F2F being central to F2F, without which it simply wouldn't be F2F, signified at its purest by the 'chugger', however, is a source of trauma for its practitioners, a dirty word, and the contradiction it represents is explained away in two, again contradictory, ways. First, proponents disavow the contradiction by subordinating the 'cost-effective' aspect to a purely secondary, instrumental role of banal necessity. Second, the contradiction, or ineffectually managing the contradiction, is displaced or externalised onto malevolent individuals. What this entails however is a further contradiction, in which the question of managing F2F's contradiction is at once banal *and* dangerous, a utilitarian consideration to be rationally managed *and* a threatening temptation.

In Chapter 4, I engage F2F on the level of its ideological external materiality; practices, rituals, institutional/organisational form, spatiality and so on. I argue that this manifests a disavowed enjoyment of fundraising for its own sake: while the

materiality of F2F appears to manifest the desire towards the prefiguration of 'human' social relations and shared humanity, its economic organisation and concrete measure of success (i.e. getting someone to 'sign-up') displays the drive to produce surplus-value for its own sake, and thus manifests a surplus-enjoyment in fundraising for the sake of fundraising. Therefore, while the various 'human' motifs discernible in its ritual (smile, chat, handshake, individual human stories) may reveal an attempt to 'live their values', its concrete organisation in fact reverses Vaughn's depiction of F2F as when 'capitalism works for good' (2004), instead revealing that 'good works for capitalism'. This however also involves an illicit and transgressive enjoyment in exploiting the gaps of such an ideological notion of common or shared humanity; the exploitation of precarious/affective labour, the exploitation of colonial/paternalist enjoyment, and exploitation of (primarily female) fundraisers' sexuality.

In Chapter 5, I turn to the level of the spontaneous idealisation of materiality, fleshing out the notion that 'good works for capitalism' by interrogating the object of F2F, the 'sign-up'. Drawing on the implicit ambiguity regarding what the sign-up *is* and given my argument in Chapter 4 that the object which stands in for F2F's desire is the 'sign-up', I theorise the sign-up as what Lacan calls *objet petit a*, the impossible object of desire, a 'constitutive negativity' (Özselçuk and Madra 2015, p. 21) which has no positive consistency in itself. However, this object *cannot* appear as such, and is thus subject to modes of fetishisation which attempt to 'fixate the logical object [qua *objet petit a*] onto the empirical object [the sign-up] and conceal the gap that separates the two orders of reality (Tomšič 2015a, p. 173). I identify two fetishes, which appear complementary but in fact repeat its central contradiction, albeit in an inverted and redoubled form. In the first case, the sign-up is fetishised as *utility*, as directly 'doing good'. While this appears to move away from the instrumental calculus of exchange-value and money, it in fact repeats the most basic

fetishisation which underlines the commodity universe by equating use-value and exchange-value. Further, in doing so it presents the former as excessive compared to other commodities, and thus paradoxically reintroduces the previously disavowed aspect of cost-effectiveness. In the second case, the sign-up is fetishised as *charity, as a figure of total or absolute alterity*. However, as 'charity', the 'sign-up' appears simply as a transfer of strictly *money*, and when conceived alongside the prior fetishistic attribution of 'value for money', it is money conceived as capital, as having the 'occult ability to add value to itself' (Marx 2013, p. 103) in complete abstraction from any substantial use-value.

Through this labour, I *realise* the epistemological, explanatory and subversive potential of a dialectical materialist critique of ideology, demonstrating its capacity to make sense of, and critically subvert, a phenomenon whose specificity highlights the weaknesses of other approaches. Indeed, the analysis of F2F reveals that its ideological function cannot be reduced to mere mistaken subjectivity or consciousness, nor a rational process of co-option/PR stunt, nor a simply reformist depoliticisation of neoliberalism covering over its cracks. Rather, F2F is a deeply contradictory phenomenon, closely tied to the contradictions manifest in the value-form of the commodity, between its use-value and exchange-value. It functions through both dissimulating *and* revealing the internal cracks in its practice, where it not only fails to live up to its own idealised image of itself but actively exploits the moments such failure shows itself. F2F explains all of this away, projecting it onto malignant others, yet all the while passionately enjoying it, spontaneously relying on a fetishistic misrecognition of itself which gestures toward an outside to capital but is nonetheless produced by it, and ties us ever closer to its operations.

In the conclusion, I further emphasise the subversiveness of this approach, articulating its practical implications. While its negative character manifests an

immanently subversive edge, such a procedure also entails some implications for considering concrete tactics of subversion. Crucially, this comes down to the psychoanalytic strategy of ‘identifying with the symptom’: in this case, the ‘chugger’. Unlike revolutionary Marxist humanism (cf. Lebowitz 2010, Selwyn 2014, 2017, Veltmeyer and Rushton 2012), the Gramscian ‘war of position’ (cf. Bieler and Morton 2018, McSweeney 2014, Robinson 2013, Rupert 2000) and ‘post-structuralist’ pluriversal politics (cf. Escobar 1995, 2020, Dogra 2012), this conjures up a possible revolutionary subject capable of breaking with the existing formation. This is because it directly counter-acts the disavowed enjoyment of ‘chugging’ which sustains its contradictory existence, offsetting the pacifying reference to ‘doing good’ by insisting on its inhuman core. Rather than wholesale rejecting the practice and its ideological milieu (i.e. human development, capitalism with a human face) which ultimately entails avoiding or circumventing the task of trying to break with the formation, it materializes and mobilises its immanent cracks against itself, and thus represents the place from which a real break can be mounted. ‘Chugger’ condenses the paradoxical condition of revolutionary violence – the curious combination of love (*qua* charity) and violence (*qua* mugging) – and intersects with the classic notion of ‘expropriating the expropriators’ (cf. Marx 2013, p. 535) infused with the Utopian promise of charity.

### **0.5. *Original Contributions***

The contributions of this thesis are both empirical and theoretical, forged in the encounter of these two levels. In this sense, they both condition and illuminate each other, with the exception of the first more prosaic contribution concerning the collection and analysis of original data.

- 1. Interviewing and Observing F2F:** The first original contribution of this thesis is the quite prosaic element of original interviews and fieldwork. I carried out and analysed thirteen formal interviews with ex-fundraisers, fundraising experts, NGO management/charity effectiveness experts, fundraising regulators, city centre governance officials and fundraising company owners. I also spent eight non-consecutive days observing and interacting with fundraisers and the potential donors they encountered, yielding five further field interviews. I thus contribute to the slim empirical literature on F2F (Dean and Wood 2017, Waldner et. al. 2020), providing new empirical insights and connecting it to contemporary global capitalism.
- 2. F2F and ‘commodified compassion’:** While collecting data on F2F through original interviews and direct observation is a contribution in its own right, exploring it allows me to shed some light on other modes of ‘commodified compassion’ within critical literatures on development and globalization (cf. Kapoor 2013, Nickel and Eikenberry 2009, Olwig 2021, Richey and Ponte 2011, Richey 2019, Richey et. al. 2021, Wilson 2015, Žižek 2009) and its ideological role. Unlike my analysis of F2F as another representative of ‘the commodification of care, compassion and sentiment’ (Richey et. al. 2021, p. 1) or the ‘merging [of] business interests and humanitarian sentiments’ (Olwig 2021, p. 1), these literatures rarely connect these phenomena to the apparent opposition between ‘commodity’ and ‘gift’, as distinct objects or modes of exchange (cf. Karatani, 2014) corresponding to different social structures that, from some of the first studies of the gift, have been treated in tension with each other (cf. Mauss, 2002). Moreover, reference to commodification is often understood in somewhat ‘gentrified’ and rudimentary ways – seen primarily in terms of consumerism (Kapoor 2013, p. 71) and shopping (Richey and Ponte 2011) – unrelated to its grounding in the value-form and the problematic of production.



3. **NGOs and ambivalence:** in mobilizing this framework my thesis also contributes to a theorisation of NGOs – who frequent F2F and represent arguably *the* institutional form of such an ideological humanisation of capitalist development and globalisation – as ambivalent (Ismail and Kamat 2018, Helliker 2007), ‘productively unstable’ (Lewis and Schuller 2017), apparently contradictory (Hilhorst 2003, Eagleton-Pierce 2019) or essentially indistinct (Bernal and Grewal 2014). While I don’t necessarily disagree with these conclusions, they are typically framed in terms of a need for further categorisation; a banal fact that has to be recognised before being dissipated through more specific analysis. Such a ‘fact’ is thus essentially ‘left there’, and its explanation avoided. I explain the function of such ambivalence while resisting the temptation to resolve it. However, this only makes sense in light of the dialectical and materialist perspective taken in this thesis. According to this perspective, the incomplete or failed attempt to correctly identify a concept (in this case, the NGO) is not simply an epistemological failure in our attempt to grasp it, but an ontological feature of the thing itself. In other words, NGOs should be seen as *ambivalent as such*, as immanently incomplete, heterogenous and antagonistic, and this is developed, crucially, in and through the product of my final contribution.
4. **Marx, Lacan, Dialectical Materialism and the Critique of Ideology:** F2F, as a manifestation of ‘commodified compassion’ also ‘enacts the myth of “just capitalism”’ (Richey and Ponte 2011, p. 15) and ‘gives credence to the notion of “globalization with a human face”’ (Cheru in Richey and Ponte 2012, p. 139). Through establishing F2F as a modality of these ‘human’ ideologies of development and globalisation – from the ‘humanitarian’ impulse of the development apparatus, to UNICEF’s *Adjustment with a Human Face* and the subsequent *Human Development* paradigm, to humanitarian NGO calls for a more *human* economy (cf. Oxfam 2019a) – and as something that resists

interpretation in the terms of existing ideology critiques of such a 'human' turn, I contribute to the 'critique of ideology' in development/globalisation studies. I develop a new theoretical framework – built on the contemporary dialectical and materialist synthesis of Marx-Hegel-Lacan (cf. Tomšič 2015a, Žižek 2017, Zupančič 2017) – that is capable of critically explaining and subverting the contemporary 'humanistic' permutations of global capitalism, and thus providing an alternative reading of a phenomena which highlights the limitations of existing approaches. On the one hand, such a framework, organized according to a moving tripartite structure dividing 'ideology' into three continents of ideological phenomena or moments of ideological functioning, avoids the reductive – epistemologically, analytically and politically – humanisms (Cammack 2017, Lebowitz 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010, Selwyn 2014, 2017, Veltmeyer and Rushton 2012, Veltmeyer and Wise 2018) and 'functionalisms' or 'reproductionisms' (Bieler and Morton 2003, 2018, Cutler 2005, Gill 1993, 1995, Jessop and Sum 2006, McSweeney 2014, Munck 2010, Ramos 2006, Robinson 2005a, 2005b, 2013, Rupert 2000) of the Marxist literature. On the other, it effectively stages the point of *epistemological* rapprochement between Marx and Lacan – the formal analysis of the commodity – and thus avoids the tendency within psychoanalytic development and globalisation literatures to either almost completely ignore Marx in matters of 'political economy' (Bousfield 2018, Fridell 2014, Sioh 2014) or to potentially repeat the epistemological, explanatory and subversive problems of more 'orthodox' Marxist ideology critique that the turn to Lacan and psychoanalysis attempted to transcend (Kapoor 2017, 2020, MacDonald 2018). Ultimately, putting this framework to work in a concrete analysis of F2F allows for a theorization of such 'human' ideologies as more than mere false representation (e.g. Cammack 2017, Lebowitz 2009, McSweeney 2014, Morton 2006, Selwyn 2014, 2017, Veltmeyer and Ruston 2012), rational co-option of potential counter-hegemonic agents (e.g.

Cutler 2005, Ramos 2006, Robinson 2013, Rupert 2000) or de-politicisation of neoliberalism (e.g. Kapoor 2013). Rather, such a framework both reveals F2F to be a contradictory phenomenon which simultaneously masks and displays this contradiction – deeply connected to the value form of the commodity – and dialectically moves in and through these contradictions to subvert it from within.

So, then, what of this framework? What is the character – epistemological and conceptual – of this instrument this thesis seeks to develop and validate? In other words, what is a dialectical materialist critique of ideology, and how does it relate to other approaches?

# Chapter 1 - The Critique of Ideology: Dialectics, Materialism and Critique

## 1.1. *Introduction*

The title of this chapter, and indeed the primary focus of the thesis as a whole, invokes a set of deeply contentious theoretical debates. While 'ideology' has been designated by David McLellan as 'the most elusive concept in the whole of social science' (1995, p. 1), articulating it with 'critique' appears to double down on such ambiguity. In this chapter I elaborate what I mean by, and what is at stake in, the 'critique of ideology' through forging a critical encounter with alternate manifestations of it 'at work', specifically in relation to the ideologies of capitalism with a 'human face', 'human' development and a 'human' economy. I argue that the way such an ideological formation is treated betrays a set of interrelated theoretical weaknesses, which are particularly germane given the very problematic of the 'critique of ideology', namely, a relative independence of thought to represent an unmediated reality and therefore a (typically implicit) humanist theory of the subject. To overcome these weaknesses, I propose a 'critique of ideology' informed by the dialectical and materialist 'syntheses' of Hegel-Lacan-Marx developed *inter alia* by Slavoj Žižek. I argue that this provides a more convincing 'standpoint' of critique, as well as a potentially compelling set of subversive concepts.

This is a primarily epistemological endeavour, however it also lays the groundwork for its 'application' later in the thesis, as well as setting up the implications of these epistemological considerations for effective critique. Indeed, as I argue in the next chapter (2), these issues with existing 'critiques of ideology' render their critical

appreciation of such 'human' ideologies wanting, with a more consciously dialectical and materialist 'critique of ideology' (as I understand it) being well placed to rectify these issues. It thus functions as a necessary first step to developing an answer to my central research question, allowing me to demonstrate in later chapters the significant extent to which such a 'critique of ideology' can help explain and subvert such 'human' ideologies, as well as beginning the answer itself.

In brief, the approach developed in this thesis does not launch its critique from a standpoint of *full positivity* or *fundamental ontology qua* positively determined objective reality independent of a subject, a feature which detracts from existing approaches to greater or lesser extents. Such a position, despite often explicitly 'materialist' (and dialectical), manifests a latent idealism both in the 'fundamental' description of a substantial capitalist reality and in the particular hidden presuppositions underpinning the 'subject' of the critique of 'human' development. A dialectical materialist critique of ideology however, rather than idealistically positing without mediation a fundamental character of substantial reality and a super subject operating apart from said reality, operates from the standpoint of *negativity as ontological, as constitutive of both subject and reality*. Instead of judging ideology false from a predetermined external metaphysics of capital and humanity, it thus functions by tarrying with the points at which an ideological edifice breaks down, and the subsequent resistance such an edifice exerts to maintain its consistency. Importantly however, while such an approach therefore takes inspiration from and aligns with other psychoanalytically informed 'ideology critiques' precisely *in its distance* from 'Marxist' modes of critique (cf. Žižek 2008a p. 50, Kapoor 2020, p. 19) – indeed, Sections 1.2. and 1.3. of this chapter and Sections 2.1. and 2.2. of the next chapter reaffirm such distance and demonstrate an affinity with such psychoanalytic interventions – it also insists on the importance of *the critique of political economy*. This is because psychoanalytic critiques in critical

development/globalization studies, while capable of engaging ‘political economy’ (cf. Bousfield 2018, Fridell 2014, Sioh 2014), intersecting promisingly with Marxian themes and anti-capitalist praxis (cf. Kapoor 2020, MacDonald 2018, Wilson 2014, 2018), could be strengthened by a closer consideration of some of the central conceptual-methodological innovations developed in Marx’s ‘mature’ critique of political economy. The *dialectics* of fetishism and the value-form provide a sort of umbilical cord for the intersection of Marx and Lacan both in terms of critical analysis and anti-capitalist politics (cf. Tomšič 2015a, 2019a), conspicuously underdeveloped in the praxis of ideology critique within critical development/globalisation studies. Moreover, without this there is a danger of repeating the same ‘positive’ Marxist critique existing psychoanalytic approaches seek to distance themselves from. As such, as emphasised in the introduction, my approach in this chapter and in the thesis more generally is to stage the primary theoretical encounter around the nexus of Marx-Lacan and their respective representatives. While a lot of what I argue in Sections 1.2. and 1.3. is already trodden ground – albeit, definitively expanded upon, with various Marxisms engaged rather than simply the spectre of the ‘classical Marxist’ (Kapoor 2020, p. 19) – given the attempt to more closely integrate the critique of political economy into this framework it is important to properly frame the precise epistemological shifts in this brand of Marxism.

One of the main ways this is integrated is the structure or ‘framework’ for the deployment of ideology critique in this thesis, which follows Žižek’s Hegelian ‘logico-narrative reconstruction of the notion of ideology’ around three ‘continents’ (1994, p. 10).<sup>11</sup> First, ideology in-itself *qua* explicit doctrine/ideas, second ideology for-itself *qua* its external materiality in practices, organisations and so on, and third

---

<sup>11</sup> It should be clear that this is by no means overly prescriptive. The scare quotes around framework are to prevent this being a sort of magic bullet that can be taken and ‘applied’ in distinct contexts. Indeed, as I argue, such a ‘framework’ is compelling precisely in its subversive or negative function.

ideology reflected-into-itself *qua* the spontaneous illusions which emerge from and structure such external materiality. Beyond a mere heuristic for organizing the empirical work of the thesis, this particular form of exposition – noticeably absent from psychoanalytic ideology critique in development/globalisation studies – translates its theoretical (dialectical materialist) commitments into its very mode of presentation. In other words, as Chris Arthur has argued in reference to the role of Hegel's dialectic on Marx's exposition in *Capital*, while it functions 'as an aid to exposition...the *logical* framework [also] has *ontological* import' (2004, p. 9). This is because it reinscribes negativity and movement within both itself and its object. It proceeds through, and is conditioned by, the negative and its mystification, unfolding the myriad and contradictory determinations of its object from a variety of angles.<sup>12</sup>

Such a formula is manifest in the structure of Chapter 2, as well as between the further three empirical Chapters 3, 4 and 5. In this chapter it both provides the framework for the exposition of the concepts I deploy in three final empirical chapters which bear their names (i.e. in-itself, for-itself, reflected-into-itself), but also corresponds roughly to the three extant approaches (and their theoretical devices) I have identified, writing in relation to 'human' ideologies: 'orthodox' Marxist, 'Neo-Gramscianism' and Psychoanalytic.<sup>13</sup> First, on the level of ideology in-itself – ideology in arguably its simplest determination as a set of ideas – existing approaches from more 'orthodox' Marxists (Cammack 2017, Lebowitz 2002, 2003,

---

<sup>12</sup> In this chapter, its object is 'ideology' and its epistemological vicissitudes. In chapter 2, it is the 'human' ideological formation, and in chapters 3, 4 and 5 it is F2F.

<sup>13</sup> Some might have problems with the qualifier 'orthodox' here. I use it mainly to delimitate those more firmly rooted in Marx without supplementary theorists i.e. Gramscians. Further, one might query my exclusion of 'Foucauldian' or 'Post-structuralism' from this list. While I don't ignore such a perspective, I develop my critique of ideology through a closer engagement with certain strands of Marxist thinking for reasons I outlined in the introduction. Nonetheless, in fidelity to the avowedly dialectical approach of this thesis, such post-structuralist theses are *passed through* rather than bypassed, as they raise concerns germane to the effective renewal of ideology critique. As Žižek argues in the introduction to *Tarrying with the Negative*, the solution is not 'a return to the traditional attitude but a new founding gesture which "beats the sophists at their own game"' (1993, p. 4).

2009, Selwyn 2014, 2017, Veltmeyer and Rushton 2012, Veltmeyer and Wise 2018) typically oppose 'human' ideologies to some full positivity or 'fundamental ontology' either of capitalism or the 'real human'. The implication, rendered explicit in Lebowitz, is that these authors, or their inspirations (notably, 'Marx') exist as super subjects, cognisant of reality apart from themselves (including an absolute knowledge of the thorny issue of 'human needs'). While problematic on its own terms – as deeply dogmatic – it also implies an unacknowledged (undialectical) idealism. In response, while I highlight the *epistemological* limits inherent in this approach, I argue that this should not lead to the supplanting of ideology critique with discourse analysis (cf. Escobar 1995, 2007, Ferguson 2012, Ziai 2004, 2015) which merely repeats such assumptions under a different guise. Instead, following Žižek's reading of the move from Kant to Hegel and its intersection with the Lacanian subject, I argue that the properly materialist response should be that such limit should be transposed into an ontological condition, which refigures the central opposition of ideology critique from between ideology and reality, how things appear and how they are in themselves, to between ideology and the Real. Rather than designating a brute reality of being, the Real represents the 'internal impossibility/contradiction of being' (Zupančič 2017, p. 44) which ideology seeks, but fails, to obfuscate. I then introduce the conceptual couple symptom/defence, mobilised in the corresponding empirical chapter (3) as, in the case of the former, the mark of such an immanent impossibility/inconsistency of an ideological formation, and in the case of the latter, the means by which ideology mystifies this impossibility.

Second, on the level of ideology for-itself – a more complex determination of ideology whose employment is represented within the field in Gramsci-inspired approaches (cf. Bieler and Morton 2003, 2018, Cutler 2005, Gill 1993, 1995, Jessop and Sum 2006, McSweeney 2014, Morton 2005, 2006, Munck 2010, Ramos 2006,



Robinson 2005a, 2005b, 2013, Rupert 2000) – I argue that while they emphasise the epistemological implications of the ‘orthodox’ Marxism’s rudimentary materialism, advocating subjective reflexivity and the imbrication of ideology in reality (notably through treating it as having a ‘material existence’) the form of this exposition reintroduces the spectre of full positivity under the guise of stepping out of it. Ultimately it treats the inclusion of ideology *analytically*, but not *epistemologically*. They thus implicitly cast the subject as ‘detached’, capable of distinguishing a positive description of reality and the false representation of it. They mobilise a crude dialectic which resembles Hegel at his most idealist, sublating all apparent contradictions (notably between ‘materialism’ and ‘idealism’) into a higher rational totality (represented by ‘Gramsci’). In response, I elaborate the second conceptual couple mobilized in the corresponding empirical chapter (4); *fantasy/jouissance*. Like the former couple, both operate in a negative epistemological paradigm of impossibility and inconsistency, manifesting a similar ‘back and forth’ dynamic of fixation and disintegration, staging and mystifying, against the background of a fundamental negativity.

Third, on the level of ideology reflected-into-itself, I argue that while a psychoanalytic critique of ideology correctly opposes itself to a certain Marxist ideology critique, it is at this level of ideology – of sensuous supersensuousness, or spectral materiality/objectivity manifested in the fetishism of the commodity universe as ‘exemplary’ of this level of ideology (cf. Žižek 1994, p. 15) – that it appears to have shot too far.<sup>14</sup> While extant psychoanalytic critiques highlight points of complementarity between their approaches and Marxian themes (Bousfield 2018, Fletcher 2018, Kapoor 2020, MacDonald 2018, Wilson 2014, 2018),

---

<sup>14</sup> Indeed, in Kapoor for instance, perhaps the most important exponent of psychoanalytic ideology critique in critical development studies, this opposition is only dealt with minimally. My exposition backs this up more concretely, but also then complicates it, which is especially important given the important place of Marx for this thesis.

and insist on the need to ‘politicise capital’ (cf. Kapoor 2020, p. 26), this is rarely approached in terms of a *formal* analysis of the commodity and the vicissitudes of *value* (Wilson 2018 and Wilson and Bayon 2017 here form an exception). As a result, I argue, their intrusion into ‘political economy’ relates to it as a fully constituted sphere, of which Marx correctly situated its reality albeit without recognizing its ‘libidinal content’ (cf. Kapoor 2020, p. 80). This paradoxically entails the reproduction of some of the same problematic tropes of Marxist ideology critique criticized above. Conversely, I argue that a closer attention to the form of the commodity, the ‘critique’ in the critique of political economy and the dialectics of fetishism and *objet petit a*, provides the critical epistemological point of rapprochement between Marx and Lacan, promising to be a compelling critical method that can effectively ‘politicise capital’ (Kapoor 2020, p. 26), which is especially important for the critique of capitalism with a human face.

## 1.2. *Ideology In-itself: Ideas and Reality, Thought and Being, Subject and Object*

The first continent of ideological phenomena which presents itself concerns what Žižek designates, in Hegelian parlance, ideology in-itself as a ‘doctrine, a composite of ideas, beliefs and so on’ (1994, p. 10), ideology in its most simple determination present in our immediate intuitive comprehension of the term. The concept’s original coiner for instance, Destutt de Tracy (in 1796), was concerned primarily with the creation of a new discipline, a new science, with *ideas* as its object. From within his liberal Enlightenment milieu, De Tracy intended ideology to be ‘genealogically the first science’ (Kennedy 1979, p. 355), and ideas to be studied in a similar way as any other object of scientific enquiry. Yet, it quickly lost its status as a neutral signifier designating a field of study with Napoleon – who did not share the liberal republicanism of De Tracy and his colleagues – pejoratively referring to

those within the newly established field as 'ideologues'. Within the Marxist tradition as well, this 'critical edge' manifested in 'Napoleon's scorn of "cloudy metaphysics"' (McLellan 1995, p. 9) became a crucial element of the study – and critique – of ideology (cf. Larrain, 1983). Indeed, Marx had read De Tracy, unsurprisingly labelling him, due to his liberal political-economic commitments, a 'fish blooded bourgeois doctrinaire' (Kennedy 1979, p. 368). Fast forward to the contemporary moment and 'orthodox' Marxist critics appear to be making a similar point vis-à-vis the ideologies of 'human' development or capitalism/globalisation with a human face (albeit without such polemically colourful language). What unites them is a conception of ideology as 'doctrinaire', a false ('cloudy') body of ideas or thought rigidly held onto despite facts to the contrary, or a subjective misperception of some unmediated objectivity. Indeed, they all lay claim to the (historical) *materialist* tradition in some sense (cf. Cammack 2003, 2017, 2020, Lebowitz 2003, Selwyn 2009, 2014, 2017, Veltmeyer and Wise 2018) and although never really fully explicating exactly what this means, their precise approach to the critique of ideology renders their position clearly.

Take Ben Selwyn for instance, perhaps one of the leading Marxist voices within critical development studies. He begins the introduction to his 2017 monograph *The Struggle for Development* with a reference to George Orwell's *1984*. This world of 'infinite ideological manipulation' (2017, p. 1) depicted by Orwell, Selwyn contends, is in some sense similar to the world of 'contemporary reasoning about development' (ibid) expounded by organisations as varied (and with as varied 'ideological' positions) as the World Bank, The International Labour Organisation and NGOs. In particular, this is down to Selwyn's identification of the work of 'doublethink'; the practice and effect of 'ideological manipulation' employed in *1984* in which someone holds two completely contradictory statements to both be true. For Selwyn, this is manifested in the dual belief that we can end global poverty

while at the same time maintaining certain capitalist fundamentals as necessary prerequisites. While he highlights that this is by no means uniform, differentiating development discourse into two camps – the ‘anti-poverty consensus’ and the ‘anti-poverty counter consensus’ – they ultimately ‘share much common ground’ (ibid, p. 7).

While the latter – comprised of proponents of capitalism/globalisation with a human face or a more human/more ‘humanistic’ development like Ha-Joon Chang, Joseph Stiglitz or Amartya Sen (cf. Chang 2010, Stiglitz 2002, 2009) – realises a ‘powerful, vocal and often popular opposition’ (ibid) to the former’s ‘market fundamentalism’ both share the same fundamental doctrinal propositions: economic growth as the ‘foundation’ (ibid) of human development, the necessity of capitalist property rights, and the (potential) existence of a stable and harmonious class relation in capitalism (ibid, p. 8). Despite differences therefore, they both are marked by their imbrication in the same ‘ideological manipulation’ (ibid, p. 1) of ‘Orwellian doublethink [which] cloaks capitalism's exploitative social relations and their destructive effects in emancipatory clothing’ (ibid, p. 4).

Although the reference to Orwell may be meant to be a helpful introductory gambit, what such an account betrays is a definite set of ontological and epistemological presuppositions. Not only does it conceive of ideology as belonging to the domain of *thought* but, in problematising the holding of two contradictory beliefs at once, he grounds his ideology critique in the principle of noncontradiction. Such a principle attempts to guarantee the ‘consistent and meaningful articulation of thought’ (Tomšič 2019a, p. 10) and orients investigation toward ‘bring[ing] thought and concept into correspondence with reality and prevent[ing] the inmixing of nonsense, error and contradiction in discourse’ (ibid, p. 11). What this adds therefore is a further determination of ideology. It is not simply *thought* but *false thought*, thought

that through its inconsistency fails to come into correspondence with the level of being. Indeed, Selwyn regularly mobilises terms like ‘myth’ to describe such ideology, and entitles his introduction ‘The Big Lie’, which forcefully locates ideology as a mistake of the mind, as a false representation of a more fundamental reality.<sup>15</sup> The conditions of possibility for such an ideology critique are twofold. In order to problematize such false thought out of joint with being one not only must operate from a position of full positivity, but also assume a ‘positive’ theory of the subject, a sovereign ‘detached’ subject capable of rising above its own thought to comprehend the full positivity of being.

Such presuppositions are similarly mirrored in the work of Paul Cammack (2017). Through tracing the discourse of human development, he argues that while it originally expressed a more ‘expansive philosophical stance’ which went ‘beyond the notion of human beings as “instruments of commodity production”’ (ibid, p. 3) its ‘surrender to the logic of capitalist competitiveness’ means that it ‘figures purely as ideology’ (ibid, p. 4). The appearance of ‘human development’ as an alternative to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund centred development consensus is ultimately a *false appearance*, as a set of ‘platitudes’, ‘rhetoric’ and ‘myth’. This is because the differences are ‘*subjectively* substantial, but *objectively small*’ (ibid, p. 7 my emphasis). In such a move, ideology is conceived as a *subjective* misperception of an independent objectivity, which again relies on the same conditions of possibility as Selwyn: both an accurate representation of being and a subject capable of doing so.

---

<sup>15</sup> Of course, this is not to deny the validity (in some cases) of Chomsky-esque arguments concerning purposeful lying/manipulation by elites, or the so-called ‘manufacture of consent’ (Hermann and Chomsky 1988). The point of highlighting this language is to demonstrate ideology’s conceptualisation as opposed to ‘truth’, and what it reveals about the author’s epistemology. In the next chapter, I go one step further and criticise this position – again derived from such an epistemology – on grounds of ‘analytical’ or explanatory value. While I wouldn’t want to suggest anyone belonging to any perceived ‘ruling class’ doesn’t at some point purposefully manipulate, such an argument has its immanent explanatory limitations as well as failing to capture the specificity of this thesis’ empirical domain. Moreover, while implicit throughout, the conclusion will further criticise it on grounds of the politics which arises from it.

Now what is exactly wrong with this? Is this not typical for approaches rooted in Marx's philosophical materialism, that rather than dealing with mere ideas or the 'shadows of reality' one must leap into the study of 'actuality', of how things really are (Marx 1845, n.p)? This is indeed how Veltmeyer and Wise (2018) put it. In the introduction to their recent book *Critical Development Studies*, they argue that the aim of such an approach is precisely to 'unveil and deconstruct the ideology of capitalism' which involves 'highlighting the difference between the myth and reality of capitalism' (ibid, p. 3). Aligning themselves with not only Marx's historical materialism but Auguste Comte's positivism, they claim to deal with 'facts', not idealist 'speculation', emphasising the study of 'objectivity' or 'the study of the world as it is' (ibid, p. 8). However, while seemingly rooted in such a materialist tradition, the presuppositions manifest in such an ideology critique reveal precisely the opposite. In committing arguably the cardinal sin for 'critical theory', failing to heed Adorno's warning that 'fundamental ontology cannot annul epistemology at will' (1990, p. 86), they reproduce a kind of anti-epistemology which fails to reflect on the extent to which our own 'thought' frames such being.<sup>16</sup> This is especially problematic for any critique of ideology because in mobilising such ideology critique you admit on one level that such 'thought' *does* play a role in framing such reality, which then necessitates an answer to why the ideology critic's 'thought' does not also deserve the title 'ideology'. Put differently, the epistemological certainty of the above authors – that they assume a direct ability of subjects to accurately represent objective reality – is put into question by any 'critique of ideology' in the first place which assumes precisely the capacity of thought to

---

<sup>16</sup> What we thus see is the Borromean knot in theory asserting itself in the inseparability and interdependency of epistemology and explanation – despite eschewing the questions of epistemology in favour of the positivist tendency towards appropriate, and objective/neutral, categorisation of an object, epistemology rears its head. And vice versa, implicit positions on epistemology infuse explanatory schemas, the limitations of which will be more thoroughly evaluated in Chapter 2.

mediate our relation to being. Indeed, for Louis Althusser's theory of ideology – which will be briefly encountered in the following section – 'the category of the subject is constitutive' (1994, p. 129).

Without this reflection, such an ontology-without-epistemology ultimately resembles a dogma, a positive foundation without a foundation, a pre-critical metaphysics which resolutely clings to some absolute statement on reality (already given to us by 'Marx'). As such, this comes dangerously close to a sort of idealism. That is, by trying to 'isolate reality "as it is in itself," independently of the way we relate to it, the more this In-itself falls back into the domain of the transcendently constituted' (Sbriglia and Žižek 2020, p. 11). By claiming to have direct unmediated access to reality as it is apart from human perception/synthesis, they imply precisely a mind or thought external to this reality. Thus, this anti-epistemology is not only problematic on its own terms but is also an index for the 'hidden idealism' (Žižek and Daly 2004, p. 96) of such an 'orthodox' Marxist ideology critique, a hidden idealism which becomes more apparent in the specific character of 'full positivity' deployed to critique 'human' ideologies.

### *1.2.1. Capitalism and Humanity*

After identifying the development apparatus as a whole as indoctrinated by pervasive false thought valorising capitalist social relations, the next step in Selwyn's argument concerns its qualification. Drawing on 'Marxist political economy', he moves to identifying 'why and how capitalist exploitation, appropriation and oppression are the core causes of global poverty' (2017, p. 20). Paul Cammack and Veltmeyer and Wise also rely on such a procedure. In the former, such a designation of human development as ideology relies precisely on its imbrication with capitalism, insofar as capitalism, as Marx already expressed

over 150 years ago, does not set humans free, but only sets capital free (Cammack 2017, p. 19). And in the latter the knowledge required for highlighting the difference between the truth and ideology of capitalist development is to be found not simply in the facts, but the facts generated from the ‘fundamental sources of this knowledge’ namely ‘a theory constructed by Karl Marx about capital and the workings of the system’ (Veltmeyer and Wise, 2018, p. 3).

While the absence of epistemology gives such a reference to Marx’s fundamental knowledge an idealist tinge, given my approach’s grounding in the ‘critical edge’ of ideology established by Marx it would be hard to deny that such a ‘human’ capitalism *is ideology*. As I understand it, and as will be explicated later, capitalism and its social relations *are* built on exploitation, and the critique of political economy *is* indispensable in accounting for and subverting this. The difference, however, is that the former authors (e.g. Cammack 2017, Selwyn 2014, 2017, Veltmeyer and Wise 2018) amongst others (Lebowitz 2002, 2003, 2009), supplement this *negative* point with a *positive* one – without which the former would not work – namely a particular ontology of the ‘human’.

Certainly, the way the above authors relate to ‘human’ development is not simply dismissal. Rather, highlighting the exploitation inherent in capitalist social relations is typically preceded by some sort of valorisation of ‘human’ development. Ben Selwyn for instance designs the second half of his book around the search for struggles that might ‘generate real human development’ (2017, p. vi). Similarly, in a prior extensive engagement with key thinkers of ‘human’ development or the ‘human’ economy – Amartya Sen and Karl Polanyi – while praising their move towards ‘human’ metrics or towards ‘embedding’ the market in the substance of (‘human’) society, he argues that because of their neglect of the exploitative capital-labour relation, the essential determinant of human development (2014, p. 208),



their proposals can never amount to 'real human development' (2014, p. 24). For Paul Cammack as well, the argument appears to implicate some Other human development beyond its capitalist instantiation, against which the latter is judged as false. Indeed, for Cammack the invention of human development had some emancipatory aspects, it was only corrupted through its articulation with expanding capitalist social relations. Human development thus becomes split between its 'bad' manifestation of being 'shaped by the logic of global capitalism' (2017, p. 4) and its 'good' potentiality of offering an outside to global competitiveness and a fuller notion of a human being outside the confines of what capital bestows on individuals. As such, the dominant (capitalist) comprehension of human development ultimately amounts to simply 'a way of saving capitalism...[which aims] to give a human face to capitalist development that is anything but human' (Veltmeyer and Rushton 2012, p. 2).

The metaphysics of capitalism is thus accompanied by the positivity of an external *ideal* of 'human'. Michael Lebowitz – a crucial interlocuter for both Selwyn and Veltmeyer – deserves a special mention in this regard. He is perhaps best known for his reconstruction of Marx's *Capital* on the grounds of attempting to complement its 'one-sidedness' – its focus on the logic of 'capital' – with a 'political economy of the working class' (2003). According to Lebowitz, Marx's seemingly exclusive focus on *Capital* makes the world of capitalism appear as a 'world of things and inhuman forces, of one-sided subjects (if, indeed, there are any subjects) – rather than living, struggling beings attempting to shape their lives' (ibid, p. viii). The effect is a reduction of the worker to an 'abstract proletarian' rather than a 'socially developed human being' (ibid, p. vii). This is not only problematic for Marxists, insofar as it places the stress on capital's internal dynamics as the explanation as to how it 'will come to an end' (ibid, p. vii), but also for 'post-Marxists'. By not recognizing the worker as subject, as a fully developed human being with a specific nature (rather

than a narrowly defined 'abstract proletarian') it inevitably gives way to the argument that their 'needs' are in principle satisfiable within capitalism. It feeds the discourse of 'capitalism with a human face – capitalism humanized by the struggle of workers' (ibid, p. 168).

Recognising the worker as a 'human being [and thus] as subject' (ibid, p. 187) by contrast, identifies a fundamental opposition between capital and the worker (*qua* human subject) and thus constitutes the theoretical prerequisite for diagnosing capitalist human development as ideological, and the condition of 'real human development'. The former entails a scenario in which 'the logic of capital dominates; and that logic goes counter to the needs of human beings for their own development' (2009, p. 43).<sup>17</sup> It 'deforms people...cripples us as human beings' (ibid, p. 51). The latter on the other hand 'oppose[s] the logic of capital with the logic of human development...[which will] remove the barriers to our full and complete development' (ibid, p. 59).

What Lebowitz makes explicit therefore is precisely the romantic humanism underpinning such 'orthodox' Marxist critiques of 'human' ideologies, or a theory of the subject which conceives of the 'human' as fully centered or reconciled with itself, capable of determining its 'true' and 'false' needs. The positive metaphysics of capitalism, with all its idealistic presuppositions of a super subject apart from

---

<sup>17</sup> For Lebowitz, there are two distinct 'political economies' in capitalism, corresponding to the capitalist and the worker respectively. While the former functions according to the circuit M-C-M', or money invested to produce more money, the latter functions on the more homeostatic circuit of trading commodities to get other commodities or C-M-C (2003, p. 73-81), an analysis enthusiastically supported by Selwyn (2017, p. 40). While they both emphasise that these are distinct but mutually constitutive, presupposing one another, in their conception M-C-M' dominates the latter, while C-M-C constitutes a more 'natural' activity geared towards the maintenance of communities, albeit playing the functional role of reproducing the labour-power necessary for M-C-M' in the first place (ibid, p. 41). While this has the limitation of reproducing the problematic humanist paradigm of alienation, as I fully develop in Chapter 5 it also fails on both explanatory and subversive levels. The cycle C-M-C is not a more authentic mode of exchange but the 'inner fiction' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 63) of the process M-C-M'.

material reality is thus supplemented by an equally idealist invocation of the abstract 'human', master over itself and the world around it.

For some, such theoretical presuppositions within this more 'orthodox' Marxist critique of ideology means that such a paradigm should be progressively abandoned. While 'post-structuralist' critical development scholars have highlighted the analytical limitations in such an approach (to be discussed in Section 2.1.1.), they also reject it based upon its epistemological realism or 'objectivism' (Escobar 1995, 2007, Ziai 2004, 2015). Certainly, for Foucault – one of the primary interlocuters of this tradition – the concept of ideology both 'always stands in virtual opposition to something else which is supposed to count as truth' and refers 'to something of the order of a subject' (Foucault 1980, p. 118).

Indeed, this is a claim which stands up given the review I have just outlined. From the perspective of the Kantian problematic of human finitude (cf. Foucault 1986, p. 89, 2008, p. 121) and the limits of discourse/representation (cf. Ziai 2015, p. 9) the modern subject of cognition was 'erased' (Foucault 1973, p. 387) along with its capacity to stand above its own partiality to accurately represent reality as it really is. The methodological corollary was the supplanting of ideology critique with the newer paradigm of discourse analysis.<sup>18</sup> However, while appearing to correct the problematic epistemology of traditional ideology critique, its own position of enunciation undermines its explicit enunciated content. According to Žižek, the post-structuralist mantra that 'there is no meta-language', denying the positing of such a 'meta-linguistic vantage point' (Laclau 1996, p. 218) to oppose to ideology, implies the precise opposite. Such an utterance cannot account for its own position

---

<sup>18</sup> Jenny Edkins is someone who deserves a mention but doesn't quite fit the typology here. Despite employing Žižekian ideology critique, it is cast under the banner – despite Žižek's own protestations to the contrary (2008a, p. xxx) – of 'post-structuralism' (1999). While her particular brand of analytic can't be simply aligned with these other – more Foucauldian than Lacanian – post-structuralists, as we will see in Chapter 2, she suffers from some of their explanatory deficits.

of enunciation; in making such a claim one implicitly does invoke some 'meta-language' which states that there is no meta-language, a position 'not menaced by the decentered textual process' (Žižek 2008a, p. 173).<sup>19</sup>

So then, how can a properly materialist ideology critique be re-actualised without falling back into the pre-critical, and idealist, epistemology of the 'orthodox' Marxists? And what does mean for the critique of ideology's immediate aspect as an explicit configuration in 'doctrine' or official 'ideas'? Following Žižek, it all turns on a particular dialectical reversal, which paradoxically for a materialist, relies on a detour through German Idealism.

### *1.2.2. Epistemology to Ontology, and the symptom*

Kantian epistemology, against the implicit and explicit epistemology of the ideology critics discussed above, places human finitude front and centre. The simple fact that we exist within our particular time and space renders our knowledge inherently particularistic, incapable of operating on a universal plane in which things appear to us without that particularistic mediation. Human finitude signals a gap in the subject's capacity to know itself and the world in any direct or unmediated sense.

---

<sup>19</sup> Take Aram Ziai for instance, one of the most important exponents of such a Foucauldian perspective in critical development studies, who, while denying the existence of a meta-language or access to reality apart from its (discursive) representation, still 'clings to the claim of correctly describing social reality' (2015, p. 9). Word and thing are consequently more directly identified, thus producing the effect of a meta-language – the pure language of being (Tomšič 2019a, p. 12) – in the guise of stepping out of it. Effectively, as Žižek notes in *Less Than Nothing* 'one cannot avoid ontology' (2012, p. 195). Juan Telleria's recent intervention into the critical analysis of human development is thus along the right lines: For Telleria, existing 'post-development' research has focused too much on epistemological questions, neglecting the ontological dimension. Indeed, in a similar argument to the one furthered here, he argues that 'any epistemological approach to an object implicitly accepts specific ontological assumptions' (2020, p. 8). However, while such a recognition is welcomed, it overly stresses the distinction between his 'ontological' post-structuralism and the prevailing 'epistemological' post-structuralism, as if Escobar's Foucauldian discourse analysis was not precisely concerned with the development apparatuses 'ontologisation' of its epistemological categories and thus the creation of the 'Third World'.

Rather than stop here however, Žižek's reading of the move from Kant to Hegel is not a positive overcoming of this finitude but a more radical reassertion of it. As opposed to asserting the impossibility of our knowledge to provide an accurate representation of the positivity of objective reality – or the (im)possibility of telling whether it would be more or less accurate – this impossibility is reflected back into the thing itself: 'what looks like an *epistemological limitation* of our capacity to grasp reality (the fact that we are forever perceiving reality from our finite temporal standpoint) is the positive ontological condition of reality itself' (Žižek 2008c, p. 158). In other words, Žižek's reading of the Hegelian critique of Kant is less a case of an overcoming of epistemological limit, and more of bringing out what is implicit within such a formulation. What starts as a limit in the subject's knowledge – generated out its situatedness *within* material reality – is taken to imply that the subject, as part of 'reality' or 'being' is not fully itself, stained by a certain *ontological negativity*. The limit in the subject's knowledge implies a limit in being, the 'human subject' is therefore never fully One, and is defined precisely by such negativity. This is ultimately what is meant by Hegel's dictum concerning the 'Absolute not only as substance, but also as subject' (cf. Žižek 2008a, p. xxii). While the former implies something at one with itself, a One-all of inert substance, thinking this 'also as subject' introduces a basic negativity to such substance which renders the former non-all or incomplete.

Thus, contra the humanist critique of ideology which sees its end as the retrieval of the human being with some absolute potential or unbounded positivity – with intimate-unmediated knowledge of itself, its needs, and the world around it – there is not a positivity of 'human subject' but rather only a dimension of its negativity. The human is not a simply substance but is also a subject, which is at once internal but nonetheless heterogenous to such substance. Indeed, as highlighted in the

passage from Hegel's *Realphilosophie* which Žižek mobilises on many occasions in his elucidation of a negative theory of the subject (cf. Sinnerbrink 2008) the human being is 'this night, this empty nothing, that contains everything in its simplicity—an unending wealth of many representations, images, of which none belongs to him' (Hegel, cited in Žižek 2006b, p. 44).

However, while the turn from Kant to Hegel is a crucial 'philosophical' move in this regard, the novelty of Žižek's re-actualisation of ideology critique also lies in his reading of Lacan together with this Hegelian-dialectical emphasis on negativity. Crucially, this also involves a similar 'overcoming' of the post-structuralist emphasis on the disintegration of the subject in signification/discourse (cf. Johnston 2008, Žižek 2008a, p. 171-174). While there is an acceptance of the subject's constitutive alienation in language it retains the *negative* moment of this constitution. Rather than disintegrating subjectivity into a 'mirror image of the subject-positions produced within a given discursive regime of power-knowledge' (Vighi and Feldner 2007, p. 151), the subject is instead conceived as the negative leftover of the process of symbolisation. While the subject only exists through the symbolic, it nonetheless fails to be fully articulated within it. For instance, in re-reading the Althusserian problematic of interpellation – the process in which ideology interpellates individuals into subjects (of ideology) – Mladen Dolar insists that the problematic of interpellation be derived not around its positive success (the extent to which it is productive of subject and world) but rather its failure or negative moment (1993).

While this has significant *political* implications regarding the place from which the subversion of 'human' ideologies is mounted, which will be discussed in the conclusion, what matters here is that this new *epistemological* paradigm shifts the function of ideology and the mode of its critique. Ideology is not a question of false

thought masking a more fundamental positivity of being but rather a more 'total' positivity masking its immanent impossibility or inconsistency. As Žižek states, the difference between the more 'orthodox' Marxist conception of ideology versus its Lacanian manifestation concerns the shift from viewing it as a '*partial* gaze overlooking the *totality* of social relations' towards '*a totality set on effacing the traces of its own impossibility*' (2008a, p. 50). In the former, as we saw in Section 1.2.1., 'human' development is ideological insofar as its proponents don't accurately represent some fundamental aspect of reality as a whole. It acts as a partial, or limiting view missing the capitalist totality (i.e., excluding a fuller conception of 'human' outside the partiality of what capitalism allows humans to be, or excluding the exploitative dimension of capitalism). In the Lacanian-Hegelian sense however, such 'human' ideologies are ideological insofar as they are set on effacing not a positivity hidden behind, but a *negativity*, its own point of impossibility. Its critique, therefore, far from being sustained by a positive, external determination of being *qua* being (for instance, the fundamental logic of capitalism, or the transparent self-knowledge of the human subject), works toward the immanent negativity of an ideological edifice, countering its attempts at cleansing itself of its own impossibility.

However, does this cleansing of any reference to some 'base' material reality not condemn us to a sort of solipsistic idealism which abandons external reality? The answer of course is no. As already argued, it is the presumption of speaking about material reality itself apart from our own interpretation of it which entails the idealistic presumption of the subject's externality to such material reality (i.e. subject apart from substance, capable of seeing all of it as it truly is). As such, all the talk of *negativity*, of concepts or language, is the royal road to a proper materialism, which according to Zupančič, can only be a *dialectical* materialism, in which rather than 'matter' operating as a first principle (which looks suspiciously abstract-idealist) it

is grounded 'in the notion of conflict or contradiction...[or] the primacy of a cut' (2017, p. 78).<sup>20</sup> While the brand of idealist-materialism manifested in the more 'orthodox' approach to ideology critique discussed previously marks a *realist* epistemology in which the critic speaks the language of being to the falsity of invocations of 'human' development, the implications of this critical notion of *dialectical* materialism marks instead an epistemology of the *Real*. This key psychoanalytic concept nicely condenses the precise lesson of this crucial shift in accent on questions of realism and materialism, insofar as the Real, which one might consider to be brute material reality is in fact 'not a being, or a substance, but its deadlock, the point of its impossibility' (ibid, p. 43).

What exactly embodies this impossibility in an ideological edifice however, with regards the level of ideology in-itself *qua* its explicit conceptual-discursive existence? The answer is the symptom. Indeed, following on from the psychoanalytic thesis that the subject is a negativity, a void of its (social) structure, that it exists in the failure of ideology, Mladen Dolar points out that the 'symptom' is involved in the 'starting point of analysis' insofar as it is the 'most obvious manifestation' of the 'flaw' (1993, p. 77) that is the subject. However, we should be wary of articulating such 'symptomal' analysis in terms of a depth model whereby the symptom reveals a more fundamental positivity lying beneath. Rather, within this epistemological frame, the symptom manifests as a surface *torsion, inconsistency or contradiction* which points instead to an underlying negativity (the Real). The symptom represents such a negativity *within* the circuit of discourse. However, such negativity nonetheless persists, and thus it must be also thought together with its mystification. Indeed, the trauma of the Real (of the symptom) functions as the

---

<sup>20</sup> And hence, as Frank Ruda argues, it is precisely the 'dialectics [which] saves materialism from becoming idealism' (2016, p. 151). While materialism on its own implies the prioritisation of matter over ideality, it is dialectics which introduces the emphasis on an 'inconsistent (non-All) mixture' (Žižek 2014, p. 1).



'bone in the throat' which 'triggers the very repetitive process of symbolisation' (Žižek 2000, p. 224). Its paradoxical status means that while it is disruptive, it also functions as a support to the subject's being, and as such various modes of symbolic gentrification or resistance stand in to maintain its consistency. Modes of defence (cf. Tomšič 2019a, p. 146-147), such as *disavowal* in which some acceptance of the trauma coincides with explaining away its properly traumatic element, and *displacement*, which externalises such trauma onto an outside (both of these are mobilized in Chapter 3) generate new configurations of symbolisation which need to be understood but also critically subverted.

Analysis of the symptom and its modes of symbolic domestication thus provides an appropriate corrective to the epistemological limitations of extant critiques of development and globalisation doctrine. And as I suggest in Chapter 2, and more concretely demonstrate in Chapter 3, such an approach both avoids the concomitant reductionism inherent to the epistemology of 'orthodox' Marxist ideology critique, taking such an ideological form seriously on its own terms, while also maintaining its subversive element, thus showing the extent to which it can help both explain and subvert F2F *qua* modality of such 'human' ideologies. However, while the symptom is typically conceived as a (pathological) symbolic formation, it is also closely tied to enjoyment, a bodily affection best discerned in practices. Indeed, a properly dialectical *materialist* critique of ideology cannot confine itself to a strictly symptomatic analysis of ideology's explicit symbolisation but must account for its effect in its external materiality and its performative effects. The dialectical materialist emphasis on the 'cut', on the reflection of the gap between one's own cognition of reality (thought) and reality (being) into reality itself, similarly implies that 'there is no "pure" language of being' (Tomšič 2019a, p. 10), no language without both its object (Žižek 2008a, p. 177) and those who speak it. Such an emphasis on ideology's external materiality is perhaps best represented in the

literature in the Gramscian tradition. While an improvement on the 'orthodox' Marxists discussed here – Gramsci himself warned of the danger that 'by trying to be ultra-materialist one falls into a baroque form of abstract idealism' (1971, p. 467) – they nonetheless repeat the some of the same epistemological issues already discussed, albeit in the guise of stepping out of them.

### 1.3. *Ideology For-itself: Enjoyment and Being*

The second continent of ideological phenomena, ideology for-itself, concerns its external materiality in practices, rituals, the built environment, institutions and so on. In Žižek's commentary, this is typified by Althusser's notion of 'ideological state apparatuses' and their ritualistic performativity (1994, p. 12). In Althusser's exposition, this is above all not only analytical or empirical but ontological, entailing a crucial materialist (but not dialectical...) move, in which '[i]deas have disappeared as such...to the precise extent that it has emerged that their existence is inscribed in the actions of *practices* governed by *rituals* defined in the last instance by an ideological apparatus' (ibid, p. 128 my emphasis).<sup>21</sup> What comes into view with this second continent therefore, is the implicit materiality of ideology in-itself; far from mere 'rhetoric' or a 'big lie', distracting subjects from a more fundamental truth, the particular 'ideas' propagated are embedded in material structures, which reproduce (and are reproduced by) ritualistic performances which are by no means reliant on the strictly rational.

Yet, while Althusser is of negligible influence within contemporary development and globalisation studies, Gramsci – whose argument concerning the

---

<sup>21</sup> He starts his investigation into ideology by paraphrasing Marx in saying 'every child knows that a social formation which did not reproduce the conditions of production at the same time as it produced would not last a year' (1994, p. 100). He thus immediately links the problematic of ideology to a material production, efficacious and intertwined with materiality, in terms of a certain empirical fact.

public/ideological effects of ideology embodied in institutions and practices Althusser spoke to and developed (ibid, p. 111) – has had considerable influence. Adam David Morton for instance, an important populariser of Gramscian theory (often with regular co-author Andreas Bieler), has, throughout his career, spent a great deal of time arguing for a view of ideology as on the side of reality, as ideas themselves having both material effects and a material existence. Whether criticising alternative strands of Marxism (Bieler and Morton 2003), the so-called ‘critical’ International Political Economy (IPE) of explicitly anti-historical materialist theory (Morton 2006), or various strands of constructivism and post-structuralism (Bieler and Morton, 2018), the same quote from Gramsci regarding ideologies being ‘real historical facts’ (Gramsci cited in Bieler and Morton 2003, p. 480, 2018, p. 70, Morton 2006, p. 68) and having a material existence continually re-appears (Bieler and Morton 2003, p. 479, 2018, p. 51-75, Morton 2006, p. 68). Indeed, as Gregor Moder puts it in his book length study on the relation between Hegel and Spinoza, the Althusserian lineage of ideology – with which the Gramscian approach shares many features – could be summed up with the inversion that ‘ideology does not *distort* reality because it *constitutes* it’ (2017, p. 98). For Stephen Gill (drawing on Robert Cox), this hinges on the difference between *historical economism* and *historical materialism* (1993, p. 21). While the former exudes the positivism of the ‘economy’ and its essential laws, the latter recognises the ‘realities’ of ‘thought’ and ‘ideas’ and the subsequent importance of their production (1993, p. 26). Bieler and Morton similarly emphasise – on multiple occasions (2003, p. 476, 2018, p. 37), again drawing on Cox (1989, p. 39) – the need to think production in broader terms to encompass the production of meanings, knowledge, morals and so on. However, does this further determination of ideology overcome the epistemological limitations of the more ‘orthodox’ Marxist ideology critique? While an improvement to a degree on the Marxists engaged previously, both the implicit and explicit ontological presuppositions reaffirm the humanist conception of

subjectivity and thus the opposition between 'mere false thought' and a fully constituted reality.

### *1.3.1. Common Sense, Passive Revolution and Hegemonic Bloc*

As perhaps a testament to the potential improvement a Gramscian approach offers to its more 'orthodox' Marxist comrades, not only has their engagement with such 'human' ideologies been more considerable (cf. Bieler and Morton 2003, 2018, Cutler 2005, Gill 1993, 1995, Jessop and Sum 2006, McSweeney 2014, Munck 2010, Ramos 2006, Robinson 2005a, 2005b, 2013, Rupert 2000) but such depth is further conditioned by the more extensive set of conceptual devices they have to draw on. With regards the critique of such 'human' ideologies, the (closely related) major concepts mobilized are those of 'hegemonic bloc', 'passive revolution' and 'trasformismo'.

Let's take 'hegemonic bloc' to begin with, 'one of the most fundamental innovations of Gramsci's political theory' (Gill 1995, p. 402). According to Stephen Gill, it is defined by its combination of 'ideas and practices with particular conditions of existence which are more or less institutionalised...[and it] allow[s] us to come to make sense of the way practices and understanding come to pervade many areas of social life' (ibid). While the 'creation of such a bloc presupposes opposition and a means for incorporating or defeating it in a process of struggle' (ibid, p. 400), such incorporation can occur on the level of incorporating potentially counter-hegemonic ideas, as well as organisations and elites. In other words, its function relies on the dual processes of coercion and consent. While counter-hegemonic challenges may be pacified through their physical incorporation into extant structures, certain aspects of their ideas may be absorbed into a distinct but nonetheless similar

'common sense', consolidating the 'formation of an ever-more extensive ruling class' (ibid, p. 401).

Closely related, and particularly germane to Gramscian critique of 'human' ideologies of development and globalisation, are the notions of 'passive revolution' and 'trasformismo'. Clare Cutler for instance mobilises the latter to denote the process in which the activity of a hegemonic bloc attempts to 'sustain globalisation by giving it a "human face"' (2005, p. 540). It reflects a process through which 'the ruling group constitutes itself through the absorption of subordinate groups...the process by which opposition and resistance to hegemony is absorbed into the dominant ideology' (ibid, p. 536). Leonardo Cesar Souza Ramos similarly, argues that the "'humane face of globalisation" discourse, [is] connected to the strategies of action of big corporations and their "corporate responsibility", and the capture of certain NGOs by the historical globalist bloc [which] characterize[s] a "global passive revolution" strategy performed by this dominant bloc' (2006, p. 156). William I. Robinson as well reads the ideology of 'globalisation with a human face' as a process of expanding the ruling class, of 'saving the system' (2005b, p. 319) from both 'itself and from more radical responses from below' (2013, p. 7).

What is implied in this diagnosis of such 'human' ideologies as embroiled in a process of passive revolution or *trasformismo*, in which an extant hegemonic bloc aims at the 'co-option' (Rupert 2000, p. 146), 'capture' (Ramos 2006, p. 156) or 'absorption' (Cutler 2005, p. 536) of counter-hegemonic challenges? And what does it entail/imply for Gramscian epistemology? Paradoxically, despite claims that such Gramscian approaches are beholden by a certain 'structural-functionalism' (which will be noted in Section 2.2.1.), such language implies a thoroughly 'agent-centred' conceptualisation of ideological manoeuvring. The process of co-optation is not without a subject, it is always connected to an agent and implies a distinct level of

intentionality on behalf of those co-opting and those co-opted. It is not simply a question of ideological osmosis, in which a once radical idea simply happens to lose its radical edge after being almost spontaneously incorporated into the ideology of the dominant bloc. Rather, such a process of incorporation is connected to some intentional consciousness which activates such 'co-option'. Ronaldo Munck for instance, characterises allusions at the need for 'social and human development' or 'globalisation with a human face' as mere 'token gestures' (2010, p. 212). Jessop and Sum (2006) similarly, in constructing their own version of a cultural political economy which 'Gramscianizes Foucault', cast the 'rubric of "globalization with a human face"' as something that has 'been selected and promoted by transnational elites as an ethico-managerial strategy to reconnect economic policies with moral norms and to reconfigure them into managerial visions and practices' (2006, p. 172).

Mark Rupert puts this in even clearer terms. While he concedes that there may be 'alternative meanings' associated with such a 'human face' (2000, p. 148) and that it may 'represent openings to progressive global politics' (ibid), the alternative meanings themselves are organised around specific material configurations which consciously employ these meanings in line with their rational intentionality. On the one hand, when in the hands of the dominant hegemonic bloc, such a 'human face' ideology is a process of co-option: 'a public relations strategy aimed at making the global dominance of corporate capital more palatable...wedded to some very modest institutional reforms'. On the other, when advanced by the UNDP or the 'NGO activist', it represents a 'more ambitious set of proposed reforms aimed at making market-based globalisation socially responsible and equitable' (ibid).

While those like Bill Clinton and Klaus Schwab (of the World Economic Forum) advocate globalisation with a human face as a cynical public relations strategy, an instance of passive revolution or 'social reform initiated from above for the purpose

of forestalling popular political mobilisation' (ibid), those like NGOs and the UNDP *are really trying to generate such popular, progressive political mobilisation*. As such, the line between the progressives and the agents of ideological co-option is defined according to the intentions of the active agents shaping this process. What this implies is not simply an idealist presupposition concerning the prioritisation of intentional consciousness in analysis, but also a theory of the subject as fully centred, capable of being aware of one's own interests or having those interests intentionally distorted. Indeed, the classic Gramscian formula of hegemony as a mixture between coercion and consent (cf. Morton 2006, p. 63) implies a liberal subject, master of its own mind and body that either freely chooses (consent) or has to be forced against its will (coercion).

Unsurprisingly therefore, despite differentiating Gramscian analysis in terms of its conscious place for 'ideology' as *more than simple false thought*, the shades of such an implicit 'super subject' shine through in their repetition of the 'orthodox' Marxist standard strategy of repudiating it as a false representation next to some Other full positivity. Cutler for instance conceives of such a 'human face' ideology as a 'mythology' (2005, p. 539), and Robinson, in perhaps the clearest instance of such dismissal, remarks that 'it is unlikely, in my view, that a global capitalism "with a human face" is possible – indeed, [it is] an oxymoron' (2013, p. 11). Despite recourse to Gramsci, they retain the realist-humanist epistemology of the 'orthodox' Marxists; as both Morton (2006) and McSweeney (2014) make clear, 'capitalism with a human face' figures merely as merely false *perception* engendered by 'effacing rather than facing class struggle' (Morton 2006, p. 63, 65) or the non-inclusion of the 'ontological centrality of class' (McSweeney 2014). These implications however, when looking at the Gramscian theoretical interventions more directly, are rendered more clearly.

### 1.3.2. Taking Epistemology Seriously? Dogma and Dialectics

In each of (Bieler and) Morton's various expositions of the Gramscian approach to the question of ideology, there is a telling absence or shift of emphasis. In expounding the conceptual framework associated with such critique, explicit reference to 'epistemology' and 'ontology' are conspicuously absent.<sup>22</sup> In Bieler and Morton's critique of a particular brand of Marxism ('Open Marxism', cf. Bonefeld 2014) for instance, each term only appears once (2003, p. 483, 490) and in Morton's later critique of 'critical' literatures on IPE each term is completely absent (2006). As a result, the crucial argument regarding the 'reality' of ideology reads as having strictly *analytical* consequences: they treat the reality of ideology as its efficacy, its real-world impacts, not in terms of its accurate representation of reality. Indeed, while recognising the 'epistemological significance' of Gramscian hegemony – insofar as it 'revolves around shaping intersubjective forms of consciousness' (2003, p. 483) – it is merely alluded to. They do not at any point question the extent to which such 'forms of consciousness' might preclude access to being as such, implying that the subject of ideology critique idealistically exists outside the social totality.

This is similarly repeated in their most recent book (Bieler and Morton 2018), which arguably represents the culmination of their theoretical labour in establishing Gramsci as a crucial resource for critique in critical development/globalisation studies. For them, the defining feature of their (Gramscian) approach is its *philosophy of internal relations*. Rather than seeing particular objects or spheres in the world standing next to each other in external relation (for instance in the 'billiard ball'

---

<sup>22</sup> It is also worth noting these are also absent from Bieler's own critical reflections on the material structure of ideology in conversation with 'cognitivism' and 'constructivism' (2001).



model), a philosophy of internal relations rejects dualisms between material and ideal, economic and political, content and form. It holds that the world exists as a *totality*, as a 'self-forming whole' (ibid, p. 9), and thus provides 'a revolt against the *violence of abstraction* through which concepts all too commonly become fetishized, or treated as things' (ibid, p. 10) rather than as part and parcel of the totality of social *relations*.

However, the way this appears and the way it is asserted bypasses the question of subjective limitation in both epistemological and ontological terms. While 'ontology' is far from absent in this work, it by far outnumbers any reference to epistemology (in the introduction epistemology appears once to ontology's seventeen references). And given the former's sequential precedence in the book's conceptual exposition, it provides an elementary exercise in 'fundamental ontology' – as a description of the full positivity of being – insofar as the assertion of some fundamental reality *precedes* a discussion on the extent to which our own conceptuality / signifying structures, or our own finitude, prohibits such statements. Indeed, such a philosophy represents an establishment of a 'vantage point from which to view, consider, link and rethink a set of relations as parts of a self-forming whole' (ibid, p. 22).

Such a 'vantage point' thus appears as a privileged position for understanding reality in its totality, and one that bypasses the situatedness of knowledge. Indeed, when they come into contact with arguments surrounding such epistemological limitation (for instance, the post-structuralist act of 'denying ontological foundations' (ibid, p. 64)), the response is to ultimately avoid the epistemological limitation which prohibits assertion of ontological foundations and engage strictly on the level of analysis. For instance, they argue that poststructuralism can't come

to terms with capitalism (ibid), ends up 'inscribing ontological centrality to ideas' (ibid, p. 65) and can't answer the 'who' of power (ibid, p. 66).

While these may all be valid points, their argument bypasses the very issue of epistemological limitation through illegitimately asserting some base truth, and again treats such epistemological questions as an issue of more or less appropriate explanation, thus already presuming a 'detached' researcher. In other words, on being faced with the somewhat Kantian move identified in Section 1.2.2. – in which post-structuralism denies the existence of some truth outside dominant significations/discourses/transcendental categories – instead of facing this challenge head on or immanently, they regress to a pre-critical mode of argumentation which ultimately relies on *assertion* of fundamental ontology. Thus, despite an explicit recognition of epistemological questions, distancing themselves from sharp positivist separations between subject and object (ibid, p. 48) and recognising a degree to which being is 'mediated by thought' (ibid), they nonetheless pass over the inevitable difficulties this raises for ontology (as being *qua* being) to outline another fundamental ontology, another dogma and thus another idealism. Again, this reaffirms the importance of considering theoretical interventions in terms of the Borromean knot of epistemology, explanation and subversion. Moreover, while rooted in the apparently dialectical concern for totality, such an ontology of internal relations understood as a 'self-forming whole' (2018, p. 22) regresses 'from the properly dialectical notion of totality to a corporate model of the social Whole' (Žižek 2011, p. xvi).

Indeed, such an undialectical regression is also apparent in their nominally dialectical 'method'. Just like their passing over of epistemology in the name of a

philosophy of internal relations, dialectics functions as an unreflexive tool, consequently repeating both the idealistic pretensions of Hegel's dialectic at its most crude, and the positivistic comprehension of dialectic as 'asymptotic'. In the first instance, while Morton is at pains to tell us how Gramsci 'transcend[s] the established poles of traditional idealism and materialism' (2005, p. 448), this just brings them together in one and the same thing, and thus assumes an ultimately undialectical unity between the two, one that, quoting Gramsci, 'goes beyond...while retaining their vital elements' (ibid). While appearing dialectical, it reproduces a crude dialectic associated with a final moment of sublation in the absolute, taken here in the figure of Gramsci, as if his theoretical corpus represents the culmination of the dialectical movement. For Žižek's materialist Hegel however, the dialectic is not a mechanical overcoming ('transcending') of two opposites by their reconciliation into a synthesised whole. For Žižek, what Hegel means by the negation of the negation is not a 'kind of 'superseding' of negativity [sublating the failures of both the thesis and anti-thesis into a positive, complete synthesis] but the experience of the fact that *the negativity as such has a positive function*' (Žižek 2008a, p. 199). Such negativity is what disappears from view in this Gramscian 'synthesis', and such a disappearance is what reveals the ultimately idealist character of this Gramscian 'philosophy'.

Yet, on the other side of this idealism of 'Gramsci the concept' we get the positivism of dialectic as 'asymptote'. In writing on the 'epistemology' and 'ontology' of Gramscianism (again, in which the latter figures considerably more than the former), Stephen Gill argues that the process of knowledge generation within such a framework functions through a

‘method, to use the metaphor of Engels, [which] enables the theorist to approach a more comprehensive and consistent explanation of social reality, rather like the way an asymptote approximates a straight line (an asymptote is a curve which increasingly approximates, but never touches, a straight line stretching to infinity)’ (1993, p. 28).

While emphasising the impossibility of successfully reaching the end point, arguing that this process should remain ‘ongoing’ (1993, p. 29) he nonetheless holds up ‘Gramsci’ and his historical materialism as the best realisation of this dynamic. Thus, while preferable to Bieler and Morton’s hypostatisation of Gramsci as the point of absolute knowledge, as the final synthetic moment which puts all discussions between materialism and idealism to bed, in recognising his theory as the closest approximation he implicitly retains a fidelity to a substantial truth in itself, through which such an approach can be judged to be closer than others. Yet, as was established in Section 1.2.2., Žižek’s reading of the Hegelian reversal of Kantian finitude is not that we are forever doomed to miss some substantial objectivity, but that ‘the insufficiency of knowledge, its apropos of the truth, radically indicates a lack, a non-achievement at the heart of truth itself’ (Žižek 2006a, p. 48). As he puts it with respect to Lenin’s supposedly materialist advocacy of the ‘asymptotic process of approximation’, this misses the fact that the distortions of reality ‘occur precisely *because* we are part of reality and therefore do not have a neutral view of it’ (Žižek and Daly 2004, p. 96-97). Incompletion concerns substance as well as subject; ‘being’ as well as ‘thought-processes and knowledge systems’ (Gill 1993, p. 45). However, how does this figure in terms of the critique of ideology’s external materiality? What critical concepts can be deployed which manifest such an epistemological paradigm?

### 1.3.3. *Fantasy and Jouissance*

As we saw in Section 1.2.2., far from critiquing ideology from an external standpoint filled up by the assertion of a fundamental ontology, the Hegelian-Lacanian reversal of epistemological limitation into ontological condition renders its mode of critique as revolving around outlining the contours of such ontological incompleteness (notably condensed in the symptom). Conversely, the operation of ideology moves from a false partiality masking a more fundamental totality of being, to a totality overlooking the partiality of being. This is the properly dialectical and materialist point: passing through subjective-epistemological finitude can only occur through the reflection of thought's inadequacy into being.

However, while ideology 'fills out' the immanent contradictions and gaps of (social and subjective) being, it simultaneously never completes this operation. As I showed vis-à-vis the symptom, it at the same time reveals and dissimulates ontological incompleteness, it functions as a point of closure at the same time as revealing a point of rupture, and in order to mask such rupture the subject typically resorts to various sorts of linguistic gymnastics (e.g. disavowal and displacement) in order to maintain its consistency-in-inconsistency.

While symptoms are themselves manifest in repetitive practices, their identification and analysis are primarily on the more strictly symbolic/textual level. With regard to the level of ideology for-itself or the external materiality of ideology, the concept of fantasy emerges as relevant. Not only is this something which is primarily operative in the 'doing' rather than the 'knowing' (Žižek 2008a, p. 27), but something that concerns a radical disjuncture rather than their happy 'internal relational' synthesis. Although despite the term's implication as being mere falsity,

of some dream world apart from brute reality, its epistemological content is precisely the opposite. Fantasy is in fact on the side of reality, 'framing' it so that social reality appears consistent and meaningful. It is thus opposed not to reality, but to the Real, to the immanent breaks in being. As such, any outlining of a fundamental, positive ontology like in those critics we have seen so far, is itself a manifestation of fantasy: the social ontology of internal relations, bringing the 'base' realities of materiality and ideality and their interpenetration together into a unified whole, provides an elementary attempt construct a consistent and meaningful reality, to hide the immanent impossibility of closure. Similarly, while the vision of the dialectic as asymptotic appears to react against such closure, it nonetheless implicitly relies on it, placing Gramsci's historical materialism as the closest approximation of substantial objectivity. The fantasmatic aspect of this figuration of dialectic as asymptotic however reveals that fantasy is much more ambiguous than screening such impossibility, in that it often 'creates what it purports to conceal' (Žižek 2008b, p. 5). This is captured nicely by Glyn Daly's (2019) recent extension of Laclau's (1996) intervention into the problematic of ideology critique. In some sense following the same reversal as I explicated in Section 1.2.2., Laclau claims that ideology does not consist in masking or distorting some extra-discursive or extra-conceptual reality but instead in 'the very notion of extra-discursive closure' (Laclau *ibid*, p. 299). However, for Daly this represents 'more of a beginning rather than an end' (2019, p. 87). Not only is 'closure' itself ambiguous, in that it can sometimes operate in the guise of its opposite (as could be said for Gramscian philosophy), but it also doesn't 'result from a straightforward negative exclusion establishing a positive inside' (*ibid*). Rather, from the perspective of psychoanalysis and Hegelian dialectics 'what is excluded is always some form of excess [or lack]...that simultaneously persists as inherent' (*ibid*).

This is because it mediates the subject's relation to *jouissance*. Although translated as enjoyment – which I will use interchangeably throughout this thesis – it is not to be understood in such common-sense terms. Rather, such enjoyment 'belongs to the Real' (ibid 2019, p. 101); it is itself impossible to reach, representing in some sense an impossible fullness denied by our alienation in the signifier. But while such fullness is impossible, such enjoyment persists in surplus, 'smaller hits of *jouissance*...[which] reflects the destabilizing excess that is both constitutive of the socio-symbolic order and threatens to overrun it' (ibid). In this sense, Žižek argues that fantasy has both a 'beatific side, a *stabilising* dimension which is governed by the dream of a state without disturbances', or the dream of a full *jouissance*, and a '*destabilising* dimension' (1999, p. 192) as it brings us closer to the Real of enjoyment.

These aspects of fantasmatically organised enjoyment correspond to the two ways in which a subject relates to it. Again, each conveys a certain missing of the mark. First, in desire, there is an intentional relation to a specific object which comes to count as 'it' for the subject, promising the fullness of *jouissance*. However, due to our alienation in the signifier, this is ultimately an impossible relation: it is 'both heterogenous to and inseparable from the signifying order' (Zupančič 2017, p. 24). Nonetheless, while such full *jouissance* is impossible, the repetitive activity of missing this goal, of repeating the desiring circuit, brings a *surplus-jouissance* which characterises the libidinal relation of drive. Unlike desire, which permanently defers satisfaction, metonymically shifting from one object to another under the presumption that each instantiation of the object of desire will be 'it', drive solicits a surplus-satisfaction in 'the repetitive cyclical movement of itself' (Daly 2019, p. 132). However, this does not mean it dispenses with all reference to some purpose or reason. Indeed, going back to the Zupančič quote above, while *surplus-jouissance* and its articulation in fantasy are indeed *heterogenous*, they are also *inseparable*. As Samo Tomšič emphasises – paraphrasing Marx in *The Grundrisse* – the

psychoanalytic notion of the drive is '*not* the hunger that swallows raw meat but the hunger that reaches satisfaction through the *montage* of cooked meat, cutlery and table manners' (2015a, p. 124). In other words, the drive indeed is all about its own pointless movement, but this functions in and through a *montage* of articulations and practices which generate the semblance of such a 'point'.

The epistemological implications of fantasmatically (ideologically) structured enjoyment, and the tension between its two modes, for the critique of ideology are thus twofold. First, it represents a further move away from the epistemological paradigm of false cognition, and of critiquing ideology by exposing a substantial reality. Not only does this render the procedure of exposing falsity impotent – which will be further developed in the thesis' conclusion – but destabilises the image of the rational, detached, and objective subject. Contra the appeals to 'real human development' (Selwyn 2017, Lebowitz 2002, 2009, Veltmeyer and Rushton 2012) and the concomitant positing of human *needs* (Lebowitz 2002, 2009, p. 43-44, Selwyn 2017, p. 27) we always minimally subjectivise these needs; in other words, we desire. Or, to put it in Hegelian terms, 'the passage from substance to subject is a one-way street' (Comay and Ruda 2018, p. 14): one cannot thus simply dismiss 'subjective' appearance as distinct from its 'substantial' truth, they are inextricably intertwined. Second, insofar as desire misses its mark, and drive attains an excess or *surplus-jouissance*, it retains the negative thrust of critique of ideology. *Jouissance* as a bodily materiality tied up with discourse, signification and the intersubjectivity of fantasy, doesn't neatly overlap the two levels of materiality and ideality in *relation* but rather in *non-relation*. The ambiguity of fantasy – as both concealing and revealing the Real – and *jouissance* – as rooted in both lack and excess – renders an ideological edifice *out of joint*. Indeed, the psychoanalytic notion of the inherent transgression, central to fantasy and its relation to the symbolic order, takes into



account the gap that separates an individual's knowledge and their, often transgressive, activity.

As will be demonstrated in Chapters 4 and 5, while the materiality of F2F is indeed organised around various 'human' motifs, its concrete organisation concerns the generation of an abstract 'sign-up'. In other words, its enjoyment is conjoined to, while out of joint with, its explicit aims. Yet, given the generation of sign-ups is also then equated with the production of surplus-value, this necessarily brings us to the relevance of Marx's critique of political economy.

#### ***1.4. Ideology Reflected-into-itself: Capitalism, fetishism and the Critique of Political economy***

The third continent of ideological phenomena concerns the paradoxical space in between ideology in-itself as 'ideal' doctrine and ideology for-itself as external materiality and is the moment where the intersection of the critical projects of both Marx (at his most Hegelian) and Lacan is most keenly felt. Indeed, according to Žižek, the exemplary notion here is precisely that of commodity fetishism – arguably *the* Marxian notion, with libidinal connotations – insofar as it doesn't refer simply to the in-itself of bourgeois ideology but also not strictly the for-itself of its external materiality. Rather, it refers to a sort of objective illusion, located in the spontaneity of doing which reveals the materiality or reality of capitalist abstractions as well as the abstractness of capitalist materiality. And while this ultimately functions to 'destabilise this old dualism' it by no means enacts 'any kind of synthesis' of these elements (Jameson 2011, p. 44). Rather, as discussed in the previous discussion of the idealist elements of Gramscian dialectics, such a 'synthesis' should be 'understood as the point where difference appears rather than disappearing' (Cesarale 2016, p. 209).

This reference to commodity fetishism however brings up the broader critical framework from within which it was theorised, namely the critique of political economy. Unfortunately, this is something notably absent in the vast majority of psychoanalytic ‘ideology critiques’ in critical development/globalisation studies.<sup>23</sup> While by no means silent on a *critical interpretation of political economy* and elucidation of Marxian themes, the critical epistemological elements of such a *critique* of political economy are not always developed. This is not only problematic given the conscious – or even homological – place this particular Marx has had in the development of psychoanalytic ideology critique (that is, the ‘mature’ Marx of *Capital*, of fetishism and the commodity-form cf. Žižek 2006b, 2008a, Tomšič 2015a, 2019a, 2019b) but also because it risks replicating the ‘hidden idealism’ (Žižek and Daly 2004, p. 96) of the objectivist-humanist epistemology of the Marxist version of ideology critique they explicitly locate themselves against. This third step therefore, while developing out of the prior two, marks a crucial element to be considered in renewing a dialectical materialist critique of ideology, retroactively forcing the return to Marx as emblematic of this ideo-critical paradigm.

#### 1.4.1. *Psychoanalysis and ‘Political Economy’*

The interventions aiming to demonstrate the value of psychoanalysis for development studies have typically been couched in a critique of not only mainstream development thought but also its ‘critical’ varieties. Ilan Kapoor’s

---

<sup>23</sup> Japhy Wilson is a notable exception here (cf. 2018), with his theory of the Real of Capital which draws together the Marxian dialectic *qua* value theory and the Lacanian notion of the Real. The work of Özselçuk and Madra (2005, 2007, 2010) similarly represents another rigorous attempt to think value theory together with enjoyment. Rather than simply evidencing the role of the libidinal economy within the political economy, their recourse to value-theoretical innovations – i.e. exchange-value and use-value, abstract/concrete and surplus/necessary labour – correctly situates the political/libidinal economy in relation to its inherent contradictions, and thus provides the ground for critique.

introduction to a sub-theme of *Third World Quarterly* on psychoanalysis and development for instance, poses such an intervention as a 'rejoinder to [Marxist] political economy and post-development' (2014a, p. 1119). Six years later, writing in a book which represents the continuation of the project of demonstrating the value of psychoanalytic criticism to critical development studies, this opposition becomes more refined. While such a rejoinder is still issued to both camps, it is the Foucauldian inspired 'post-development' which constitutes psychoanalysis' 'main intellectual adversary' (2020, p. xii), with Marxism valorised for its 'uncompromising opposition to global capitalism and inequality' (2020, p. xii). Nonetheless, and very much in line with what I have argued previously, extolling psychoanalysis' value for critical development studies has also involved juxtaposing its version of ideology critique with the 'Marxist' version. Psychoanalysis, unlike Marxism, avoids the epistemological pitfall 'which implies a privileged, neutral point from which one can distinguish "objective reality" and "false consciousness"' (Kapoor 2014, p. 1133). Instead, as highlighted previously, psychoanalytic epistemology (especially in its encounter with Hegelian dialectics) does not posit an outside to the ideology one engages in critique, instead trying to outline its Real core, expressed through 'the gaps in ideologically constructed reality' (ibid) which are revealed 'from *within* the belly of the beast' (ibid my emphasis). Again, this is not an 'idealist ontology' but instead a "'dialectical materialism"' which emphasises the 'gap (the Real) or lack in reality' (2020, p. 6-7).

Yet, despite this explicit statement of difference, in practice – particularly in making certain 'Marxian' arguments – this doesn't always follow. In Kapoor's (2017) more extensive critique of post-development for instance, he argues that not just their concrete proposals for social change but also their very theoretical edifice, by refusing the articulation of a gap to discourse, 'essentially amounts to capitalism with a human face' insofar as it avoids addressing the 'key social antagonisms that

pit the poor against the wealthy or the proletariat against the bourgeoisie' (2017, p. 2675). As such, while his astute critical analysis of their moralistic invocations of local struggles as an 'anxious defence against shaky foundations' (2020, p. 42) is grounded in psychoanalytic epistemology, his critique of 'capitalism with a human face' in this regard appears little different to Adam Morton's criticism of 'liberal idealist IPE' (2006). Capitalism with a human face, as ideology, is problematically opposed to some positive empirical sphere of antagonistic groups.

A similar lapse occurs in Kapoor's book length critique of celebrity humanitarianism, or the ideology of global charity, again subsumed under the rubric of 'capitalism with a human face' or a 'humanized capitalism' (cf. 2013). In reference to charity shopping or compassionate consumerism, he introduces commodity fetishism – perhaps the Marxian concept par excellence – to denote a process in which 'inanimate objects take on a strange and mysterious power...[and] as a result, commodities become more meaningful and important than people or social relations' (2013, p. 71). Now, while not completely erroneous, this is not only a significant contraction of the idea of commodity fetishism but comes dangerously close to the humanism of the Marxists already reviewed. In other words, it opposes capitalist fetishism as the rule of the objects, in which 'relations between people appear as relations between things', to another level of 'people or social relations' (2013, p. 71, also cf. Žižek 2008a, p. 19, 31). While later work improves on this, recognising its role in the mystification of exploitation (Kapoor 2020, p. 106, 132) as a particular symptomatic moment which introduces negativity into the apparent equivalence of the commodity universe, the comparatively brief coverage of *commodity* fetishism compared to its Freudian-Lacanian lineage runs the risk of again slipping back into an objectivist epistemology with matters 'political economy' which opposes the fetishistic mystification to the positive reality of the labour process.

To be fair to Kapoor, these remain slippages in an otherwise excellent psychoanalytic critique of 'post-structuralist' reformism which I almost fully endorse (and will be further emphasised in the conclusion to this thesis) and an empirically rich investigation into similar ideological themes that concern us here, but such slippages nonetheless gesture at a real problem, the rectification of which constitutes one of the primary contributions of this thesis. While he (rightly) insists on both the capitalist character of development, the relevance of Marxian themes such as commodity fetishism, and an anti-capitalist politics characteristic of a distinctly Marxist approach, this is less grounded in the *epistemological* rapprochement between Lacan and Marx's critique of political economy than in the *explanatory* and *political* union of psychoanalysis and 'Marxist political economy', in how psychoanalytic insights on libidinal economy 'supplements' or 'complements' 'Marxist political economy' in explanatory efficacy, and how it might inform anti-capitalist politics (cf. 2020).

While this is problematic on its own terms, delinking the theoretical Borromean knot in its consequential reproduction of a 'detached' and thus idealist subject capable of picking and choosing according to best description of reality/political vision (thus mirroring the Gramscians reviewed in the last section), it also relies on and fails to deconstruct a figure of 'Marxist political economy' as an objective description of how capital functions. As such, such an approach comes close to mirroring the more orthodox Marxists discussed Section 1.2., merely infusing such a 'fundamental ontology' of capital with an "'unconscious flavour'" (Bianchi 2015, p. 114). In other words, while definitely valuable in analytical/explanatory and political/subversive terms, Kapoor does not adequately develop the epistemological and thus critical connections between psychoanalysis and

Marxism, moving his intervention dangerously close to the very sort of Marxist ideology critique most psychoanalytic interventions are located against.

Take for instance his intervention bringing the concepts of enjoyment, desire and drive to bear on the function of capitalism. His aim in such an intervention is 'to underline the importance of (unconscious) social passions in the socio-economic system so central to development — capitalism' (2020, p. 76). While capitalism relies on the libidinal relation of desire at the level of consumption (a plethora of commodities which promise to be 'it', which fail but keeps the subject desiring, as if they next commodity will really be 'it'), it is the relation of drive which adheres to capitalism at a more fundamental level. As noted in Section 1.3.3., while desire has a certain level of 'intention' toward a specific object, drive entails an almost blind 'compulsion to repeat' (Kapoor 2020, p. 76) for its own sake. And Kapoor, drawing on previous interventions by Žižek and Dean, conceives this in terms of what 'Marxist political economy' has highlighted as capitalism's tendency towards accumulation for accumulation's sake (ibid).

While this may be partially correct – indeed, it will be a theme of Chapters 4 and 5 – it misses a crucial moment: It moves straight to the level of production, or content, while skipping the level of representation, or form. What is thus avoided, implied by his invocation of a 'Marxist political economy' as opposed to a Marxist *critique* of political economy, is the *formal* element of critique. Insofar as his argument centres on what 'Lacanian Marxists such as Žižek are adding here', namely 'the unconscious libidinal *content*' (ibid, p. 80 my emphasis), it reads as a sort of 'economics', providing the libidinal 'supplement' or 'complement' which explains capitalism's compulsion towards ever expanded production. It therefore seems to more closely resemble Marx at his most problematic, as providing an objective description of how capitalism functions (against which the 'false consciousness' of

capitalism's humanisation can be judged), albeit with the added emphasis on its libidinal content.<sup>24</sup> In other words, his argument verges on the danger identified by Alain Badiou – and reaffirmed by Ötselçuk and Madra (2010, p. 324) – concerning the rapprochement between Marx and Lacan: the danger that the libidinal will be simply fastened onto the economic, producing a new form of 'economism' in the language of the 'energetic of drives' (Badiou 2009, p. 126).<sup>25</sup>

Again, Marx's (negative) critical emphasis on the *form* is what is missed. And not only is this particular insight absolutely crucial for any theorisation of both surplus-value and the operation of fetishism (if they operate as critical, subversive concepts as opposed to simply explanatory ones), but it provides the crucial point of *epistemological* rapprochement for a Lacan-Marx 'synthesis'. While various psychoanalytic ideology critiques in critical development studies, in a similar manner to Kapoor, highlight the capacity of psychoanalysis to add the 'libidinal' element to studies on 'political economy' (cf. Bousfield 2018, Fridell 2014, Sioh 2014), this is almost always conceived in terms of one theoretical perspective being capable of articulating insights on such an 'ontic' segment of reality.<sup>26</sup> The relationship between psychoanalytic ideology critique (a 'critique of libidinal economy') and political economy is between the properly 'ontological' method of the former and the specific 'ontic' aspect of the latter, externally related to other sectors of reality.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> It is worth noting that I am not suggesting Marx had nothing to say about how capitalism functioned. Rather, that these conjectures were rooted in the process of *critique*. As soon as this element is ignored, the space for Marx is reduced to him being, to paraphrase Lacan, an 'orthopaedist of the economy'.

<sup>25</sup> Indeed, their critique identifies a quote from Žižek in *The Parallax View* concerning how 'drive...propels the whole capitalist machinery' (2006b, p. 61) – which for Kapoor seems to function as a sort of summary of the connection between psychoanalysis and political economy (cf. Kapoor 2020, p. 79) – as a precise representative of such an undialectical approach in which a 'psychoanalytical concept of drive is grafted unto an unreconstructed Marxian framework' (Ötselçuk and Madra 2010, p. 341).

<sup>26</sup> 'Ontic' here derives from Heidegger's philosophy, and is opposed to 'ontological' insofar as the latter speaks more generally about the structure of being, whereas the former concerns specific elements of or within being.

<sup>27</sup> What this misses however is the dialectical and materialist lesson concerning the relation between multiplicity – the multiple 'sectors' of reality that appear to us, and which are materialised

Not only is the critical explanatory value of Marx's critique of political economy lost – as we will see in Chapter 2 – but also its 'subversive dimension' (Žižek 2017, p. 5), in its dialectical *intersection* with Lacan. In the psychoanalytic development literature, it is a political economy *complemented* or *supplemented* by Lacan, as opposed to a critique of political economy *traversed* by Lacan and vice versa. And as I argue in Section 1.4.2. and Section 2.3.1. in the next chapter, not only does this inclusion enrich Lacanian ideology critique without replicating the fundamental ontology of capital with a libidinal twist, but potentially provides immensely fruitful subversive concepts for the critique/subversion (and explanation) of *capitalist* ideologies. So how does this work?

#### 1.4.2. Marx with, or divided by, Lacan: Value, between *Objet petit a* and Fetishism

In existing defences of psychoanalytic ideology critique for development and globalisation studies, alongside and closely related to its – quite correct – opposition to 'Marxist' modes of critique, another classic caveat is regularly repeated. In order to differentiate it from Freud's supposed biological essentialism, the emphasis is placed on Lacan's re-reading of Freud through the prism of structural linguistics. This then becomes a crucial mechanism by which the full positivity of an 'ultimate reference point' (Kapoor 2020, p. 5) outside ideology is rejected – and by extension, the rejection of Marxian ideology critique. Not only does the separation of signifier from signified imply the impossibility of a neutral or whole description of 'reality' apart from our representation of it, but it also means we are thoroughly 'denaturalised' (ibid). There is no firm external point of 'human nature' or non-

---

in distinct institutional and spatial configurations (we work in a *politics* department, not an *economics* department; we are on the fourth floor while they are on the third) – and being. The reification of multiplicity – of different sectors of reality – is reaction to the primordial division of the Real. As Žižek argues, the apparent "plurality of universes"...arise against the background of a certain impossibility or deadlock...the impossibility of 'reconciling' Being and the One, the Real and the Signifier...There are many worlds because Being cannot be One, because a gap persists between the two' (2012, p. 52).



mediated 'human needs' (Cammack 2017, Lebowitz 2002, 2003, 2009, Robinson 2013, Selwyn 2017) authorising the denunciation of capitalism's humanisation as mere falsity.

However, such a juxtaposition between the epistemology of Marx's 'objectivist' political economy critique and Lacan's 'symbolic/linguistic' critique risks undermining the very rapprochement Kapoor seems to defend (in both theoretical *qua* capital and drive, and political *qua* anti-capitalism terms), as well as obscuring the role of Marx in Lacan's teaching more generally. While Lacan's psychoanalysis did indeed 'return to Freud' through the insights of Saussure's structural linguistics, according to Samo Tomšič's recent book on the relation between Marx and Lacan (2015a), the latter 'returned to Freud' a second time, but this time through Marx. And crucially, the ground for such a 'return' is less a case of the 'libidinal content' of capitalist production and consumption but rather its *form*. For Tomšič, it all hinges on the relation between the autonomy of the signifier and the autonomy of value, or the logical 'continuity, equivocity, inseparability between commodity language and human language' (ibid, p. 35).

While Saussure and structural linguistics analysed human language in terms of a split between the signifier and the signified, Marx began his analysis in *Capital* with the formal split in the commodity; its 'twofold' character between its exchange-value and its use-value. In each case, the former (i.e. signifier, exchange-value) are defined as difference in relation to other signifiers/values, in abstraction, autonomous or 'barred' from the signified or use-value. Indeed, as Tomšič underscored, such a relation was not lost on Saussure, who saw the connection between linguistics and political economy as both sciences of value (ibid, p. 27). However, this connection only went so far. According to Tomšič (and Lacan), Marx

went a step beyond Saussure, incorporating the problematic of production and the subject into the autonomy of the signifier / value.

Insofar as Saussure and structural linguistics more generally constructed its object as language minus speech (ibid, p. 32), it is not only without temporality and thus production – appearing as static and ahistorical, cleansed of internal movement, oscillation and so on – but also without a subject. In order to construct such an object of knowledge, the element of actual speakers – which introduce temporality, and thus change and instability – must be excluded otherwise such a system of differences reveals itself to be inexistant, in a constant state of flux and instability, fracturing into a ‘multiplicity of “private” languages’ (ibid, p. 38).<sup>28</sup> Saussure could ultimately only account for the problematic of *representation* and thus production of meaning, insofar as the differential play of signifiers at any one moment in time provides a means by which the arbitrary relation between signifier and signified is fixed. Without temporality however, he could not account for ‘the production of linguistic *value*’ (ibid, my emphasis), or the production of *surplus* – itself, like (exchange-)value, conceived in quantitative terms. While this is of course connected to the production of meaning, it is irreducible to it ‘even if it parasites on it’ (Tomšič 2015c, p. 63).

With Marx’s critique of political economy however, we get the problematics of representation and production thought together. The production of surplus-value occurs, and this is the crucial epistemological point, not just through representation but through the gap in representation, the ‘minimal gap between use-value and

---

<sup>28</sup> As Zupančič puts it, while Lacan takes the Saussurian-structuralist lesson concerning the bar between signifier and signified, ‘if this were all, the signifying field would be a consistent system and, as the structuralist motto goes, a structure without a subject’ (2017, p. 61). While this ‘convincingly does away with the notion of a “psychological subject,” of intentional subjectivity [as is the tendency in the authors reviewed so far] using language for its purposes, mastering the field of speech’ (ibid) it also releases us from any subject whatsoever. Yet, the category of the subject is crucial for the critique of ideology, both in terms of its practice and that which it produces.

exchange-value' (Tomšič 2015b, p. 31). While exploitation happens in the labour process, in this understanding it gets a primarily non-moralistic meaning. It is not just about the horrors of the hyper-exploitation of sweatshop labourers (cf. Kapoor 2020, p. 106) but rather the gap between the use-value of their labour and its representation in (exchange-)value. And similarly, that which is produced – the surplus object, *objet petit a* – bears the repetitive mark of this contradiction as it is produced in and through it. It is an 'impossible object', thought at the torsion or failure of representation, as that which 'disrupts the function of meaning' (Noys 2015, p. 75). In this sense, both 'psychoanalysis and the critique of political economy are conditioned by [the same] epistemological paradigm' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 73) with critique taking a negative character, 'pushing discursive consistency to its limits' (ibid). Indeed, as many have noted, Marx's critique should be conceived less in terms of an alternative economics and rather a negative critique of the *discourse of political economy* (Walker 2015, p. 207). Labour-power and surplus-value operate as 'two figures of negativity in the social link' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 10) that is the smooth space of commodity equivalence, two points which 'stick out' of the homogenous surface of the commodity universe. The proletariat and class struggle thus stand not for some positive human-being-denied-human-beingness (Lebowitz 2003, 2009, Selwyn 2017), nor for a fundamental a priori determinant of the social (Selwyn 2014, p. 208) nor for some classic opposition between the fully constituted, and empirically identifiable, identities of capitalist and worker (Kapoor 2020, p. 48). Instead, they stand for a structural negativity within the universe of commodities and value, already minimally contained within the contradictions of the commodity-form.

As such, while psychoanalytic interventions into the critique of globalisation and development ideologies may be somewhat correct in rejecting a certain image of 'Marxist political economy' (cf. Bousfield 2018), this reading by no means exhausts

'Marx'. And in the case of a Marx traversed by Lacan – where the critique of the value-form, crucial to the location of surplus-value/*jouissance*, takes a central place – not only do we further avoid the lure of opposing capitalist humanisation to 'real humanisation', but we are also armed with a critical method and concepts vital for the critique of capitalism's own 'humanist' ideologies.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, alongside the negative procedure of identifying a gap in value, this approach also provides us with a critical reading of (commodity) fetishism.<sup>30</sup> Far from simply signalling the 'importance' of things over people, or a mere false idea obscuring the real thing, in this reading it serves to mystify the negativities necessary for the production of value.

Fetishism as a critical concept functions to mystify the production of value's origin in exploitation, primarily of a structural gap, and to 'fixate the logical object in an empirical object' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 173) or *objet petit a* (surplus-value/*jouissance*) onto an empirical commodity. Such fetishism thus strives to tie the levels of use-value and exchange-value together, giving the impression that exchange-value is a more or less accurate representation of some base use-value. However, while Marx's reference to use-value's 'fantasmatic' status is ambiguous and can indeed be read in such realist epistemological ways that end up 'foreclosing the dimension of desire and hence the subject' (Tomsic 2015, p. 119) by physiologically presupposing some unmediated base human need against its illusory appearance, the Lacanian import moves us significantly beyond this. While the relation between use-value

---

<sup>29</sup> In Ilan Kapoor's recent edited collection on psychoanalysis and globalisation (2018), two interventions relate to Marx in such a way that misses these lessons. Dan Bousfield (2018), in the collection for instance reduces Marx to a theoretician of brute price, unable to explain the production of fantasies, later falling back on appeals to an external ideal of human development. Eleanor MacDonald (2018) similarly, while on the face of it attempting to provide some level of rapprochement between Marxian critical theory and psychoanalysis, fails to overcome a latent humanistic desire for 'more human' economy.

<sup>30</sup> This is notably absent from Gramscian readings (cf. Rehmann 2013), but is eclectically drawn on in analysis of phenomena subsumable under such 'humanisation'. However, in this they typically repeat the commonplace interpretations of it in terms of false appearance and underlying reality (cf. Dogra 2012, Richey and Ponte 2011).

and exchange-value is impossible, this doesn't mean use-value exists behind exchange-value as its hidden truth, 'mortified' by the signifier/exchange-value, and thus retrievable in a post-revolutionary society.<sup>31</sup> Rather, the 'critical axis of commodity language...consists in the fact that it places the couple of use-value and exchange-value in language' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 34). The production of value is therefore also the production of a fantasmatic figure of use-value. What this means is that alongside the negative ideology critique of capital condensed in the analysis of the commodity-form – its confrontation of political economy with its immanent negativities – is also a recognition of the immanently ideological aspect of capitalist production. These insights make up the critical intervention of Chapter 5, underscoring not only the critical epistemological potential of such an approach to subvert such a formation, but also its capacity to undermine and capture the 'capitalist' aspect of it. As I go on to argue in that chapter, the peculiar object of such a 'human' capitalist development or capitalism with a human face – rendered manifest in F2F – not only repeats *the* fundamental gesture of the commodity fetish, but posits an absolute outside to the commodity (i.e. gift-charity) which, while apparently distancing itself from such a commodity-form, is both generated by it and ties it ever closer to it.

---

<sup>31</sup> While "use-value" is ambiguous in Marx - after all, he was fallible and by no means consistent throughout his writings - insofar as it "makes no difference" whether the need or want it satisfies arises "from the stomach or from fancy" (Marx 2013, p. 17) it is often seen by Marxists as a kind of pre-discursive authenticity pre-existing colonisation by the system of exchange-value (cf. Cammack 2017, 2020, Selwyn 2017). And, I'd add, some of the recent literature on humanitarian commodification, in its critique of such a phenomenon as "shifting the focus from human need to commodities" and call for us to "keep human needs, and not profit-making, in focus" (Olwig 2021a, p. 1, 2). As per the Marxist-Lacanianism defended here however, as a corrective I'd emphasis comments in the *Grundrisse* where he argues, "Production not only supplies a material to the need, but it also supplies a need for the material...production thus not only creates an object for the subject, but also a subject for the object" (Marx 1993, p. 92). "Keeping human needs in focus" thus should amount to seeing how the production of profit requires the production of human needs.

### *1.3. Conclusion: Dialectical Materialism and the Critique of Ideology*

To conclude, in this chapter I have argued that a critique of ideology informed by the dialectical materialist ‘syntheses’ of Marx, Lacan and Hegel provides a corrective to the epistemological limitations of extant approaches. While psychoanalytic approaches correctly oppose themselves to a certain ‘Marxist’ epistemology, they fail to sufficiently ground their own interventions into Marxian themes in the epistemological innovations of Lacanian psychoanalysis. The approach outlined and defended here however, doesn’t ‘complement’ or ‘supplement’ Marx with psychoanalysis but stages an encounter which ends ‘with radicalizing Marx himself’ (Hamza 2016, p. 172). Crucially, this has been developed through the argument’s dialectical mode of exposition. While such a structure plays a heuristic role in organizing my exposition of concepts and encounter with alternative manifestations of the critique of ideology, it also accentuates the dialectical and materialist credentials of such an approach.

In the first instance, it functions as the scaffolding for the standard dialectical element of ‘movement’. As we will see, while investigating different levels or moments, the arguments in each chapter unfold from each other, adding further levels of (negative) determinations. For instance, it is not as if F2F as symptomatic is absolved once one moves onto the level of ideology for-itself, but rather F2F’s symptomatic contradiction at the level of symbolisation is reworked and unfolded at the level of for-itself. In the second instance, it helps articulate the very Žižekian dialectical reversals in which the problem (i.e. ‘too Marxist’) becomes the solution (i.e. return to Marx), in particular, that a materialism cannot simply be asserted against idealism (i.e. material reality of capitalism against the false ideas of capitalism’s ‘human face’). Rather, such materialism ‘formulates itself vis-à-vis the deadlocks internal to radical transcendental idealism. On this account, materialism

is philosophically tenable solely as the spectral inverse of idealism, accompanying it as the shadow cast by idealism's insurmountable incompleteness' (Johnston 2008, p. 19). As such, unlike Gramscians, the mode of engagement with opposed theoretical perspectives is not external – and thus idealist – criticism, but immanent, such that one 'surmounts [the rejection of ideology critique according to which there is no possibility of existing outside, seeing reality 'as it really is']...by way of its own radicalisation' (1993, p. 4). Nor does it undialectically assert the 'synthesis' of materialism and idealism in their positivity. Rather again, the argument proceeds via negativity, both in and between the levels. While the third moment of ideology may appear as the 'synthetic' point of the argument, it instead overcomes the separation between 'ideal' and 'material' not in their 'synthesis' but rather in their immanent redoubling into each. It thus guards against the crude materialism of Cammack, Selwyn and Veltmeyer, but also the rudimentary dialectic of Bieler and Morton and Gill. It doesn't reduce ideology to a false perception of materiality (thus only existing in people's heads, in the realm of 'thought') but also doesn't simply assert the synthesis of matter and ideas, being and thought. Rather, such a level indicates a 'double effort of thinking the material character of abstractions and the abstract character of matter' (Tomšič 2019b, p. 83), undermining both the opposition between reality and illusion (or being and thought) and their 'synthesis' into a whole from which a nonetheless 'false' thought can be discerned in its non-recognition of the truth of such a synthesis. Moreover, this is where the place of 'Marx' – not just any Marx but the 'best Marx' (Pfaller 2015) – can be most faithfully situated in this 'synthesis'. Namely, in his mature dialectical and materialist emphasis on the efficacy and critique of the 'real abstractions', 'sensus suprasensuousness' or 'spectral objectivity' of the commodity-form, albeit with all the Lacano-Hegelian mediations on epistemology and ontology *reflected in to* such critical-explanatory innovations. Despite the valuable attempts to 'complement' or 'supplement' Marx and 'political economy' with Lacan and psychoanalysis (cf.

Kapoor 2020, p. xii, 50, 88) for a critique of capitalist development and globalisation, such a dialectical 'reflection' of each into one another guards against the aforementioned tendency towards economism, albeit with an "'unconscious flavour'" (Bianchi 2015, p. 114), and its concomitant implications for 'critique'. The value-form is a particular modality of social mediation in and through which the production of enjoyment/value is staged and mystified, and thus an essential component of any ideology critique of capital and its ideologies.

This is one of the reasons why I retain the name 'reflected-into-itself' as it appears in Žižek's articulation of this triad at the point when it is elucidated. When he first introduces the triad it in fact bears the original name of in-and-for-itself (1994, p. 10), but with reflected-into-itself we get the properly dialectical encounter which changes each side in the process, preventing a mechanical cobbling together of heterogenous or regional elements. Furthermore, this shift of terminology also releases such a progression from the evolutionary linear perception of the dialectic, moving toward a higher, 'final' synthesis. Indeed, the standard appreciation of the Hegelian distinction between in-itself and for-itself is the move from potentiality to actuality, and their reconciliation in the 'in-and-for-itself' (Žižek 1993, p. 141). In conceiving it as 'reflected-into-itself' however, it 'restarts' the movement, decisively distancing it from any sort of finality, while simultaneously 'completing the circle', introducing some sense of totality. Far from some problematic contradiction however, this itself functions as a reminder that such a totality is always an inconsistent, incomplete and negativity totality. Thus, while introducing totality, it is not in a final synthesis of a whole, but rather a cyclical process which redoubles negativity and inconsistency. Indeed, such a notion of totality must be opposed to the regressive notion of an 'organic Whole' reminiscent of the Gramscian notion supported by Bieler and Morton of seeing reality as a 'self-forming whole' (2018, p. 22). The Hegelian notion of totality is not simply 'let's see everything in a holistic



way as always related to each other' but instead, as Žižek notes, a 'critical notion [which entails that the dialectical imperative] to "locate a phenomenon in its totality" does not mean seeing the hidden harmony of the Whole, but includes in a system all its distortions...as its integral parts' (Žižek 2018, p. 44).

As such, while the dialectical and materialist elements are at work within each level, they are also at work in the 'totality' of levels. While I split the levels up, each is part of the same totality and all levels reflect into each other. Here one might question the purpose of then splitting up these levels. Again, far from a mere heuristic, such a division provides the dialectical means of investigating the contours of this totality, insofar as they can only be approached by drawing lines, 'starting from and moving within the understanding's black-and-white divisions and dichotomies' (Johnston 2018, p. xv). If one begins from the premise that they are all together, that there is no way of dividing them completely, then one is left with a distinctly non-dialectical unity of the whole, or in Hegel's terms, a 'night in which all cows are black' (ibid). Each level of ideology corresponds to the same object, albeit viewed from a different angle, and thus, when taken together, serves to place negativity within the object itself, manifesting the materialism of the 'cut'; a *parallactic* materialism which includes the subject in reality in the guise of a gap.<sup>32</sup>

In the first case, the critique of ideology in-itself proceeds internally to its object on the level of symbolisation or signification, highlighting the internal inconsistencies of such appearance rather than a more *essential* outside. In other words, isolating the symptom and the mechanisms of its obfuscation. In the second case, the critique of ideology for-itself, mobilising concepts such as fantasy and *jouissance*, and their

---

<sup>32</sup> 'Parallactic' here gestures to Žižek's work on 'parallax', one of the 'master-signifiers of dialectical materialism' (2016, p. 10), which designates an 'apparent displacement of an object..., caused by a change in observational position that provides a new line of sight. The philosophical twist to be added, of course, is that the observed difference is not simply "subjective"...[but] reflects an "ontological" shift in the object itself' (2006b, p. 17)

close associates in desire and drive, similarly retains the negative ground of critique and concomitant procedure of revealing negativity against its fantasmatic dissimulation. In the third case, the spectral level of ideology reflected-into-itself and associated concepts of *objet petit a* and the fetish also oscillates between the Real and its mystification, but connects this decisively with Marx's critique of political economy, specifically the relation to the value-form. While the concepts presented here by no means exhaust the potentials for the content of this thesis' ideo-critical dialectical movement, they all represent the paradigmatic dialectic between obfuscating and displaying negativity, itself written into the tripartite structure for a sustained and unfolding ideology critique.

Indeed, while such epistemological and ontological questions mark a crucial starting point, especially in the case of a more theoretically motivated enquiry, these are irrelevant if not 'mobilised'. This is especially important not only in terms of the central research question but more generally given the theoretical background of this thesis. As Bruno Bosteel's highlights in the first of his two-part essay on Badiou's *Theory of the Subject* and 'dialectical materialism', there is something inherently 'practical and impure about the debate concerning materialism, which from the start defeats the purpose of a strictly speculative or philosophical elaboration' (2001, p. 200). As such, the rest of this thesis is now dedicated to providing a critical empirical exposition of the value of such an approach relative to others, starting with an historical tracing of the 'human' turn in globalisation/development. This not only demonstrates the theoretically mandated inability of existing approaches to grasp (and subvert) this phenomenon, but in identifying F2F as an exemplary *ambivalent* modality of this formation, identifies a highly appropriate site to demonstrate the extent to which this approach can explain and subvert this phenomenon.

## Chapter 2 - Humanising Global Capitalism

In this chapter, I move from the more strictly theoretical concerns of this thesis to its empirical terrain, providing an answer to the sub-question: what has been the significance of the ‘human’ turn in development/globalisation discourse, how does it relate to F2F and what does it reveal about critique? As such, while it plays the more ‘pragmatic’ role of historical contextualisation, charting an extended genealogy of the ‘human’ turn in ideologies of globalisation and development – along with its historical pedigree – and the important place both NGOs and F2F occupy with respect to it, the limitations and possibilities of ideology critique are kept in full view. Indeed, the argument I develop about this formation – its significant yet *ambivalent* character, particularly in its primary institutional form of NGOs, and F2F’s representativeness of such ambivalence – entails consequential theoretical lessons concerning the limitations of extant approaches and the value of the approach developed here.

In brief, such an account both troubles the *explanatory* capacity of the approaches discussed in Chapter 1 – themselves generated by their more *epistemological* limitations – while also rendering a dialectical materialist critique of ideology promisingly placed to make up for these limitations in both explanatory and subversive terms. The subsequent empirical chapters then, drawing on original fieldwork of a conspicuous yet underexplored phenomenon within this ideological milieu, puts this approach to work in a concrete demonstration of its critical/explanatory and subversive force.

Like Chapter 1 and the three chapters following this one, this chapter employs Žižek’s tripartite reconstruction of the concept of ideology. As I argued in Chapter

1, far from merely instrumental, such a divided, or parallax, approach to ideology and its critique most faithfully and reflexively practices dialectical materialism, and this chapter demonstrates its critical-interpretative potential, specifically regarding the emphasis on *ambivalence*, insofar as it is developed around – or rather, through – this structure. In Section 2.1, I chart this historical movement through a more explicit focus on ideology in-itself or its explicit doctrine. This is by no means an exhaustive account. Rather, such an historical exposition seeks simply to emphasise the significance and logic of the signifier ‘human’ to discourses on ‘development’ and ‘globalisation’, and the ever more important role of NGOs, as both advocates of this particular articulation and crucial building blocks for its actualisation. In doing so, it both undermines the problematic idealistic tendencies of the ‘external’ critique of this phenomenon, typically practiced by the ‘orthodox’ Marxists, and shows how the ‘symptomal’ analysis expounded in Section 1.2.2. is well placed to overcome this.

In Section 2.2, I focus on ideology for-itself or the more ‘material’ (institutions, practices) aspects of this historical process. I demonstrate that while NGO practices have some definite correspondence with such a logic of the ‘human’, and such organisations have become increasingly more vocal in criticising the excesses of the neoliberal consensus, not only do they also manifest a definite *difference* within the humanity they seek to represent as a whole, but they were borne out of the neoliberal architecture of the global political economy and have arguably internalised much of its logic. What this shows is a certain *ambivalence* of an institutional form, which militates against the ‘functionalism’ and ‘rationalism’ inherent to the Gramscian concepts of hegemonic bloc, passive revolution and so on. Far from simple co-option, it has been at the point which would in principle avoid the potential for co-option that NGOs have been most effectively ‘co-opted’.

Such an intentional non-intentionality presents itself as appropriate to critical interpretation in the terms of fantasy and *jouissance*.

While this section hints at a degree of ambivalence however, this is solidified in the third section in which I re-focus this exposition onto the level of ideology reflected-into-itself, or its spontaneous presuppositions. Namely, the extent to which such an intrusion of a commodity logic to NGO organisation contradicts their more spontaneous assumption of working within the register of the gift. While the latter has typically been characterised as opposed to commodity, in particular through its more social, personal and *human* characteristics, the commodity logic presupposed in the marketisation, corporatisation and managerialism of NGOs complicates this. Indeed, I argue this signals a much more fundamental ambivalence of NGOs which inheres immanently or internally to the NGO as such, and thus a fundamental ambivalence of arguably *the* object of capitalism or globalisation with a human face; the paradoxical gift-commodity. This further undermines Gramscian analysis, and the latent reproductionism of certain psychoanalytic approaches (cf. Kapoor 2013, also cf. Özselçuk and Madra 2010 for a critique) as well as calling for critical interpretation rooted in the formal structure of the commodity, and a critical analysis that starts and continues with a certain constitutive split in an object, manifested in the dialectical and materialist 'synthesis' of Marx-Lacan-Hegel. In the conclusion, I flesh out the relation of F2F to such a formation, arguing that it represents an exemplary *ambivalent* modality of the 'human' turn, and thus a highly appropriate case to demonstrate the extent of such a perspective's explanatory and subversive potential.

## 2.1. *The (re-)occurrence of the 'human'*

Despite the oft-repeated story of how 'development' began with Harry Truman's inaugural presidential speech in 1949, this narrative is empirically suspect. While such a post-war moment established a coordinated international architecture under the heading of 'development', not only is there distinct textual evidence of such a signifier appearing under colonial regimes (Cowen and Shenton 1996, p. 7) but 'development' *qua* intentional activity (ibid), a 'project of intervention in the "third world"' (Hart 2001, p. 650) or the 'discursive and institutional practices which structure relationships between the West and the Third World' (Kapoor 2014, p. 1120) definitely precedes 1949. So, what of the doctrinal reference to the 'human' in the pre-history of development? How did it explicitly render itself in terms of its official symbolisation?

The first thing I will emphasise doesn't necessarily refer to 'development' but rather to something which is nevertheless difficult to disentangle it from: humanitarianism.<sup>33</sup> According to Michael Barnett in his history of humanitarianism (2011), while acts of compassion that could be deemed 'humanitarian' have a tale 'as old as history' the specific term 'humanitarian' only came into currency at the turn of the 19th century (ibid, p. 19). While this renders it difficult to disentangle from its precedents, he argues it is defined by three features. First, it has been 'associated with compassion across boundaries' (ibid), or compassion towards *human* others. Second, this has a 'transcendental significance' (ibid, p. 20), which means it involves some level of belief 'in something larger than us' (ibid). While this undoubtedly has been influenced by the crucial role of religion in the genesis of

---

<sup>33</sup> Indeed, the organisations which make up the primary focus of this thesis are borne of humanitarian values and, as will be demonstrated, its particular form and content easily lends itself to an articulation with 'development'. Further, given the 'definitions' provided in the introductory paragraph of this section, the difference between 'humanitarianism' and 'development' is more of difference in degree rather than in kind.

humanitarianism, such transcendental aspects of humanitarianism are still evident in secular organisations, particularly ‘in notions of humanity’ (ibid). Certainly, in establishing the defining principles of humanitarianism in another book, Barnett and his co-author Weiss look to the ‘famous desiderata’ from Jean Pictet of the International Committee of the Red Cross. For Pictet, humanitarianism consists of seven core principles: ‘humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality’. While Barnett and Weiss identify the first four as those that constitute its most important principles, it is ‘humanity’ which ‘commands attention to all people’ (2009, p. 3) that is front and centre. Indeed ‘critical to humanitarianism is the “human”’ (Barnett 2011, p. 36) and ‘to be a humanitarian is to respond to the suffering of others regardless of their identity, to act selflessly, to do what can be done to save lives, and to place humanity above all other considerations’ (Barnett and Weiss 2008, p. 6).

Reflecting such categorisation, Didier Fassin’s work on humanitarian reason similarly identified such a ‘transcendental’ faith in humanity as a whole as a central feature to humanitarianism. According to him, humanitarian reason ‘allows us to continue believing...in this concept of humanity which presupposes that all human beings are equal because they belong to one moral community’ (2011, p. 252). Corroborating this argument, Thomas Davies’ extended history of ‘transnational civil society’ provides a wealth of empirical material in which the humanitarian themes of ‘concern for humankind, and solidarity with and compassion towards those in need’ (Anheier cited in Davies 2013, p. 8) are consistently repeated. Many of these organisations ‘extended their assistance to people of any nationality’, often describing themselves as ‘universal’, with some advocating for the establishment of a ‘Universal Society’ (Davies 2013, p. 25, 26). Within this milieu a popular motto emerged which stated that ‘all mankind are brothers’ (Davies 2013, p. 43).

However, according to Barnett – and Davies too (cf. 2013, p. 23) – alongside this second defining ‘transcendental’ aspect to humanitarianism, its quasi-religious elevating of humanity in its ‘desire to demonstrate and create a global spirit’ (Barnett 2011, p. 20), its third defining feature is that it is also immanent, ‘very much of this world’ (ibid, p. 21). What he means by this is that it is ‘imprinted by modernity’ insofar as it has been imbricated in the conviction that ‘it is possible to engineer progress’ (ibid). Historically, this has had two important implications. Not only did it entail a ‘growing zeal for creating institutions and other standing bodies’ (ibid) of which NGOs have been the majority (ibid, p. 17), but it crucially implicated its vision and those bodies advocating it in the longer-term goal of ‘improv[ing] the human condition’ and ‘perfecting society’ (ibid, p. 22).

Considering the particular conjunction of these aspects – the modernist imperative towards progress and rational organisation, and a fidelity to the transcendentalism of humanity – it is easy to see how humanitarianism could expand beyond simply the provision of relief. While some humanitarian organisations like *Médecins Sans Frontières* – due to principles of impartiality and neutrality, in fidelity to humanity as a whole – have elided such ‘longer-term’ interventions as a result of their potential political content (as the example of partiality par excellence), the majority – including those now represented on UK high streets communicating their ‘human’ message – have made the opposite move (cf. Saunders 2009). If one had a desire to alleviate human suffering, then surely one also has ‘a desire to remove the causes of suffering’ (Barnett 2011, p. 22).

It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that the incipient development apparatus directly alluded to humanitarian themes. The United Nations (UN) charter for instance stated its intention toward the task of ‘social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom’, alongside the recognition of ‘the dignity and worth of the



human person' (UN 1945, preamble). Similarly, in the infamous speech by Harry Truman marking the oft-held starting point of the 'age of development' (Sachs 2010, p. xv-xvi) we can see some of the same discursive tropes. While 'officially' addressing citizens of the U.S.A, it was equally addressed to the whole globe, with references to some higher level of humanity as a whole – albeit divided into 'free nations' – in terms of its well-being, freedom and so on, taking a central place:

We believe that *all men* have a right to *equal justice* under law and *equal opportunity to share in the common good*. We believe that *all men* have the right to freedom of thought and expression. We believe that *all men are created equal* because they are created in the image of God.

...

For the first time in history, *humanity* possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people.

...

we should foster capital investment in areas needing development [but]

...

Such new economic developments must be devised and controlled to *benefit the peoples* of the areas in which they are established. Guarantees to the investor must be balanced by guarantees in the *interest of the people* whose resources and whose labor go into these developments

...

we hope to help create the conditions that will lead eventually to personal freedom and happiness *for all mankind*.

...

the future of *mankind* will be assured in a world of justice, harmony, and peace. (Truman 1949, my emphasis).

Despite being evidently tinged in American nationalism, with all its god-fearing anti-communism, such a discourse explicitly distanced itself from the 'old imperialism' and 'exploitation for foreign profit' in favour of 'democratic fair-dealing', advocating compassion across boundaries and most importantly invoking some (transcendental) global community of 'mankind', 'humanity' or the 'human family'. Thus, while underpinned by the 'ideal of self-governing states composed of *citizens* united by the ideology of nationalism' (McMichael 2016, p. 4), this was subsumed within a broader 'human' relationality. As Bienefeld, an early former fellow of the Institute of Development Studies, retroactively designated it, 'the dream was human liberation... The dream was of life in stable communities, rich in human relations, secure, materially prosperous and focused on leisure undertaken for their own sake and not for instrumental reasons' (1992, p. 3). However, how did this manifest in terms of 'economy'? While there was an emphasis on economic management and fostering 'capital investment' along with 'the expansion of world trade on a sound and fair basis', these must be 'balanced by guarantees in the interests of the people' (Truman 1949).

In other words, while strictly *economic* developments were important, they must be in the service of 'peoples'. In this sense, its official discourse overlaps, perhaps unsurprisingly, with the political-economic consensus at the time. As Arturo Escobar noted (1995, p. 72) such a moment 'marked the collapse of some of the most cherished economic principles of the nineteenth century [i.e. *laissez-faire*] in favour of 'Keynesian theory' in which the governance of the economy was 'for the good of the people' (ibid). Writing in 1982, John Gerard Ruggie conceptualised this period as one of 'embedded liberalism', which was characterised by a particular kind of trade off (1982). Like Truman's invocation of free trade alongside its subordination to the 'benefit [of] the peoples', Ruggie's understanding of 'embedded liberalism' also centred on a recognition of 'free trade' along the lines of its 'traditional virtues'

(1982, p. 387), but nonetheless rejected the faith in a total self-regulating market that wasn't in some sense 'controlled to the benefit of the peoples'. According to Ruggie, the former without the latter was ultimately, citing John Maynard Keynes, a 'doctrinaire delusion' (cited in Ruggie 1982, p. 385). Alongside some support for free trade therefore, one of its constituent elements was the desire to limit unimpeded multilateralism (ibid, p. 393), to provide states the freedom to pursue interventionist policies, to protect infant industries, to spend on welfare programmes and ultimately to achieve 'full employment' (ibid, p. 395) within national boundaries. Not only was laissez-faire considered false in positing 'some smoothly functioning automatic mechanism of adjustment which preserves equilibrium' (ibid, p. 388), but it was also went against contemporary 'demands for social protection [that] were very near universal' (ibid).

Importantly, beyond its articulation with the 'humanitarian' impulses of the development apparatus, a crucial signifier articulated within this particular logic was precisely the 'human' or the articulation of a 'human face' with the (capitalist) economy. Hyman Minsky's appreciation of Keynes for instance, led him to refer to Keynes' institutionalist proposals as something 'that would create what today we might call "capitalism with a human face", which obviously was the aim of the great institutionalists' (1996, p. 358). And while Keynes never used the metaphor 'capitalism with a human face', he invoked many of the same tropes. In *Economic Possibilities for Our Grandchildren* (1930), he regularly spoke from the perspective of the collective 'human race' and its future, under threat from the 'love of money'. According to French economist Andre Orleon, who wrote a preface to the republication of this text, a crucial aspect of it is 'the violence of the antagonism he sets out between true *human* values and capitalism's false values, such as the love of money' (2017, my emphasis). Perhaps more clearly however, Ruggie's notion of 'embedded liberalism' draws much of its inspiration from Karl Polanyi, a theorist

regularly employed to retroactively criticise the 'market fundamentalism' of neoliberalism (cf. Block and Somers 2014) and one who opposed such a 'disembedded' economy and its 'dehumanising' aspects (1957, p. 66) to a 'human economy' (1947).

Writing about the attempts in the 19th century to engineer a 'market economy', Polanyi argued that this process was characterised by two movements (2001). In the first case, despite the commitment of those who wanted to create a self-regulating market to the principle of 'laissez-faire', the process by which such a market was created was paradoxically planned and directly implemented. For Polanyi, while the self-regulating market required land, labour and money to operate as commodities, these were for him ultimately fictitious commodities in that their reality was not one of being produced for the market for sale (Block 2001, p. xxv). As such, any attempt to engineer such a condition of economic 'laissez-faire' was met with a limit, and a limit which would 'explain the impossibility of disembedding the economy' (ibid, p. xxvi). Such a limit would manifest in a second movement, which resisted the disembedding and manifested the 'reality of society', its natural inbuilt tendency to self-protection. Again, while the reality of society is asserted, it is regularly proceeded by 'human' (society). Indeed, as Block argues in the introduction to this cited edition of *The Great Transformation*, not only did this argument involve a claim that there was some real substance of human society which naturally resisted its subordination to the market (and of course, that markets always requires regulation by some form of political authority), but that this was morally sanctioned: 'nature and human life' have a 'sacred dimension' which makes their subordination to the market 'impossible' (ibid, p. xxv-xxvi).

This 'sacred' aspect of human society (or human economy) thus not only sanctions the 'embeddedness' of any market economy within human society, or its

subordination to social purpose – which operated as the normative framework for incipient ‘age of development’ – but also appears to manifest a similar ‘transcendental’ faith in ‘humanity’, characteristic of humanitarianism. Indeed, humanitarianism was a signifier employed by Polanyi in positive terms. For example, he was full of praise for the ‘general humanitarian outlook’ of what he termed the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ (cited in Dale 2016, p. 110) political attitude. Moreover, in highlighting what he saw as the absurdity of ‘subordinating society to the logic of the market’ (Block 2001, p. xxiv) he argued that this paradoxically would render ‘any act of humanitarianism as a crime against humanity’ (cited in Dale 2016, p. 156).

Nonetheless, in the wake of various crises through the 1970s and 1980s, such a paradoxical perspective rose to ascendancy. The embedded liberal consensus and the humanitarian impulse of the post-war global political economy gave way to the conviction that, contra Polanyi, the attainment of a self-regulating market, of removing barriers to its functioning, would be the most appropriate organisation of global and national economies.<sup>34</sup> What came to be known as neoliberalism was ‘plucked from the shadow of relative obscurity... transformed...into the central guiding principle of economic thought and management’ (Harvey 2007, p. 2). Within the development apparatus this was manifested in the Washington Consensus implemented in structural adjustment programmes. Far from controlling or balancing the free market in/with the interests of the people, these prescribed a set of political-economic policy prescriptions which advocated a reduction in tariff barriers, privatisation of state-owned industries along with the deregulation and liberalisation of markets (cf. Gore 2000, p. 790, Moore 1995, p. 2, Williamson 1991). As some authors have noted, this entailed a discursive shift away

---

<sup>34</sup> Interestingly, the rise of neoliberalism was (and is) interpreted by many within international studies in Polanyian terms (cf. Blaney and Inayatullah 1999).

from the more sentimental-altruistic intentionality of 'development' to the discourse of 'globalisation', insofar as the latter embodied predilections towards an increasingly interconnected and free global economy (cf. Ziai 2015). Indeed, as McMichael has argued, development and globalisation are 'arguably two sides of the same coin' (2005, p. 111).

However, in the face of its failure – and the resulting 'lost decade of development' (Singer 1989) – its legitimacy began to be challenged. Significantly, such a challenge appeared very much with a Polanyian inflection, with the signifier 'human' being prominent. Chief among these was the publication of UNICEF's report *Adjustment with a Human Face* (Cornia et. al. 1987). Although not doing away with an emphasis on economic growth (Black 1996, p. 159), there was an attempt to distance themselves from this overt focus, an attempt to re-centre development policy around promoting 'human well-being' (ibid). To create 'human well-being' was not only to treat economic growth as a means, but also to foreground a more *intrinsic* ethical approach. Development's whole purpose, it was argued, should be about improving people's well-being, not simply maximising their economic utility. As stated in the introduction to *Adjustment with a Human Face*, the more 'people-sensitive approach' goes well beyond 'economic good sense', defining itself by the fact that it '[u]ltimately rests on the ethic of human solidarity, of concern for others, of human response to human suffering' (Cornia et al. 1987, p. 3).

Three years after the publication of *Adjustment with a Human Face* the UNDP published its first HDR, similarly positioning themselves against the neoliberal orthodoxy while invoking the figure of a more 'human' development, defined by the 'essential truth that people must be at the centre of all development' (1990, p. iii). It argued that 'people cannot be reduced to a single dimension as economic creatures' (ibid), posing the 'embedded liberal-esque' question of how 'economic

growth can be managed in the interests of the people?’ (ibid, p. 10).<sup>35</sup> 1999 edition of the HDR later doubled down on its ‘human’ references with it explicitly embracing the metaphor of ‘globalisation with a human face’ for its subtitle. While the foreword repeats that ‘it is important not to reject markets as the central organising principle of global economic life’ (1999, p. v) they are clear as to its limitations: ‘When the market goes too far in dominating social and political outcomes, the opportunities and rewards of globalisation spread unequally and inequitably’ (ibid, p. 1, 2). As such, the report argued that the market must be supplemented by an appeal to ‘meet the aspirations of a global citizenry...[and] work together to build the frameworks of a new global society and economy’ (ibid, p. v-vi). Drawing regularly on John Maynard Keynes, it argued in favour of his ‘vision for global governance’ (ibid, p. 98) in which ‘full employment’ and both economic with social rights were key. Such a vision of global governance ‘with a human face...required...acceptance of human responsibility and obligations’ alongside the ‘shared values’ of ‘respect for life, liberty, justice, equality, tolerance and mutual caring’ (ibid).

In order to build this new ‘global society’ – to counteract development ‘driven by market expansion’ with ‘a new commitment...to the ethics of universalism’ (ibid, p. 2) – advocates of ‘humanising’ capitalist development/globalisation have been explicit about the place of NGOs within this movement. Not only have they been described as ‘people-centered’ (Lewis 2010, p. 264), rooted in the humanitarian values of a ‘philosophy that recognized the centrality of people in development policies’ (Cernea cited in Lewis 2010, p. 265), but they have been crucial for its advocacy. Indeed, for one commentator, the advent of the ‘people-centred’ (Therien 2012, p. 2) ideology of human development (as a challenge to neoliberalism) was

---

<sup>35</sup> See Richard Jolly for an extended overview of the differences between the ‘human development’ and ‘neoliberal’ paradigms (2003).

foreshadowed by ‘criticism voiced by UNICEF and NGOs pressing for adjustment with a human face’ (ibid, p. 3).

Richard Jolly, one of the authors of *Adjustment with a Human Face*, similarly praised the role of NGOs in ‘provoking rethinking’ (1991, p. 1807), and considered them ‘vital if the movement is to involve *people*’ (Cornia et al. 1987, p. 228, my emphasis). This then translated into the pages of the UNDP’s first HDR with it including, as one of its 15 policy conclusions, a desire for a more participatory approach which was able to include NGOs. This was not simply an add on: the inclusion of NGOs into the development architecture of the United Nations was considered ‘*essential* for any viable strategy of human development’ (UNDP 1990, p. 6 my emphasis). And similarly, in *Globalisation with a Human Face* the role of NGOs was praised as ‘effective advocates for human development’ (UNDP 1999, p. 35), having ‘more members than some countries’ (ibid, p. 36).

In even clearer terms, Frances Stewart, another author of *Adjustment with a Human Face*, wrote an article twenty years after its publication arguing for a new ‘Great Transformation’ based on the ‘same objective’ as its original theorist (2007, p. 624). Such a transformation ‘would make the market serve society rather than conversely’ and, following Polanyi, would aim at ‘the protection of man...to rehabilitate the lives of men’ (Polanyi cited in Stewart 2007, p. 624). When the focus of the article moved to questioning the extent to which this transformation would be likely, she argued that NGOs would be one of the primary forces which could encourage such a transformation (ibid, p 625). However, while according to Stewart all NGOs contribute in some sense to this process, it is only those with ‘“claims” functions’ (ibid, p. 626) – in other words, NGOs who are in some sense ‘directed at changing the rules’ (ibid) – that contribute fully. And indeed, the claim to be ‘changing the rules’ in favour of a more ‘human’ development or ‘human’ economy is more and



more the explicit vision of the NGOs which make up the focus of this thesis. Beyond their role in the incipient adjustment with a human face or human development paradigms, the critique of neoliberalism is now a staple of their explicit doctrine.

Oxfam's 'Even it up!' report for instance – endorsed by advocates of globalisation/capitalism with a human face like Joseph Stiglitz (who wrote the foreword to the 2001 publication of Polanyi's *The Great Transformation*) and Ha-Joon Chang – claims that the reason for their famous inequality statistics is precisely due to too much emphasis on the market. Front and centre of their analysis concerning the 'drivers of inequality' (Seery and Caistor Arendar 2014, p. 13) is 'market fundamentalism' (ibid, p. 12). While they accept that the 'market economy has brought prosperity and a dignified life to hundreds of millions of people' (ibid, p. 13) they draw on Thomas Piketty to claim that this needs to be accompanied by government regulation:

'There are clear lessons to be learned from recent history. In the 1980s and 1990s, debt crises saw countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the former Eastern bloc subjected to a cold shower of deregulation, rapid reductions in public spending, privatization, financial and trade liberalization, generous tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy, and a 'race to the bottom' to weaken labour rights. Inequality rose as a result' (ibid).

In response, they advocate many of the hallmarks of a Keynes-embedded liberalism ideology: state regulation, higher taxes and redistribution, public services and secure jobs (ibid, p. 14-23), integrating the Polanyian tropes of a pristine and solidaristic human society secondarily corrupted by market induced inequality. For

Oxfam, inequality not only threatens society (ibid, p. 12) but society spontaneously or ‘instinctively’ reacts against it:

‘people instinctively feel that there is something wrong with high levels of inequality...Across the world, religion, literature, folklore and philosophy show remarkable confluence in their concern that an extreme gap between rich and poor is inherently unfair and morally wrong. This concern is prevalent across different cultures and societies, suggesting a fundamental human preference for fairness and equality’ (ibid).

Subsequent reports also tend to draw on this theme, invoking the metaphors of an economy for the 99%, and a ‘more human economy’ (Oxfam 2017). In their 2019 report, skyrocketing inequality is again laid at the hands of neoliberalism (2019a, p. 5-6) resulting in a ‘gap between the rich and poor [that] is pulling *us* apart (ibid, p. 10 my emphasis). The only chance at preventing ‘us’ from being pulled apart, they argue, is through a ‘human economy’ (ibid, p. 11) in which ‘everyone in society stands to benefit’ (ibid, p. 18).

While Oxfam, as ‘the global leader of the NGO community’ (Edwards 2018) as one development NGO scholar *and* practitioner put it, is a key example here, such a signifying logic is similarly reproduced in other NGO discourse (beyond the already discussed intervention of UNICEF). Action Aid for instance claim that they ‘hold a deep critique of the dominant global economic system of neoliberalism’ (2008, p. 4, also cf. 2010, p. 38), that it increases poverty which means that people ‘are often treated as less than human’ (2010, p. 27). Instead, they place ‘human development at the core of development’ (ibid, p. 8), allowing people ‘to flourish as human beings’ (ibid, p. 27). Save the Children similarly locate their belief that ‘human development should remain at the heart of the world we want’ (2013, p. 1,

3) against the 'Washington consensus' (ibid, p. 1) and 'neoliberal ideologies' (2016, p. 2), invoking the need for 'breaking the mould' and 'transforming the economic development paradigm' (2013).

#### *2.1.1. The Critical Pitfalls of Externality, and the Promises of the Symptom*

So, what does this account reveal about the prospects of 'ideology critique', and the extent to which its various manifestations can effectively explain and subvert such an ideological humanising of global capitalism? On the one hand, it further undermines the procedure of the 'orthodox' Marxists reviewed in the previous chapter, demonstrating the explanatory and subversive implications of their epistemology. On the other however, it also reveals the critical potential stemming from the alternative epistemological paradigm in which the psychoanalytic symptom is located.

In the first instance, the classic 'orthodox' Marxist procedure of 'enlightenment', in which the false representation of capitalism development/globalisation is opposed to its naked truth, fails to both account for such an ideology as well as actually subvert it. In passing through (or over) such an ideological appearance, the critic spends more of their critical faculties in outlining the truth beneath the appearance rather than engaging with the appearance in any substantive way. The vicissitudes of such an ideology are thus dealt very little critique. Take for example Ben Selwyn's extensive engagement with two theorists of 'human development', 'human economy' or capitalism 'with a human face', namely Amartya Sen and Karl Polanyi. In each case, while he presents their 'core ideas' effectively, 'by employing analytical concepts and categories derived from Marx' (2014, p. 24), it reads as a summary of their work with a final joinder repeating the fundamental lessons already learnt from Marx. In each case, the conclusion is effectively the same. While there are

occasions in which the ideology is 'entered' – I could not criticise him for not properly explicating the theories of Sen and Polanyi – this is merely supplementary to the primary thrust of critique.

Similarly, Cammack, while effectively conveying the precise content of various HDRs, these appear as a merely descriptive detour, which ends with how their vision fails to heed the fundamental lesson of Marx concerning capital being set free at the expense of human beings (2017, p. 19). And similarly, Veltmeyer and Rushton's (2012) and Lebowitz's (2009, 2010) critiques of human development revolve primarily around demonstrating capitalism's non-human or anti-human character, rather than probing the specific form of 'human' in which capitalism appears. Indeed, more time is spent – whole books in fact – outlining the conditions for 'real human development' or the 'anti-human' capacities of capitalism as opposed to the vicissitudes of its capitalist ideological form. 'Critique' revolves around the repetitive (and dogmatic) reassertion of 'that's not real human development', an answer already given in advance.

Alongside its abdication of critique as such, the reduction of such ideology to 'mere illusion' to be dispelled through a more accurate representation leaves them as simple mistakes of the mind, and to explain their continual reappearance – which in this particular case is considerable – means they have to resort to some suspect modes of explanation. Indeed, in locating ideology and its critique as a question of moving from the false representation of social reality to its truth, explaining its effect is either reduced, on the one hand, to the ignorance of social subjects, or on the other, to the super consciousness of those manipulating them. The result a contradictory image of proponents of 'human' approaches to development and globalisation as either idiots, or hyper intelligent manipulators of 'rhetoric' and 'platitudes' (Cammack 2017) in service of insidiously 'giving a human face to capitalist

development' (Veltmeyer and Rushton 2012, p. 2). At best this is an unsatisfactory explanation of such ideological phenomena's continued existence, and at worst it is both a normatively problematic 'condescending conception of the social subject as an ideological dupe' (Hay 1997, p. 47) and a drift into the domain of conspiracy theories.<sup>36</sup>

In this context, like with the epistemological issues of this approach, the discourse-analytic perspective appears to offer itself as an alternative. Indeed, its forerunners in critical development studies certainly frame it not simply more epistemologically sound but also as overcoming its explanatory weaknesses. In one of the interventions which inaugurated the 'post-development' school of critical development theory James Ferguson argued against extant Marxist criticism precisely because they typically treat dominant ways of 'talking and thinking about "development"' as mere 'ideological icing' (2012, p. xiv). By contrast, in his discursive approach to the work of the development apparatus in Lesotho – the case study for his book – whether it was conceived of more or less adequately (i.e. an appropriate correlation between thought and being) was beside the point. Rather, the crucial thing to comprehend was instead the extent to which such knowledge or thought on Lesotho constructed it as an object of knowledge, and thus produced effects in material reality beyond simply misrepresenting it.

Arturo Escobar similarly – another crucial representative of the discourse-analytic approach to critical development studies – has been particularly critical of such an apparent 'regime of objectivism' (1995, p. 7) practiced by both mainstream and critical (Marxist) approaches to development both because it practices such a naïve

---

<sup>36</sup> The conception of subjects as 'dupes' is deeply problematic for those like Selwyn and Lebowitz in particular, insofar as they appear to valorise what comes 'from below' (Lebowitz 2012, Selwyn 2016) against the more dictatorial elements of 'socialism from above' in terms of the primacy of the 'conductor' over the 'conducted' (Lebowitz 2012), or in terms of the opposition between (bad) 'elite development theory' and (good) 'labour-centred' critique (Selwyn 2016).

'realist epistemology' (2007) and entails a limited mode of analysis. Responding to Samir Amin's political economy of development, which closely mirrors the work of Selwyn, Cammack, Veltmeyer and Lebowitz, he argues against both his 'realist epistemology' (1995, p. 100) as well as its effect on critique: '[t]he discourse of development is not merely an "ideology" that has little to do with the "real world"; nor is it an apparatus produced by those in power in order to hide another, more basic truth, namely, the crude reality of the dollar sign' (1995, p. 104). Indeed, from such a broadly Foucauldian perspective the epistemological paradigm of 'orthodox' Marxist critique rendered ideology always in a 'secondary position relative to something which functions as its infrastructure' and in rejecting this argued that 'the problem does not consist in drawing the line between that in a discourse which falls under the scientificity or truth...but in seeing historically how effects of truth are produced within discourses which are neither true or false' (Foucault 1980, p. 118).

Yet, while this approach has the advantage of taking this level of appearance seriously, of refusing that 'the idea of the human is taken for granted, as if it were unproblematic' (Edkins 2019, p. 75), not only does the relation of the 'human' to capitalism disappear from view – with it unproblematically integrated into *neoliberal* discourse (cf. Edkins 2019, p. 77, Lacey and Ilcan 2011, Mitchell and Sparke 2016, Mitchell 2016, Shani 2012) – but as Kapoor (2017) has noted, it both misses how such discourses persist and lacks the negative-subversive capacity to break with them.<sup>37</sup> In a similar way to the reversal according to which the post-structuralist mantra of 'there is no meta language' means the precise opposite, the

---

<sup>37</sup> Edkins represents something of an anomaly here. As noted in Chapter 1, while engaging psychoanalytic-Žižekian critique of the 'symptomal' and fantasmatic variety (2000, p. 103-127), these are incorporated under the banner of 'post-structuralism' (1999). As such, while she doesn't fall prey to the 'negative-critical' limitation of discourse analysis, she does overemphasise 'neoliberalism' (2019) at the expense of capitalism, opting for the notion of 'modernity' to designate the milieu. When capitalism is referenced, it is in terms of the interdependence of abundance and scarcity (2000, p. 124).

eschewal of an external position secretly sneaks one in. Refusing the negativity of critique in favour of the positivity of 'vivisection' (Ferguson 2012, p. xv) or patiently 'describing social reality' (Ziai 2015, p. 9), leads this procedure to either rely on romantic and moralistic assertions of a pure externality, a 'tout autre' to development discourse embodied in localised resistance, or an even stronger identification with the system (cf. Ferguson 2015, and Nilson 2021 for a critique).

The dialectical materialism of symptomal analysis on the other hand, alongside rejecting both epistemological perspectives, allows one to take the appearance itself seriously, not reducing it to the underlying truth which it obscures, while also maintaining the subversive edge of critique. In other words, it provides a non-reductive account of the explicit ideological form which takes it seriously on its own terms rather than a simple smokescreen hiding the truth, while also training itself to the tensions within such a form. As Zupančič puts it in terms of the methodological intersection between Hegelian dialectics and Lacanian psychoanalysis, this approach doesn't concern itself with simply 'passing judgment on things. This kind of activity, says Hegel, instead of getting involved with the thing, is always-already beyond it; instead of tarrying with it, and being preoccupied with it, this kind of knowing remains essentially preoccupied with itself' (2017, p. 65). Indeed, as I demonstrate in the next chapter, this approach allows me to make sense of F2F *qua* its discursive construction, while nonetheless locating it around a central contradiction. However, while this approach can somewhat account for its persistence more convincingly than 'orthodox' Marxist approaches, this capacity is more clearly affirmed on the level of ideology for-itself. While the 'symbolic' level must be accorded its own 'productivity' (and not simply something epiphenomenal, transitive and ultimately 'in the way'), this runs the danger of its own sort of linguistic-idealist fetishism which locates a consonance between word and thing, as if the former and the latter coalesce without remainder.

Although the negativity of the symptomal focus guards somewhat against this tendency, without the ‘other side’ of discursive production, the production of enjoyment, such a critical and subversive procedure is incomplete (cf. Tomšič 2015c). Moreover, the particular significance of ‘human’ ideologies also reveals itself to be much more peculiar than simply its regularity of appearance, and this peculiarity both undermines extant approaches as well as lending itself to interpretation in terms of the ‘critique of ideology’.

## 2.2. *NGOs and Ambivalence*

So now we have seen the ‘symbolic’ evolution of such a human turn, how has this manifested ‘for-itself’? How has this been externally realised in the material structure and practice of this ideology? I have already hinted at some elements of this, as Section 2.1. emphasised, such a ‘human’ moment involved a new configuration of actors with distinct institutional-material set ups, most importantly the NGO. However, what are the contours of this ‘NGO materiality’? How has this manifested alongside the development of such anti-neoliberal ‘human’ doctrine? What is significant about it and what does it reveal about the prospects of ‘ideology critique’?

While the practices of early humanitarianism materialised the abstract community of ‘humanity’, the colonial context rendered its principles of neutrality suspect. For instance, while the Quakers, so crucial to the development of humanitarianism (e.g. Oxfam, cf. Davies 2013, Saunders 2009) – through organisations like the Friends Foreign Missionary Association and its official relief arm, the Friends War Victims Relief Committee – provided relief ‘without discrimination’ (Saunders 2009, p. 41), it was inevitably conditioned by a ‘belief that Christianity and the West defined the values of the international community’ (Barnett 2011, p. 30). While relief may have



been provided indiscriminately, its practical configuration – i.e. who provides it to whom, from where it originates to where it is received – materialises less a ‘shared humanity’ than clearly staging its divisions, whether Christian or nominally secular.

Nonetheless, the practices and organisation of such non-state, non-profit actors are not as evidently representative of a *partial* section of humanity as a whole. Yet, their role in the development apparatus was negligible compared to the primary place of (nation) states in the *international* architecture of the embedded liberal consensus (cf. Lewis and Porter 2006, p. 43). Indeed, the state, state-based agencies or international development organisations were the primary institutions carrying out development aid, materially complementing the nationalist elements of the embedded liberal consensus (during the 1960s, more than 90% of Official Development Assistance was bilateral aid, that is between states (cf. Hattori 2001, p. 644)).

Not only was the practice of Overseas Development Assistance deeply imbued in Cold War geopolitics, typically tied to the self-interest of the giver, but the institutional make-up of Bretton Woods often overtly manifested Western hegemony (Hattori 2001, 2003, Kapoor 2008). Both the World Bank and International Monetary Fund headquarters are in Washington D.C. and the US has a de facto veto. The UN similarly had to go through various architectural expansions to accommodate the growing number of independent states, meaning that the exclusion of colonies was built into the materiality of the UN (cf. Padelford 1967). Their growing presence within the architecture of the UN clearly expressed the limits of national self-determination and the ideology of a ‘united’ nations. Indeed, returning to the ‘flag-carrying’ (Craig and Porter 2006, p. 50) materiality of the embedded liberal/nationalist ideology, the flags present were far from evenly visible, nor evenly distributed. As Kapoor has noted, much development aid

typically bears the flag of the donor country, serving to not only valorise the donor state but place it in the subject/ agential position within the development apparatus (2008). As such, state-based development aid materialises a dynamic whereby 'nationalist discourse (in the west) and aid/development discourse are bosom buddies. They both centre on and complement one another's insider/outside distinctions' (ibid, p. 86-87).

Consequently, as Kapoor highlights – albeit while recognizing its limitations – giving gifts through NGOs might be a 'fruitful route' for reconfiguring foreign aid as they 'can be less bound by national loyalties' (ibid, p. 93), and thus hold potential for dissipating its tendency toward nationalist gratification.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, many of the NGOs which form the focus of this thesis emerged in the early to mid-20th century and had a less explicit national allegiance. Fight the Famine (which would later become Save the Children) for instance, 'motivated by a sense of political injustice' were 'distributing highly controversial leaflets' critical of the allies blockade of Nazi occupied Greece, thus acting against their own national allegiance in respect for humanity as such.<sup>39</sup> Later, Oxfam 'had begun to raise awareness of the politics of poverty through its briefings on the GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade]... and its analysis of third world debt' (Saunders 2009, p. 45), and with Christian Aid, set up the 'highly political New Internationalist' magazine out of which developed *People and Planet* (ibid). Nonetheless, according to Nandita Dogra's (2012) study of NGO communications, while 'shared' or 'common humanity' is a major aspect (2012), it isn't alone. In fact, according to her study, the

---

<sup>38</sup> Edkins argues in her critical discussion of responses to and practices of famine and aid, particularly Band Aid and Live Aid, that it produced a 'new humanitarian international community' (2000, p. 122, also cf. Lousley 2014).

<sup>39</sup> Save the Children might be a problematic instance here, given they are very much a British charity, with a member of the British Royal Family as a patron, and having been closely tied to imperial policy (cf. Baughn 2021). However, there has nonetheless been a concerted effort to *not* look like that. For instance, they hired Ken Loach, veteran socialist filmmaker, to make a film about the charity on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their founding (cf. Hilton 2015).

representations produced by NGOs manifest a 'dual logic of 'difference' and 'oneness'' (2012, p. 3). In other words, while NGO representations typically endeavour to connect potential supporters and those they seek to support by demonstrating how they are 'like us by virtue of their humanity' (ibid), in practice this also involves highlighting their distance and difference. Indeed, as Yanacopulos and Baillie Smith argue, in the process of NGO engagement with their supporters, they manifest an 'ambivalent cosmopolitanism' (2007). While on the one hand, they agree with Carey's (2003) designation of NGOs as 'genuine cosmopolitan actors [involved in the] establishment of an agenda and political community that transcends the state or local community...in a position to act as legitimate advocates for humanity' (cited in Yanacopulos and Baillie Smith 2007, p. 298) they note that in practice '[e]mphasizing common ground does not fit easily with NGOs' realization of care for the "distant other" (ibid, p. 310). Kate Manzo (2008) similarly, in a study of childhood iconography in NGO communications, contends that while the principle of humanity is crucial and that 'the lone child represents humanity as a whole' (2008, p. 642), it can also be read as a metaphor for a colonial-paternalistic relation.

On this more material level of practices therefore, the abstract commitment to shared or common humanity doesn't directly translate. Moreover, while such principles of humanity or a more human development have been articulated against neoliberalism, it was also paradoxically the rise of the 'anti-human' neoliberalism which coincided with the growth of its most ardent critics (Khangram et. al. 2002, Lewis 2010). Although, as the last section showed us, NGOs are far from neoliberal ideologues (cf. Save the Children 2013, Seery and Caistor Arendar 2014, Action Aid 2008, 2010), many commentators have recognised that their growth in the neoliberal conjuncture is not necessarily oppositional nor coincidental. Their role as service providers for instance, was held to be something which plugged the gaps left

behind by large scale privatisations of state-based services, thus materially supplementing the neoliberal hollowing out of the state (Edwards and Hulme 1992). Some commentators designated them as a force for 'internal delegation', materially supplementing the 'neoliberal deterritorialisation of governance' (Craig and Porter 2006, p. 60). In other words, by stepping in to provide services, they delegitimised the typical alternative to neoliberal development in the developmental state (cf. Kambhampati 2004, p. 140, Pearce 2000, p. 19), thus shifting 'ideas about government away from national planning and state services towards markets and the "non-governmental" actors' (Lewis 2005, p. 205), having the effect, according to one commentator, of 'privatising the public sphere' (Kamat 2004). Neoliberal ideology emphasised that 'voluntary aid must be more cost-effective' (Craig and Porter 2006, p. 61) and NGOs were happy to frame themselves in these terms, that 'their aid was more likely to reach the poorest groups' (ibid). During the 1980s their numbers grew globally in exponential terms and by 1988 US\$1.5 billion more in development financing was flowing through NGOs than the World Bank (Banks and Hulme 2012).

For some commentators who still held out hope for NGOs as a development alternative, again under the aegis of a more 'people-centred' (Banks and Hulme 2012) or 'human' development (Hulme 2008), the problem however was not so much down to NGOs as such, but because they were more willing to identify as mere service providers (Bebbington et. al. 2008). Without the emphasis on development alternatives, what Bebbington et. al. (2008) term 'little d' development, NGOs seemed 'too close for comfort' (Edwards and Hulme 1997) with official avenues of funding (cf. Kane 2013).<sup>40</sup> In other words, instead of focusing on the

---

<sup>40</sup> Here they follow Gillian Hart's (2001) re-working of Cowen and Shenton's (1996) distinction between 'little d' and 'big D' development. In the former development can be conceived as a spontaneous process or a deliberate activity, which Hart translates to development as about the sort of society we want to live in, whereas the latter refers to Development as the actual practice and structure of development.

question of development alternatives, the role of service provision and closeness to the established funding sources blunted their counter-hegemonic edge, thus rendering them beholden to the role of merely 'applying' neoliberal policy. Unsurprisingly, given the influence of Gramscian notions of civil society on these authors (cf. Bebbington et. al. 2008, McSweeney 2014), as a space in which hegemonic blocs are reproduced and contested, this argument mirrors elements of the Gramscian 'critique of ideology' I problematised in the last chapter. Emphasising the integration of NGOs into established configurations of ideas and institutional architecture, reads as an instance of their 'co-option' (Rupert 2000, p. 146), 'capture' (Ramos 2006, p. 156) or 'absorption' (Cutler 2005, p. 536) into the hegemonic bloc, or the project of 'reformism from above' (Robinson 2013, p. 7).

As such, the response from within the critical yet supportive voices on NGOs (cf. Bebbington et. al. 2008, Banks and Hulme 2012, 2015, Girei 2016, Yanacopulos 2015) was to advocate different channels of fundraising to regain some autonomy and counter-hegemonic status. Fowler (2000) felt that what was required was to look beyond the aid system to discover alternative modes of funding. Girei qualified this further by adding that this should encourage 'closeness to local communities' (Girei 2016, p. 198), and Banks and Hulme have argued that '[w]ithout greater commitment to their community-driven and grassroots approach, there is no means through which NGO programmes can be realigned with local realities and brought closer to goals of empowerment' (Banks and Hulme 2012, p. 14). However, rather than more closely aligning the practicality of NGO funding with the potential counter-hegemonic capacities of its discourse (*qua* humanity against neoliberalism), the effect has been precisely the opposite. Moving towards constituents for funding has paradoxically, considering their desire to move away from the neoliberal logic of the global political economy, become more and more commercial, and reliant on market mechanisms (Eagleton-Pierce 2019, Townsend and Townsend 2004, Lebaron

and Dauvergne 2014). In the words of Martin Kirk, previously head of campaigns at Oxfam UK and head of global advocacy at Save the Children:

‘Large development NGOs excel in two main areas that relate to their domestic environments: using consumer marketing techniques and retail operations to raise funds and guide mass broadcast communication; and traditional advocacy and public policy. Expertise in fundraising and, for some, running shops, is undeniable. Oxfam GB, for example, raises over £300 million a year and is the largest secondhand bookseller in Europe. It knows how to run a business’ (Kirk 2012, p. 252).

As such, it appears that the move which would in principle resist the potential for co-option by the neoliberal bloc has in fact resulted in an uncanny internalisation of its logic. Indeed, much recent literature dealing with the practical aspects of such organisations have highlighted precisely the tendency towards their ‘neoliberalisation’ (Choudary and Kapoor 2013, Cooley and Ron 2002, Dar and Cooke 2008, Dauvergne and Lebaron 2014, Hopewell 2015, Kapoor 2013, Krause 2014) and nowhere is this perhaps as clear as in the domain of fundraising. Not only in clear examples like cause related marketing, in which ‘doing good’ is integrated with consumption of commodities (cf. Eikenberry and Kluver 2004, Nickel and Eikenberry 2009, Richey and Ponte 2011), but also in the more traditional appeals for donations. Since such NGOs have ‘grown in size and sophistication’ (Banks et. al. 2015, p. 713) there is an increased competition between them for funds (cf. Girei 2016). What this entails is a tendency towards a doubling down on their ambivalence. On the one hand, it forces them to operate more like a for-profit firm (cf. Joachim and Schneiker 2018), situating their ‘activity within an economic calculus’ (Leander and van Munster 2007, p. 20). As such, the critique of an over-extension of the market has developed alongside the adoption of market logics. On

the other hand, fundraising appeals have typically relied on ‘negative’ tropes which exaggerate ‘difference’ (Dogra 2012) – undermining the vision of common or shared humanity – precisely because they are more effective at raising money. For instance, Helen Yanacopulos’ 2015 book on NGO ‘engagement, advocacy and activism’ quoted an NGO director who stated that: ‘[m]y fundraisers were just at a seminar yesterday and they were showed the difference between how much money you raise showing happy babies vs dying babies, and you raise much more money showing dying babies’ (cited in Yanacopulos 2015, p. 93). And another quote from a head of communications at a different NGO contended that ‘there is a direct correlation between the amount of pity shown and the money raised. You turn down the pity even by a small degree and your income goes down. This is particularly true for ads on daytime TV’ (cited in Yanacopulos 2015, p. 93). Indeed, according to Maggie Black, writer of the histories of both Oxfam and UNICEF (cf. Black 1992, 1996), ‘no-one could pretend that “1 per cent of Gross Domestic Product” and “fair trade” evoked in the public mind the passionate concern that a Biafran child could conjure’ (cited in Saunders 2009, p. 46).<sup>41</sup> As such, despite being deeply aware of the implications of the ‘imagery debate’ for at least forty years the same tension between fundraising and accurate representation continues to raise its head (cf. Lidchi 1999, Lissner 1977, Yanacopulos 2015) with the former typically coming out on top.

For Kapoor, the effect of such ‘spectacularization’ of NGO imagery – with its tendency to undermine the image of common or shared humanity – is not only a de-politicisation of neoliberalism due to its short termism, in calls to act and to act

---

<sup>41</sup> Despite this having been a topic of significant debate within and beyond the sector for some time (cf. Lissner 1977, Lidchi 1999), the same concerns nonetheless reappear. David Lammy, British Member of Parliament, as recently as 2019 called out journalist Stacey Dooley for her posting a picture of herself posing with an African child during her recent trip to Uganda for Comic Relief (cf. Badshah 2019)

now, but in its resembling a ‘pervasive logic of “infotainment” and the commodity-image’ (2013, p. 85). NGO publications and public appeals, relying on corporate partnerships, corporate branding and techniques associated with the private sector represents a ‘trend of NGO corporatization [which] is part of the logic of the neoliberal global order, in which to function as global players requires the adoption of corporate identities and practices’ (2013, p. 87).

Yet, as established in Section 2.1., this process seems to be simultaneously accompanied by the opposite trend: an increasingly vocal critique of neoliberalism. While they may be adopting more ‘neoliberal’ modes of internal organisation, such ‘efficiency’ also allows them to be more active in advocating/performing such a politicisation of neoliberalism. As Clare Saunders has argued in her history of British NGO development, their growth and evolution – of which more ‘efficient’ fundraising has been crucial – has meant that now ‘they are not *just* NGOs; they have increasingly become part of the global justice movement – a network of individuals and organisations that engages in collective action to address injustices resulting from the neoliberal agenda’ (2009, p. 38). Indeed, in decidedly Occupy Wall Street language, a 2016 joint statement issued by Amnesty International, Oxfam and Action Aid (amongst others) argued for the need ‘to build a global movement to counter-balance the power and influence of the 1%’ (Amnesty International 2016).

### *2.2.1. Ambivalence, Jouissance and the Limits of Functionalism*

So, what does this account – the ambivalence of realising the dream of shared humanity in material-institutional structures and practices – reveal about the limitations and possibilities of ideology critique (in its various guises) for both explaining and subverting this ‘human’ ideological formation? Leaving aside the



shared idealist reductionism of both 'orthodox' and Gramscian Marxist ideology critique (i.e. reduction to mere falsity) there are two further weaknesses of the latter worth mentioning in light of this account. The first is the weaknesses of Gramscian arguments concerning the hegemonic bloc's mechanisms of co-option or absorption. Indeed, as I have demonstrated, it has been in an effort that would in principle resist co-option, with NGOs looking beyond the aid architecture for alternative funding mechanisms, that has been the place where the neoliberal logic most clearly co-opts them. While those like Robinson (2013), Rupert (2000) and Munck (2010) for instance differentiate between the 'co-opters' as those 'from above' and those 'co-opted' as those from below, in the basic running of the organisation, it has been the return to 'from below' which has made them more closely identify with the logic 'from above'. As argued in Section 1.3.1., the Gramscian emphasis on co-option assumes a basic rationalist subjectivity on behalf of the agents involved, and thus like 'orthodox' Marxists, ends up having to resort to interpreting this ideological shift in terms of manipulative agents. While problematic on its own terms, it also seems unable to effectively convey this seemingly non-intentional co-option.

Second, and closely related, insofar as the notion (and analysis) of a hegemonic bloc – as a kind of conceptual marker of the Gramscian 'dialectical synthesis' of the material and ideal – emphasises the moments of complementarity between its parts, this cannot take into account the *ambivalent* character of this process. In other words, it cannot come to terms with how the increasing radicality of the NGO 'human' challenge to neoliberalism is itself rooted both in the reconfiguration of the global political economy on the advent of neoliberalism and in the adoption of 'neoliberal' operating logics. Their idealist appreciation of dialectics links substance and subject in their reciprocal positivity and excludes the negativity that pertains to each. Indeed, it has been a classic criticism of Gramscian analysis. That is, it practices a

certain 'structural-functionalism' (Burawoy 2003, Bieler et. al. 2006) as if all elements conjoin together in a stable constellation of material and ideal ideological forces. Clare Cutler for instance, drawing on Duncan Kennedy, refers to hegemonic bloc as a 'totalising conception in which economic, social, political, cultural and other ideological forces "form a single, indivisible whole"' (2005, p. 536). William I. Robinson similarly emphasises that within a hegemonic bloc 'a variety of allies...are *unified* in a social bloc of forces' (2005a, p. 564) and Leonardo Cesar Souza Ramos highlights the points of 'congruence' and 'coherence' between 'material forces, institutions and ideologies' (2006, p. 147). And although Mark Rupert (2000) comes closest to integrating such ambivalence by articulating opposed meanings to the discourse of capitalism with a human face, as I noted in Section 1.3.1., these get sutured onto particular agents. What this entails is the displacement of any split or ambivalence onto differences between two sets of identifiable actors. Rupert thus cannot think the possibility that the 'NGO activist' might be ambivalently articulating a critique of neoliberalism while surreptitiously reproducing its practice.

In contrast, both the notions of fantasy and *jouissance*, along with the dialectical materialist philosophy they are grounded in, seem well placed to both account for and subvert such an ambivalent ideological formation. Indeed, not only is the inherent transgression a crucial aspect of fantasy, but in its own formulation fantasy is much more ambiguous than the seemingly direct one-to-one materialisation of ideology in-itself, or the congruence of ideas and materiality. According to Žižek, the external materiality of ideology often reveals the antagonisms of its edifice more than the explicit formulation can acknowledge. Fantasy, at the same time as obfuscating the cracks in reality 'creates what it purports to conceal' (Žižek 2008b, p. 5). It thus exits from the domain of functionality, insofar as in performing its 'functional' or 'stabilising' aspect, producing a semblance of consistency and thus

producing an ideological function which ties us to a specific reality, it also brings us closer to the breakdown of said reality. Similarly, *jouissance* is something which is perennially out of joint, and the ways in which the subject relates to it are defined precisely by its impossibility, or it missing the mark. However, such a disjuncture – seemingly accountable for within the disjunctive epistemological frame of fantasy and *jouissance* – reaches its apogee in the ‘NGO’ object, whose peculiarity arguably defines capitalism with a human face as such.

### *2.3. From commodity to gift and back; the ambivalent object of capitalism with a human face*

The shift from ideology for-itself to ideology reflected-into-itself concerns the uncanny ‘spiritualisation’ of the more strictly material externality of the ‘official’ doctrinal edifice. As stated in Section 1.4., Žižek sees commodity fetishism as an ‘exemplary’ (1994, p. 15) notion here, insofar as it designates a quasi-spontaneous idealisation already at work in materiality: Not the materialisation of the ideological spirit, but the ‘uncanny “spiritualization” of the commodity-body’ (Žižek 1994, p. 18). This runs in to an immediately problematising consideration however, in view of the (idealised) ‘object’ of the human turn and its primary organisational form, the NGO. Despite the production of ‘commodity-images’ and the ‘distinction between NGOs and private business...becoming increasingly blurred’ (Kapoor 2013, p. 87), as per the title of Kapoor’s book, this is still within the confines of the ideology of global *charity*. Certainly, in incipient humanitarian organisations, as well as within the burgeoning aid regime, development assistance was conceived less in terms of commodity terminology (buying, selling, profit etc.) and more in terms of generosity, altruism and *giving*. While in state-based form, this was imbued with nationalist sentiment, the development of multilateral giving – and NGOs as crucial conduits of this practice – provided a higher degree of universality, as a practice

geared towards humanity as such, *against* the impersonal logic of the market. Indeed, such an ideology fits very nicely with the ‘human’ turn.<sup>42</sup> Whether in its Aristotelian, anthropological or Christian guise, gift-giving is on the side of civility, friendship, sociality and mutual assistance, against the competitiveness and individuality of buying and selling (cf. Scalzo 2017 for a genealogy of these three manifestations of the gift). In Aristotle, it was located in the realm of *kharis*, or the ‘spirit of gratitude’, and *philia* or ‘friendship’ (Scalzo 2017, p. 38, 39). As Marcel Henaff highlights in his book *The Price of Truth: Gift, Money and Philosophy* (2010), Aristotle categorised gift-giving in terms of direct exchange unmediated by money as ‘developed around the Greek notion of *kharis*’ or in terms of ‘gesture[s] of mutual assistance’ (2010, p. 246, 251).

In the anthropological tradition, the study of the gift has typically been influenced by the organicist tendencies of Durkheimian sociology, seeing the gift as an operator of sociality and aiding the cohesion of the community. Marcel Mauss for instance, arguably the most influential ‘gift theorist’ and the nephew of Emile Durkheim, considered the gift a ‘total social fact’, and as positive evidence that human beings ‘possess more than a tradesman morality...[such that] everything is still not wholly categorized in terms of buying and selling’ (Mauss 2002, p. 83). Those influenced by him similarly argue that it represents a ‘third paradigm’ beyond the market and state (cf. Godbout and Caille 1998, Godelier 1996), with these authors setting up an explicitly anti-utilitarian faction within the social sciences.<sup>43</sup> Such a movement aims to fight against the ‘imperialism of economic science’ on the

---

<sup>42</sup> In the following ‘review’ of gift literature, I make no claim to an exhaustive account, nor do I intend to intervene on debates on what the gift actually is. Rather, this is meant to highlight elements of its particular representation which are germane to this topic, and subsequently the question of ideology critique, particularly the peculiarity of the object of capitalism with a human face. It is about drawing out elements of the *ideology* of the gift, rather than effectively overlapping a concept with its object.

<sup>43</sup> The acronym for this faction, in French, bears Mauss’ name: Mouvement Anti-Utilitariste dans le Sciences Sociales.

grounds laid by Mauss' discovery that commercial exchange did not exhaust human capacities (Caille 2008, p. 1).

Yet, such gift-giving in this tradition is typically attributed to 'archaic' societies. Mauss himself criticised Malinowski's anthropology of giving because he took with him an idea of the gift that was rooted in the Western (capitalist) experience of Christianity (cf. Douglas 2002) in which, unlike in these societies, gift-giving was (and is) not a crucial mechanism for the maintenance of social structures. Nonetheless, such Christian giving still manifests some of the same imaginary characteristics as the anthropological and Aristotelian gift. For Maurice Godelier, in his book length engagement with the Maussian tradition of the gift, contends that in contemporary (capitalist) society it represents an:

'expression...of *personal* relationships located beyond the spheres of market and state...It testifies to this proximity by the absence of calculation, by the refusal to treat close friends and relatives as a means to one's end. In our culture, gift-giving thus continues to partake in an ethic and a logic which are not those of the market and of profit, which are even opposed to them and resist them...When idealized, the "uncalculating" gift operates in the imaginary as the last refuge of a solidarity, of an open-handedness which is supposed to have characterized other eras in the evolution of humankind. Gift-giving becomes the bearer of this utopia' (1996, p. 207-208).<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Taking this analysis into the arena of global political economy has similarly highlighted these themes. Tomisha Hattori for instance (2001, 2003) in analysing the role of aid organisations in promoting transnational hegemony, starts by noting how such an ideology typically runs counter to, and diverges sharply with a neoliberal rationale (2001, p. 159)

Linking this back to the 'human' ideologies of development and globalisation, Godelier claimed that Mauss, on the end of the First World War 'called upon the state and the generosity of the wealthy...to build a more just society' (ibid). And Gregoire Mallard similarly confirms Mauss' predilections toward the problematic of the gift and its relation to aid, as something with the capacity to build solidarity (2018). However, in the context of NGOs this is perhaps even more pronounced, insofar as these practitioners of giving, as noted previously, are decidedly less nationalist in focus (cf. Kapoor 2008). Indeed, drawing on Godelier's intervention, particularly his notion of the 'gift imaginary', Domen Bajde argues that modern charitable giving revolves precisely around the 'imagined human community' (2009, 2012, p. 12). At the level of the NGO object therefore, we thus get the apparently perfect complement to their predilections towards 'humanity' as a whole, some might say the apparent perfect 'objectal counter-point to the subject' (Žižek 2017, p. 149) of such 'human' ideologies, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. Suffice it to say here, the ideology of the gift represents at the level of object an alternative to the commodity, a more 'human' or 'personal' object.

Yet, this seems to be troubled by the argument above about the apparent colonisation of NGOs by marketised logics. For Monika Krause in her very influential intervention on the nature of humanitarian NGOs, while reviewing Mauss's formula for gift-exchange, she deems it insufficient to come to terms with the practicalities of NGO humanitarianism, and thus turns to Marx in order to analyse what NGOs 'produce' as a commodity. Insofar as what they produce is 'mediated by a market and involve[s] labour' (2014, p. 58), the donor is usurped by the consumer, and the conduit for gift-giving is replaced by a producer-consumer relation.

Many others writing about similar issues have jumped on this analysis. Freeman and Schuller (2020) for instance follow Krause in conceiving of NGOs as ‘producers of projects’ (2020, p. 8) which are evaluated in terms of ‘inflated exchange-value for the aid industry at the cost of use-value for aid beneficiaries’ (2020, p. 7). Lisa Ann Richey similarly argues that cause-related marketing – an exemplary instance of the marketisation of NGOs – transforms ‘humanitarian helping’, understood as ‘relationships with people and causes’ (2019, p. 81), into a commodity which produces ‘surplus-value through “helping”’ (2019, p. 81).

However, despite the attempt to pin down this object to one particular category, there nonetheless remains something in the NGO object which seems to resist categorisation in such either/or terms. While there is something about a commodity to it, according to Stirrat and Henkel the gift nonetheless plays a crucial ‘symbolic role...in supporting the image of NGOs’ (1997, p. 69). If NGOs are defined by anything, it is by being non-state *and non-profit* (Bernal and Grewal 2014) such that subsumption under the logic of the commodity would render them indistinguishable from private, for-profit firms. This is certainly Michael Edwards’ case. The former practitioner of both Oxfam and Save the Children as well as development NGO scholar, has vigorously criticised the role of business thinking within the regimes of philanthropy and aid (2010). While the

‘profit motive is not a dirty word... it is a different word from solidarity and caring with no expectation of return. These differences cannot be wished away. They are rooted, often unconsciously, in different worldviews and cultures...market values and human values are not just different; they pull in opposite directions in many important ways’ (Edwards 2010, n.p.).

While Edwards caveats this opposition with asserting a less confrontational position on the 'profit motive', the substance of his argument along with his own allegiances (to civil society, NGOs etc), reveals exactly where he stands on which is the 'best' route to go down. This position was mirrored by a story told by one of my interviewees. An expert on NGO management, he recalled a workshop at a conference run by British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND) – a network of UK NGOs working on international development – on the role of the private sector. The session was introduced by the chair with a tongue and cheek comment, where they stated that 'now we are going to talk about working with the darkside' (Participant 13). As such, while NGOs may be adopting a more commodified logic, the spontaneous presuppositions regarding the character of their object are apparently the precise opposite. So, then, what is significant about this? And what are its implications for critique?

### *2.3.1. Dialectical Materialism and the Critique of Political Economy*

In Section 2.2., I noted that the apparent ambivalence of NGOs – the fact that their stated vision *qua* humanity against neoliberalism is immanently undermined by their adoption of neoliberal logics and subsequent exploitation of their 'ambivalent' cosmopolitanism – both undermined the one-dimensional character of Gramscian analysis (itself rooted in a crude, and idealist, appreciation of the dialectic) and lent itself well to interpretation in terms of both fantasy and *jouissance*. Such an account developed in this section not only confirms this, but also serves to guard against more subtle un-dialectical approaches to this apparent ambivalence of NGOs.

Indeed, there is a recent and significant literature which precisely highlights the supposed ambivalence of NGOs. However, in each case, the recognition of such ambivalence functions as a starting point not to be explained, but to be explained



away. While Krause, and those who draw on her analysis, recognise a questionable ambiguity of the object, this is dissipated by the conceptuality of the commodity. For Krause, while emphasising a 'fragmentation of humanitarian reason' insofar as humanitarian practice is seemingly at odds with its explicit theory (2014), this is united in the conceptual frame of commodity production. Her argument, while initially promising, fails to take the further dialectical step in discerning this fragmentation at every level. Without this, it ultimately resembles a classic ideology critique which amounts to identifying that humanitarians know not what they do, even though they are doing it. Fragmentation results from ignorance of some positive empirical fact concealed by misguided belief, not something that reworks itself at every level, repeated alongside its necessary mystification. Ismail and Kamat (2018) take a different, but no less problematic tack. While they recognise that the capacity of NGOs to be active in 'building alliances against neoliberalism' (2018, p. 569) *and* to be performative of the neoliberal denigration of the state, means that their distinctiveness is down to their *ambivalence*, rather than attempting to explain this as such, they call for a 'conjunctural analysis'. What this ultimately amounts to is the need for more precise empirical studies which can articulate 'whether and how NGOs in different contexts can be won over to being part of the project of resistance to neoliberalism' (2018, p. 573). Bernal and Grewal (2014) similarly, highlight the indistinctness or emptiness of NGOs as a particular form, but only to step away from the implications of such 'emptiness' in favour of particularistic studies, thus rendering such a multi-dimensionality of NGOs – in that they can provide resistance to neoliberalism as well as being one of its primary 'conduit[s]' (2014, p. 8) – itself an open question and thus unexplained. Similarly, Lewis and Shuller (2017) argue that there is an 'inherent' 'productive instability' (2017, p. 634) of the concept, an 'intrinsic NGO diversity, complexity, and ambiguity' (2017, p. 635), but render this strictly an epistemological limitation to be

productively engaged with by 'charting similarities and differences' (2017, p. 634, 647) within such organisations and across the sector.

While they recognise some crucial ambiguity where NGOs can be all things at once, an explanation of such is ultimately 'left there', as some unspecified background which can be more or less concretised in particular situations. However, no less problematic is the attempt to provide an explanation by dissimulating such ambivalence, either by subsuming it under one side (i.e. 'they depoliticize neoliberalism' in Kapoor, or 'it is really a commodity' in Krause) or by finding an essential complementarity between the two poles. This is precisely the approach of Matthew Eagleton-Pierce (2019), who, while rightly casting doubt on the tendency to subsume the changes within the NGO sector – towards more 'managerial' or 'professional' organisation in which a more 'business' mindset (and associated practices) become more prevalent – under the banner of neoliberalisation, turns such changes themselves into a neutral technology in principle adaptable to any particular telos. Questioning the readings which subsume such shifts under 'neoliberalisation' through noting how they are occurring within a '*milieu* which has been historically critical of [neoliberal] capitalism' (2019, p. 2) – as I have done – he argues that such shifts are best understood as a growth of 'managerialism as a set of malleable social technologies which are open-ended with respect to the institutional site and *telos*' (2019, p. 6). The problem is that, on the level of the NGO object, there is no such apparent 'malleability' of one side. Both objects are ultimately defined in opposition from one another, such that any sort of reconciliation between the two is impossible. Nonetheless, they seem to coalesce at certain points in concrete objects.

So how can we critically approach this? It is my contention that the critique of political economy is of crucial import here, especially in its *dialectical* articulation

with Lacan.<sup>45</sup> This is for two reasons. First, it centres our gaze onto the formal anatomy of the commodity, ‘capitalism’s core category’ (LiPuma and Postone 2020, p. 169) and, in its opposition to the ‘gift’, implies the broader discussion of capitalism as such and its Other. Not only do existing psychoanalytic approaches often eschew this dimension when engaging ‘political economy’ (cf. Fridell 2014, Kapoor 2020, Sioh 2014), and even when dealing with such topics as commodification of ‘giving’ (cf. Kapoor 2013, Wilson 2014b, 2015a), but they also tend to focus on the reproduction of *neoliberal* capitalism. However, even ignoring the often explicitly anti-neoliberal character of this ‘human’ constellation, when integrating discussion of gifts and commodities this is much less certain.

The obvious response to this, however, is how such a critique of political economy, with the formal anatomy of the *commodity* at its centre, can account for its articulation with the *gift*. The answer lies in its *epistemology*, the second reason for its crucial import. In the first case, its *dialectical* mode of interpretation proceeds via split: Marx begins *Capital* by isolating two distinct aspects of the commodity which are not ultimately mediated into a coherent whole, nor ‘blurred’, but introduce a difference within an apparent unity. Indeed, according to Fredric Jameson this is one of the crucial elements of dialectical thinking, that is, ‘to invent a space from which to think these two identical yet antagonistic features together all at once’ (2002, p. 235) refusing to reduce one side to the other or provide some sort of ‘synthesis’ of the two.<sup>46</sup> It thus resists the positivist temptation of identifying what it ‘really is’, more productively allowing us to think its various real (yet abstract)

---

<sup>45</sup> It is unsurprising that the most accomplished approach to the question of NGO ambivalence is that of Kirk Helliker (2007) – who locates the contradictory *form* of NGOs not as an interesting empirical quirk to be explained away through closer categorisation (Bernat and Grewal 2014, Ismail and Kamat 2018), reconciled into a complementary unity (Eagleton-Pierce 2019), nor simply ‘left there’ in its specificity as a ‘productively unstable category’ (Lewis and Shuller 2017) but as a necessary aspect of *form* itself – draws on Marx’s critique of political economy.

<sup>46</sup> In *Valences of the Dialectic* (2009, p. 4) Jameson refers to the tendency to ‘resolve it [i.e. the opposition] one way or another [as] the non-dialectical temptation’

contradictory determinations. Certainly, as I go on to demonstrate in Chapter 5, the apparent paradox of the commodity-gift object is not to be fully resolved one way or another, and must be thought in relation to the difference of the commodity-form. The object of 'human' capitalist development or capitalism with a human face both repeats the commodity fetish at its purest, but also requires the fetish-character of 'charity' which, while gesturing to an absolute outside to the commodity, is both generated by it and ties us ever closer to its logic.

In the second case, not only does its particular brand of *materialism* emphasise the inconsistency of substance and subject, but it also conceives of materiality, like psychoanalysis, in 'sensuous supersensuous' terms (cf. Arthur 2004, Marx 2013, Tomšič 2015a, 2019b). In other words, it trains our attention to the curious idealisation at work in materiality, the ways in which an ordinary object gets 'turned into something transcendent' (Marx 2013, p. 46). The approaches which subsume the particular object discussed here into an 'either/or' implicitly try to bring the thing down to some properly 'worldly' features, rather than seeing how this excess attached to it can't be gotten rid of but forms a crucial part of its (non-)identity. Just as the commodity-form entails a specific structurally necessary appearance, the gift similarly seems to entail a particular uncanny appearance beyond appearance, whether in the form of Mauss' emphasis on 'hau' in Maori articulations of the gift – what he refers to as 'the spirit of things' (Mauss 2002, p. 14) – or in later 'post-structuralist' appreciations of the gift (cf. Moore 2011), which I'll come back to in Chapter 5. Certainly, *objet petit a* as a kind of 'third term', as Jacques-Alain Miller puts it, between 'corporeal specimen' and 'logical consistency' (2008, p. 22), and its conceptual complement (the fetish) provide crucial mechanisms for elucidating this apparent oscillation between fixed identity and non-identity. While the fetish is a function of identification, *objet petit a* is a 'pure parallax object...a minimal difference which divides one and the same object from itself' (2006b, p. 18), thus rendering

them, along with the negative-critical method, perfectly placed to come to terms with this apparent ambivalent object.

#### 2.4. *Conclusion: Ideologies of the 'human', NGO Ambivalence and F2F*

To sum up, such reference to a more 'human' economy, 'human' development or a capitalism/globalisation with a human face has been a consistent feature of the global political economic landscape for some time. However, particularly with regard to the 'object' of NGOs and capitalism with a human face, the significance of this formation is not simply in its re-occurrence but in its *ambivalence*. Far from some simple empirical quirk, this has deep theoretical significance. As I have argued, its re-occurrence and 'absolute' ambivalence both resists explanation, and by extension, subversion, in terms of existing approaches to ideology critique ('orthodox' Marxist, Gramscian, and psychoanalytic), and lends itself to critical interpretation in terms of a dialectical materialist critique of ideology. The rest of this thesis is now dedicated to realising this potential, demonstrating the extent to which such an approach can both explain and subvert 'human' ideologies of globalisation and development through the representative case of F2F.

While F2F was placed within the same ideological milieu as references to a 'human' development or globalisation with a human face in the introduction to this thesis, in light of the argument of this chapter their precise relationship can be refined. F2F doesn't simply represent such a humanisation of capitalism in a positive consonance between the two phenomena but rather in its *negativity*. F2F represents the 'ambivalence' (Ismail and Kamat 2018, p. 569) of NGOs, or their status as a 'productively unstable' category (Lewis and Schuller 2017). Indeed, as Bebbington, Hickey and Mitlin have argued, NGOs are in the paradoxical position of being a '*part of* whilst trying to be *apart from* the political economy' (2008, p. 9). In terms of

NGO ideology in-itself – conceived as a more ‘human’ or ‘people-centred’ approach to development, narrated in opposition to neoliberalism – F2F appears as conceptually complementary. Similarly, in terms of ideology for-itself, its communicative aspect seemingly entails its capacity to propagate said ideology along with it materialising a ‘human’ approach. For Greenpeace Canada’s marketing co-ordinator from 2005 Paul Mero, F2F was in some sense born because they ‘don’t take funding from governments or corporations...So we just have to get out there talking to *people*’ (Mero cited in Traves 2005 my emphasis). Yet at the same time as moving closer to people and away from the co-opting arms of states and firms, it also represents the trend towards NGO professionalisation and commercialisation. Lastly, in the weird ‘spectral’ materiality of NGO ideology reflected-into-itself, this tension captures the unusual status of their object of exchange as split between a more pure extension of generosity (*qua* gift-exchange) and being caught within the dominant commodified/quantified ideologies of exchange. In other words, NGO ambivalence is manifest in F2F. It therefore represents a site of dialectical contradiction immanent to the dispersed ‘humanising’ ideological formation. It appears as a concrete point whereby the tensions animating the movement of ‘humanising’ ideology are brought together, appearing both unexplainable within the contours of extant epistemological-conceptual orders, while displaying many pertinent features which at least potentially appear to lend themselves to theorisation in terms of the dialectical materialist critique of ideology framework articulated in Chapter 1. Moreover, as I will fully develop in the conclusion, retaining such a dialectical ambivalence provides the conditions for a materialist politics which, rather than being hinged on idealist predilections towards an alliance with the ‘good NGOs’ (cf. Robinson 2013, Rupert 2000) or a repetitive valorisation of a future ‘real human development’ (cf. Cammack 2017, Lebowitz 2009, Veltmeyer and Rushton 2012, Selwyn 2017), evolves immanently and subversively out of present conditions, allowing us to identify both

the gaps in its ideological structure and uncover traces of Utopian possibilities. However, at the moment this only remains a *potential*. The rest of the thesis therefore is now concerned with actualising this potential, starting with the ideology in-itself of F2F, how it appears on first sight in its explicit symbolic articulation.

## Chapter 3 - F2F In-itself: Symbolisation and Symptom

As I argued in Chapter 1, Section 1.2., ideology in-itself concerns its common-sense perception as a composite of articulated ideas, or ideology in its most simple determinations. In terms of the dialectical process this concerns a crucial first step; when we encounter a phenomenon, you don't simply leap to outlining its absolute complexity, but rather start with its simplest determinations. Likewise, starting our demonstration of the extent to which such a triadic, and dialectical, materialist critique of ideology can explain and subvert 'human' ideologies of globalisation and development, we must approach F2F at the level of its simplest, or 'dictionary definition', determinations. Yet, since what is revealed is not just a nice 'simple' unity of determinations but rather their negative moment which the 'triggers the very repetitive process of symbolisation' (Žižek 2000, p. 224), this gradually evolves, yielding further, more complex *and* contradictory, symbolic determinations of the phenomenon. Indeed, since the introduction of F2F to the UK, it has garnered significant attention from local and national media and has even been parodied in stand up and TV comedy (cf. Sean Lock (2021) and Ricky Gervais (2021)). Yet, its discourse is by no means uniform. While it has endured a fair amount of hostile media coverage from the 'more sensational end of the U.K. press' (Jay 2001, p. 89), its proponents have been equally as vocal in their defence of the practice, and some of the less 'sensational' press have intervened to mediate. So then, what are the contours of these 'articulated convictions on the nature' of F2F (Žižek 1994, p. 15), and to what extent can a 'symptomal' analysis help explain and subvert it? Going immanently beyond the conclusion of the Chapter 2, and drawing on desk research and interviews, I argue that F2F's explicit articulation is far from a mere 'big lie' or functional common-sense reproducing neoliberal hegemony, but a *symptomatic* point of symbolic overdetermination which – by virtue of condensing two



conflictual registers of altruistic charitable giving and cost-effective 'economisation' – functions as the internal negation of its universal context, or a 'species undermining its own genus' (Žižek 2008a, p. 16), condensed exemplarily in the figure of the 'chugger'. Of course, this doesn't always present itself as such, and first requires some sort of interpretation. Indeed, for a symptom to function it must operate as a *solution* to a deadlock, turning the latter into the semblance of a relation, which interpretation then seeks to undo. As such, interpretation of the psychoanalytic symptom thus entails both an 'analysis [which] consists in forcing out the contradiction "solved" by the symptom' (Zupančič 2017, p. 66) and the outlining of the contours of the 'solution' itself.

Such an analysis, it is argued, allows both a critical explanation the 'doctrine' of F2F as more than mere 'lie', 'myth' or cynical PR stunt, while also retaining the subversive edge of critique. My argument in this chapter (establishing the symptomatic status of F2F) unfolds in a tripartite structure through the oscillation between 'solution' and contradiction, or the ways in which the contradiction at the heart of F2F – between the instrumental or efficiency aspects of fundraising/organisational sustainability and the intrinsic/qualitative desire to altruistically 'help out' through practicing a 'human' economy – is precariously negated and the modes through which it returns.

In the first section I articulate how, in its least sophisticated form, F2F as a symptomatic solution functions through bringing the two onto the same plane, articulating them as two complementary poles of the given F2F whole. However, since such a solution reveals a flaw, namely in the opposition between these two poles, condensed antinomically in the 'chugger', in the subsequent Sections 3.2. and 3.3., I outline two further modes of discursive manoeuvrings by which the symptomatic status of F2F is neutralised. In other words, how it remains a 'solution.'

In Section 3.2. I highlight how proponents deflate/disavow the contradiction, reducing the critique to a question of banality and reasserting a proper relation in which the cost-effective or ‘economic’ aspect of F2F (i.e. its place as mechanism to generate funds) is subordinated to its social purpose, relegated to merely a banal consideration of organisational/instrumental necessity. In Section 3.3., I demonstrate how proponents also simultaneously externalise/displace this contradiction, reifying the proper use of F2F (in terms of its proper relation) into a symbolic Law and concentrating negativity *outside* this, in the transgressive figure of a ‘few bad apples’. I conclude by ‘forcing out’ further contradictions in F2F – in particular, how these modes of defence both cast F2F’s economic side as simultaneously banal *and* dangerous – and reflect on the meaning of F2F *qua* symptom, relating it to the direction of Chapter 4 and the thesis as a whole.

### **3.1. *Contradiction and the Chugger***

When researching this moment of F2F’s ideology, its official symbolisation, I thought it best to start with its ‘founders’, in the hope of a definitive encapsulation of the practices’ essence. Although unable to get a formal interview, during my preliminary desk research I discovered a short video of Daryll Upsall – fundraising ‘guru’ integral to F2F’s (re)invention who established his own agency in 2001, working with (among others) Oxfam, Save the Children, Action Aid and UNICEF, ‘helping [them] to change the world’ (Upsall 2009, Daryl Upsall Consulting International 2020) – speaking about F2F. When I first encountered this ‘data’, I expected to hear a helpful summary of F2F’s specificities from an authoritative expert on the subject. Yet, within the first thirty seconds, what I got was exactly the opposite: a statement of its generality. Rather than a ‘novel empirical case’, Upsall in fact designates F2F as ‘probably the oldest form of fundraising we’ve ever done on the earth, it is actually one human being speaking to another human being asking

them to make a commitment to support a charity' (Upsall in Fundraising Podcast 2012). Not only did this new information conflict with my rationale for this research, but also with other statements from those integral to its (re)invention (who have worked closely with Upsall). Ken Burnett for instance, claimed that F2F's novelty meant that the 'fundraising acquisition paradigm had changed, irrevocably' (Burnett 2011a). And even Upsall claims on a different platform that the design and implementation of F2F was in part driven by the conviction that 'there could be no business as usual' and thus that 'all this [i.e. existing fundraising strategy] was to change, rapidly and dramatically' (Upsall in SOFII 2009). F2F is thus symbolised immediately as both old and new, conventional and innovative. In one sense it accords with a conventional understanding of charity fundraising, yet in another it represents a decisive shift. So, what is the content of this shift? Two particular aspects stand out.

First, a 'big difference is they're [the fundraisers] asking them [potential donors] to make a commitment every month through their bank or credit card for many years to come' (Upsall in Fundraising Podcast 2012). Second, according to Upsall, one of the most important things to consider when starting an F2F operation is the quality of your fundraisers. While they must have the 'passion and drive' (ibid) to raise funds for the organisation's cause, this alone is not sufficient. What they really need he claims, with a visible degree of anguish on his face, is the 'capacity to ask for funds' (ibid). This is interesting for two reasons: First, although Upsall had spoken of *fundraising* before, he had couched F2F within the spirit of conventional charity fundraising through terms like the 'commitment' to and 'support' of a charity, rather than the more purely material/quantitative term 'funds'. In other words, when shifting to this element which distinguishes F2F's novelty, the vocabulary shifts. Secondly, his facial expression when he uttered this sentence suggested this was anything but comfortable. Yet, when describing F2F earlier as a continuation of

the essence of charitable fundraising, part and parcel of which is still an 'ask' for support, he seemed completely at ease. Furthermore, when identifying F2F's novelty as in part relying on monthly donations, framed again in the more distinctly 'charitable' language of 'commitment' and 'support', Upsall also appeared calm. So why at the point of 'asking for funds' did such a 'definition' of successful F2F appear a burden to state? What was it about declaring this element specific to successful F2F – otherwise conceived as a manifestation of traditional charity fundraising – which caused the downcast look and accompanying sigh? This was revealed soon after, when clear lines of demarcation were drawn over what counts towards the 'capacity to ask for funds' (ibid). According to Upsall, a crucial aspect of successful F2F is the use of *paid, professional fundraisers*. Although he claims that volunteers are very passionate and can speak at length and with depth about the organisation and its values, they are not very good at 'asking for money' (ibid). As a result, while F2F is symbolised as a continuation of traditional charity fundraising, it crucially incorporates the impetus of a market transaction, or the conviction that in order for fundraising to most effectively do its primary job (that is, raise funds) it should not simply rely on a spontaneous outpouring of generosity (whether in terms of an individual donating money or, for the volunteer, their time), but employ people to actively solicit individuals to agree to a regular monthly donation.

Certainly, in its original inception and its recurrent, 'common sense' depiction, F2F has been split along two primary symbolic determinations captured by Daryll Upsall's explication of F2F's dialectics of old and new – continuity and change – in its relation to other (more traditional) species of its genus. In one sense it is depicted as following from the spirit of traditional charity fundraising, conceptualised as an altruistic activity aimed at contributing towards, in Upsall's words, a 'cause' or 'mission' for its own sake. F2F thus aligns itself with the work, vision and values of those organisations which marshal it, placing it, in line with what we learnt in

Chapter 2, in service of a more 'human' capitalist development and globalisation. In another sense however, unlike voluntary or fundraising for one-off donations, it is also designated as a more *efficient*, as capable of generating funds in a cost-effective manner, crucially by means of importing organisational elements more commonly associated with business. For proponents, this is precisely the beauty of F2F: it raises money for good causes for their own sake – as perhaps, according to the US based Professional Face-to-Face Fundraising Association, one of the 'most *personal* forms of fundraising' (PFFA 2021) – but it does so much more efficiently than other fundraising mechanisms. In a briefing paper for the House of Commons for instance, Catherine Fairbairn, citing the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA), precursor to what is now the Institute of Fundraising (IoF), highlights the justification for F2F along those two axes:

'F2F is one of the most cost-effective and efficient ways for charities to find new regular donors. Charities may seek supporters who will give them a fixed amount each month rather than make one-off or ad hoc donations, because this gives them a predictable income stream and allows them to plan their expenditure on charitable services and programmes. F2F fundraisers also provide one of the most immediate ways for a charity spread the word about their work and make sure people know how to reach them if they need their support. It enables charities to have a more in-depth conversation about what they do and answer questions from members of the public' (Fairbairn 2016, p. 4).

In the first instance, F2F is 'cost-effective and efficient' in the process of acquiring regular donors. In other words, it functions as an 'economic' means by which charities can guarantee their organisational sustainability. It is not simply cost-effective in the activity, but also in its regularity, providing a continual investment

of money from donors. However, in the second instance, it also provides a space to garner 'support', to promote the activity of the charity and in some cases actually provide outreach, explicitly *doing* the charity's work (in terms of 'making sure people know how to reach them if they need their support'). Importantly, F2F is symbolised as *both* of these things, one after the other. This gives it a complementary yet twofold character. For Ken Burnett, another fundraising 'guru' and champion of F2F, F2F represents an exemplary instance of what he terms 'relationship fundraising' (2002, p. 288) with its 'donor-centred' emphasis closely mirroring the 'human-centred' ideology of human development. F2F is not just One, but a One comprised of a neatly intersecting Two.

This formulation is repeated by charities themselves who similarly justify the use of F2F according to its capacity to combine the two principles of instrumental efficiency – cost-effectiveness – and its intrinsic motivation. Oxfam for instance describes F2F as one 'of the most *cost-effective* ways of recruiting and engaging regular *supporters*: they give us an excellent opportunity to *connect with the public* and *raise money* to help millions of people every year' (Oxfam 2019b, my emphasis). Prior to the colon, F2F's 'cost-effective' aspect is connected seamlessly with its more intrinsic purpose of winning over 'supporters' to the cause by means of an 'and'. While after the colon, an 'and' comparably brings together F2F's capacity to 'connect with the public', i.e. support the communication of the organisation's social purpose, and 'raise money' without the appearance of dissonance. Save the Children similarly describes F2F as 'one way we *raise funds* for our vital work. Face-to-face fundraising is an opportunity for our fundraisers to explain our work in person, and for our *supporters* to ask any questions they have immediately. It also means *we can speak with people* who may not otherwise have heard about our work' (Save the Children 2019, my emphasis). Just as with the example from Oxfam therefore, the two ways in which F2F is justified (as efficient, cost-effective

fundraising mechanism and as supporting the cause, communicating the 'message') sit nicely together, painting F2F as a win-win scenario that satisfies the desire of NGOs towards their cause as well as satisfying need to do this as efficiently as possible. In speech however, specifically Upsall's unease in articulating the more 'economic' element within the discussion of F2F, we can determine something not quite right in this combination.

One interviewee for instance, another fundraising 'guru' who'd been involved in F2F's inception, framed this in terms of a 'dilemma'. Having worked with 'many if not most of Britain's great causes...most of the major causes in the UK and internationally' primarily in the process of 'acquiring new donors...tend[ing] to focus on marketing, communication...[in order] to have a regular supply of money coming in' he contended that F2F was embroiled in a dilemma of 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness' (Participant 1). While the former refers to 'keeping costs as low as possible, and doing as little as possible in the hope we can get as much money in now' the latter refers more to the 'longer term' goals of what they would prefer to call the 'change the world sector', rather than non-profit sector. Insofar as these are posited in terms of a 'dilemma', it implies some basic difficulty in reconciling these aspects. Yet, from this interviewee's 'constructive criticism' it is nonetheless something which can be worked out, and indeed, while dilemma implies some difficulty, it is by no means impossible.

Thus, what was portrayed by Upsall as the crucial ingredient accounting for successful F2F – *hiring paid fundraisers* capable of going beyond educating people on the values of the organisation and *asking for money* – seemed to be a source of internal struggle and tension. These two principles appeared to militate against one another, working in opposite directions and thus threatening to pull F2F apart. Within a short space of time, this tension was effectively codified in a single pejorative term:

chugger. Added to the list of acceptable words for TV show *Countdown* in 2004 and the Oxford English Dictionary in 2005, far from an unproblematic win-win scenario, the signifier 'chugger' introduced an absolute contradiction into the heart of F2F's smooth symbolic space. Rather than a complementary relationship (in principle) between F2F's primary symbolic determinations, 'chugger' indicates a problematic combination of opposed tendencies. Can one even imagine two more opposed concepts than the activities of charity and mugging? While charity stands for an act of altruism, selflessly giving, the intrusion of 'mugger' invokes the image of an aggressive individual selfishly taking. Of course, although quite tongue and cheek, it nonetheless reveals something crucial. That is, it highlights something dissonant about its symbolic constitution. The contradiction of these symbolic determinations, manifested in the 'chugger', reveals a 'certain fissure, an asymmetry, a certain 'pathological' imbalance which belies the universalism' (Žižek 2008a, p. 16) or apparent harmoniousness of F2F's symbolic overdetermination. In other words, we have detected a symptom.

Certainly, the way in which critics paint F2F, emblematically characterised by the signifier chugger, regularly plays on this tension, recognising that something just doesn't quite fit in F2F's combination of market structures and the spirit of authentic charity. *The Daily Mail* for instance published an article in 2019 on what they consider to be the outrageous amount of money paid to fundraising companies for face-to-face fundraising (Keogh and Kelly 2019). Their gripe, reproducing a common criticism of charity in the UK and beyond (cf. Breeze and Mohan 2020, Rose-Ackerman 1982) was not with charity per se, rather the fact that the use of third party, for-profit, fundraising companies verges on the unethical and in fact means that donations are being 'mediated', not marshalled for the cause themselves but rather a part of this big operation that puts money in the pockets of fundraisers rather than the 'good causes' of various charities. Although they highlight how the



introduction of money-making results in 'unethical' behaviour amongst fundraisers, it is clear that this very act is intrinsically unethical, that money making should not be intruding into the authentic spirit of charity.<sup>47</sup>

Indeed, beyond being brought to the 'absolute' contradiction of the chugger, there is a definite contradiction between the two primary elements of its symbolic constitution. While the former – F2F as charity – relies on intrinsic, altruistic, moral and cooperative logics centred on manifesting the inherent telos of the organisation, the latter – F2F as a cost-effective, efficient fundraising mechanism – centres on a more economic vocabulary of instrumental efficiency, self-interest (of the organisation) and the associated competitive grammar of market transactions. In each case this entails opposed conceptions of both society and subject. In the first instance, F2F as charity implies a 'warm' subject of compassion and collective 'love of mankind', along with the accompanying image of the social as bound by civic responsibility and duty to those in need. In the second instance however, F2F as good business implies a 'cold', calculating subject of self-interest, and an atomised society in which our civic responsibility is to look after ourselves. Certainly, while the latter implies a Smithian logic that 'we address ourselves not to their humanity, but to their self-love. It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest' (Smith 1776, n.p.), the former suggests precisely the opposite: that, if we are in need, dinner can indeed be expected from the benevolence, or the 'humanity' of the butcher, brewer or baker.

---

<sup>47</sup> Such arguments, as demonstrated in Michael Edward's intervention onto the place of 'profit' within charity cited in chapter 2 (2010) and other 'moralistic' interventions on the marketisation of philanthropy (Nikel and Eikenberry 2009), even appear on the left.

What we have with the explicit articulation of F2F therefore is a condensation of opposed symbolic threads, or a particular (dissonant) 'solution' to a contradiction which finds its symptomatic expression in the 'chugger'. Rather than opposing its official symbolisation to some external body of truth against which the former is denounced as mere falsity (produced by ignorance or purposeful manipulation), such a symptomatic analysis proceeds immanently to its object, 'forcing out' the contradiction, 'boring a hole' in the seemingly unproblematic/consistent symbolisation of F2F (Zupančič 2017, p. 66). Of course, one of the key aspects of the symptom is not only its repetition but its capacity to resist 'communication and interpretation [and thus being] included within the circuit of discourse' (Žižek 2008a, p. 82). Consequently, its analysis doesn't end here, content with having demonstrated its falsity, and thus nor does its subversion. And indeed, already minimally suggested in this section, far from simply wallowing in blissful ignorance of Marx's fundamental ontology of capital, there is an acute awareness from its practitioners of such a (symptomatic) tension. My fieldwork and desk research have both shown that there is a lot of work going into maintaining the combination of opposed principles. First, is the operation of *disavowal* in which the subject of F2F simultaneously recognises the inconsistency of the symbolic universe, acknowledges its immanent negativity, yet also denies it, depriving it of its symptomatic status. As a result, the mechanism seeks to dismiss the contradiction by means of explaining it away or cleansing it of its status as a contradiction as such, and thus re-establishing a symbolic relation between the two opposites. Second, this is complemented by a form of *displacement* in which a substitute for the immanent contradiction is introduced, dislodging it by means of transferring it from inside to outside. In other words, such a mechanism of displacement works by (re)locating the source of contradiction in an external element, thus maintaining the harmonious/smooth relation within itself.

### 3.2. *Banalisation and Instrumental Necessity*

As Section 3.1. established, F2F's symbolisation condenses contradictory strands of meaning and finds its symptomatic expression in the 'chugger'. Although this latter (theoretically informed) designation is novel – and has significant consequences which enhance the contribution of this thesis – the assumption of a certain dissonance in this formulation is not new (cf. Nickel and Eikenberry 2009, Richey and Ponte 2011, p. 4). Even amongst its proponents, the response to this criticism rarely takes the form of total denial. In response to the emblematic critique of F2F from *The Daily Mail* (which alluded to some sort of dissonance in F2F in terms of its commercialisation relative to what should be the true essence of charities), David Ainsworth, an editor of *Civil Society Media* and member of the Charity Finance Group, proceeds by way of its banalisation rather than factual negation. According to Ainsworth, this critique was 'tired and devoid of new information', representing something which could have simply been reproduced from the contents of 'its last article on the subject, a few years ago' (Ainsworth 2018). Certainly, the fact that there is a lot of money which goes into fundraising, that fundraisers are paid, that often third-party for-profit organisations are used to run F2F operations was 'first reported at least 15 years ago and possibly longer' and was 'never really kept a secret in the first place.' (ibid). The fact of the matter, according to Ainsworth, is that 'charities need money. To get money you have to ask for it. If you are going to spend your life asking for money, you need to be paid.' (ibid). In other words, while it would be great if charitable giving operated on a purely voluntary basis – if people 'supported charities out of the goodness of their own heart' (ibid) – this is simply not the reality of the matter: in order to meet 'end causes', organisational sustainability is a necessity, and this is not achievable solely through voluntary (or passive) fundraising.

Despite the seeming banality of *The Daily Mail's* rehashed critique, it provoked many to rush to F2F's defence. In some sense mirroring the argument from Ainsworth, F2F practitioners responded by deflating F2F's tension through confining its more 'economic' side to the role of banal organisational necessity, subordinating this aspect to the meagre role of instrument in service of the organisation's telos. An article on the same platform, published on the same day, emphasised for instance 'that face-to-face fundraising is a well understood and *effective* mechanism to recruit donors, and that it is *necessary* to pay fundraisers for the work they do' (Weakley 2018, my emphasis). As such, while the economised aspect of F2F is recognised, it simultaneously gets reduced to an instrumental or secondary consideration, as simply a necessity for an organisation to survive and to continue its work.

The critique which points to a dissonance in F2F's symbolic constitution is thus banalised: rather than directly contesting its substance by providing a distinct opposed narrative, the critique is deprived of its actual critique. While *The Daily Mail* thinks it is delivering a knockout blow by exposing the 'economics' of fundraising, this reality is already 'well understood' and the continuing use of F2F is conditioned by the fact that it is 'necessary', and in actuality, despite *The Daily Mail's* allusions to the contrary, an 'effective mechanism' (ibid).

This discursive manoeuvre is repeated throughout the article in an array of quotes sourced from various individuals working in fundraising (either at charities themselves, or regulatory bodies like the IoF). For example, Danielle Atkinson, head of Individual Giving at Plan International, responded to the article in the manner of pure truism, as if *The Daily Mail's* critique already had an easy answer:

‘Yes, raising funds costs money. Yes, we always do it as effectively as possible. And we work with the best to get the quality & assurance we – and our donors – demand. When *The Daily Mail* attacks, it makes me even more proud of what I do everyday. #ProudFundraiser’ (Atkinson in Weakley 2018).

In this short tweet, we can see the precise substance of this disavowal. First the critique is banalised (note the use of ‘Yes’ at the start of the first two sentences, as if to suggest a ‘fact of the matter’, such that it is already affirmed before starting. It is easy to imagine the ‘Yes’ being replaced with a ‘well obviously...’). Second, fundraising itself is banalised, reduced to a question of administration according to the efficiency demands of organisational survival (or growth...). Third, although organised along banal considerations of effectiveness or efficiency, it also entails doing right by the donors, recognising in fundraising *the necessity of not just fundraising* and thus its *instrumental* value. That is, fundraising is conceived as not solely extracting as much as possible without regard for what the donor wants – not just in terms of not exploiting the donors, or not treating them with respect – but also in terms of fulfilling the donors demands generated through the act of donation (a donation is surely not a mandate for further fundraising, but rather an expression of the ‘demand’ to fulfil the organisation’s goals). Indeed, if Atkinson is proud of being a fundraiser, it is surely because of what those funds do, rather than simply fundraising itself. She is therefore proud of her *instrumental* role, proud that she can raise funds *for* Plan International.

These tropes are repeated throughout the article with various degrees of emphasis. Joe Doyle, head of Individual Giving at Scope, similarly reduced fundraising to its banal status as a necessity of organisational efficiency, and its instrumentalisation towards the end goals of the organisation:

‘We’re committed to ensuring that every penny we raise is spent in the most effective way, and as much as possible goes to the front-line services we run...We work with third-party agencies to enable us to reach the greatest number of people, talk about our work and help us raise the funds we need to support our work’ (Doyle in Weakley 2018).

Although this individual recognises the fundraising requirement of efficiency (‘every penny we raise is spent in the most effective way’), this is more than just efficiency in the act of fundraising. What effectively spending money generated in fundraising amounts to, is not reinvesting it so that more money can be raised next time round, but that ‘as much as possible goes to the front-line services we run’. That is, towards the organisation’s *raison d’être*. Indeed, the justification here of using for-profit agencies is not primarily due to their cost-effectiveness but rather to their capacity to raise awareness of their message. Once again, even when they justify it in terms of how it helps them raise funds, this is seconded to something that they ‘*need to support our work*’ (ibid my emphasis).

Certainly, as my added emphasis in the last quote highlights, while it is instrumentalised it is not an instrument that can be dropped at no cost. Rather it remains a *necessary* instrument. For example, Karl Wilding, chief executive of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), a charitable body which ‘champions the voluntary sector and volunteering because they’re essential for a better society’ (NCVO 2021), described the commercialisation of fundraising (in this case, F2F) as an ‘*uncomfortable truth*’ (Wilding in Weakley 2018, my emphasis); although maybe not ideal, it is ‘true’, a fact of the matter, a requirement of organisational necessity, and pointing this out as problematic amounts to pure banality. Thus, in his response to *The Daily Mail* article, he sarcastically noted that

the 'Daily Mail is explaining how charities and #fundraising work today. The news today is that charities doing street fundraising spend money on fundraising costs' (ibid). Similarly, Daniel Fluskey, head of Policy and Research at the IoF, responded with the claim that 'Without spending money on fundraising, charities can't exist', thus highlighting the importance of fundraising but only as a necessary step towards instrumentally maintaining the existence of charities. Certainly, despite highlighting just quite how effective this mode of fundraising could be (understood in purely quantitative terms) by noting the statistic that '£1 spent gets £4.20 back', this is followed by an implicit instrumentalisation of fundraising towards the organisation's end goal with the qualifying brackets '(of which a small amount goes on raising money in the future)' (Fluskey in Weakley 2018): the money raised from fundraising is thus cast as primarily for the charity work, not the pursuit of more money.

This mode of disavowal was similarly discernible from my fieldwork observations and interviews. Again, far from mere ignorance of problems generated by the tension central to F2F, this immanent contradiction was often deflated by an assertion of the proper relation between either element: the point of F2F was about the organisation's end goals, with the fundraising element treated as a subordinate moment, reduced to the banal question of instrumental necessity.

One interviewee who had been active in the management and structuring of F2F from its early years explicitly stated that fundraising should not be about money. Rather, the philosophy that informed their organisation of F2F and their recommendations for its future direction, involved 'put[ing] the donor at the heart of fundraising...rather than mere financial targets' (Participant 1). What this means, echoing Atkinson's quoted comments earlier, is not simply to do right by the donor, endeavouring to not treating them in an exploitative/rude etc. manner, but rather

to fulfil the donors mandate: in the words of this interviewee, 'to get a job done' rather than 'getting as much money as quick as you can' (ibid). Another, who had been involved in running their own agency described the general process for getting into F2F management as starting 'with caring and then you have to think, well how do I help the most?' (Participant 2). Moreover, after speaking to a CARE International fundraiser on the street for a period of time I gestured to him that I would not be 'signing-up'. He then responded by saying that they preferred to use the term 'helping out' to 'signing-up' (Participant 15). In other words, F2F begins primarily with the intrinsic motivation to contribute to an organisation's telos, and then only at a secondary level does the question of efficiency enter.<sup>48</sup>

Another interviewee who had been involved in F2F throughout its history, in various roles from fundraiser to manager to regulator, maintained that while fundraisers sometimes get a bad rap for adopting sales tactics (that is, becoming too close to a 'pure' business) they ultimately 'have got a good heart' (Participant 3). For this individual, the reason they got into F2F was simply the desire to work for Amnesty International. Thus, although sales tactics are present amongst certain sectors of the fundraising community, this is only ever the means to an end, a first step towards the goal of 'making a difference'. Yet, once again, while the 'economic' aspect of F2F is instrumentalised, it is nonetheless maintained as necessary: this interviewee for instance complained that excluding the more sales-type fundraisers means you are 'cutting off your nose to spite your face' (Participant 3). That is, excluding this aspect would be self-destructive, undermining a necessary aspect at the expense of the whole. Indeed, as another interviewee remarked 'I'm afraid to say it but...it's a business as well...they *have* to balance the books' (Participant 4, my emphasis). Although it might not be ideal, these organisations are beholden to the

---

<sup>48</sup> Interestingly, after I had written this, I discovered that Oxfam had updated their face-to-face fundraising page, with it now entitled 'face-to-face engagement' (Oxfam 2020b). This seems to suggest there may be something even stronger than this disavowal currently brewing.



necessities of their own reproduction, and sometimes that involves relative commercialisation: as another interviewee, involved in various (academic) projects which try to combine the 'mind of a business and the heart of a charity' claimed, 'charities *have* to be able to create a surplus, otherwise they cannot continue to reinvest in their infrastructure' (Participant 5, my emphasis). As another interviewee stated, 'no organisation, from Oxfam down to a very small organisation [can survive without it], they are going to want to look for a return on their investment' (Participant 1).

This mode of disavowal however does not absolve its symptomatic status (indeed, if this question is so banal, or just a question of pragmatism or instrumental necessity then why does it even need to be restated?); the attempt to bring them into complementary relation with each other does not resolve the logical (symbolic) opposition between its primary determinations. Rather, it merely rearranges their relation to one another, momentarily solving the contradiction between them by confining them to different levels of importance and giving them their proper place. And in actuality, despite the discursive subordination of its 'economic' aspect under its more general social purpose, the opposition continues to disturb its smooth operation. Indeed, the fact that responses to *The Daily Mail's* critique attested to its lack of novelty suggests the tension it highlighted continues to repeat itself, failing to be resolved once and for all by being articulated into a relational organic unity: in other words, it still symptomatically 'disturbs the surface of the false appearance' (Žižek 2008d, p. ix). Further, as the next section (3.3.), the tension is rearticulated – with the help of this primary mode of disavowal – into an opposition between F2F in its organic complementarity and the malignant element, the 'chugger', in which the contradiction is concentrated. Again, far from absolving F2F of its symptomatic status, this in fact adds to it: despite the apparently complementarity of these modes of defence their relation is equally symptomatic/dissonant; while the contradiction

is disavowed through banalisation and reduced to a question of instrumental necessity, the supporting displacement constructs its 'economic' side as anything but banal.

### 3.3. *The Last Temptation of Home Fundraising*

As Section 3.2. showed, the symptomatic status of F2F's symbolic dissonance is only momentarily resolved through the reassertion of the proper relation between F2F as charity and F2F as business, thus leaving their logical opposition intact. As a result, this mode of disavowal doesn't operate alone; simply relegating the 'economic' side of F2F to its social purpose cannot explain away its consistent transgressions, or the moments in which the former ('economic') dominates over the latter ('social purpose'). Indeed, if the tension can be internally resolved, its repetition must come from outside. Thus, this form of defence is complemented by another which reifies the internal resolution into symbolic Law (with its associated prohibitions) thus displacing the contradiction between F2F as charity and F2F as business onto the tension between the unified conception of F2F as instrumentalising business towards charity – its proper social purpose – and 'false' F2F. Indeed, it is worth noting that 'chugger' is itself not readily accepted within the sector. One interviewee for instance remarked that when she got the job, she 'didn't realise it was an offensive term, so when I got through the interview I was like "yay, I'm a chugger now"'. They reacted poorly and said that it is actually an offensive term' (Participant 12). Similarly, online articles from both the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) and *The Guardian* drew an opposition between F2F and 'chuggers'. In the former, it is literally phrased as a question of one or the other "Chuggers' or face-to-face fundraisers?" (Kelly 2011). And in the latter, in an article entitled 'Are chuggers ethical?', the by-line reads: 'Face-to-face fundraisers are very effective in securing long-term donations for charities – but aggressive ones, known as

chuggers, should be ignored' (Siegle 2015). In other words, the immanent contradiction of its symbolic form is displaced onto an opposition between its proper use and its improper use, the former guided by the aforementioned resolution and the latter conceived as its transgression: F2F is not 'chugging', but there are 'chuggers' which corrode its proper functioning.

One interviewee for instance recurrently used a particularly telling word when navigating the issue of managing F2F's proper use: temptation. This individual had worked in F2F for a long time, getting into it after university because they 'wanted to get into the charity sector' or, rather more abstractly, because they 'wanted to help' (Participant 2). Very quickly they got into management positions but became increasingly disillusioned by how agencies were operating. Believing that despite the dropping standards people got into it for the right reasons, they decided the best way to overcome the problems was to set up their own company. When speaking of agencies that grow quickly (or go bust), the precarious employment arrangements of fundraisers (as typically part-time or students), or the lapses in standards, the signifier 'temptation' appears recurrently:

'There's a constant *temptation*...a lot of people want to do the job and it's a fairly well paid job...it's probably better than working in you know, say McDonalds or something like that...[At first] there was a lot of people who'd done development studies, not unlike yourself actually, who were graduates who really were interested into getting into the industry... [I also] wanted to get into the charity sector somewhere...I was certainly not a salesperson...now it is a minority and I think that's largely because the industry as a whole has not been particularly responsible for how it's gone about employing people...it's *tempting*, there's a constant *temptation* because it's easy to find people who want to do the job, to get big very

quickly...so like I say, the *temptation* is there then...Like I said, there is a *temptation* to break your own rules because you can become more profitable next week' (Participant 2).

One of the first things that come to mind when the signifier 'temptation' is uttered is its usage within the moral-theological context (cf. Day 1993). In Islam for instance, the character Eblis (an angel cast out of heaven, often compared to Satan in the Christian tradition) is referred to as the 'Tempter of Man', and in Buddhism the character Mara (a demon) figures as an agent who tempts Prince Siddhartha (Buddha) with beautiful women, placing obstacles in the way of his ascent to Enlightenment. Similarly, within the Christian tradition, Satan is otherwise known as the Tempter, and appears in various guises to try and break an individual's fidelity to God and subvert his prohibitions. In possibly the most famous instance of temptation, from Genesis, the serpent (widely interpreted to be an embodiment of Satan) emerges to undermine God's rules for conduct in the Garden of Eden by 'tempting' Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. In a similar version of this story from the Qur'an, Eblis plays the role of the serpent, in this case tempting Eve to eat from the Tree of Immortality.

In these cases, in order for there to be a temptation two things are presupposed. Firstly, succumbing to temptation *transgresses* some existing prohibition: Eve was forbidden by God from eating from both the Trees of Knowledge and Immortality, just as Prince Siddhartha's succumbing to the temptation transgresses the Buddhist imperative towards Enlightenment. Returning to F2F, the interviewee never described the desire to 'do good' or contribute towards the organisation's end goals as tempting. It was only when F2F appeared to move away from those explicit aims, into the shorter term and self-interested activity of fundraising's own reproduction

(for its own sake), or indeed the profit-making aims of third-party fundraising agencies, that temptation became an appropriate term for them to use.

Secondly, it presupposes some immediate desirability of the object of temptation. In Eve's case, the serpent argues that God's prohibition was based on a lie that eating from the tree would result in death. In fact, according to the serpent, transgressing God's prohibition is depicted as something that would actively benefit her: eating from the Tree of Knowledge would create a situation in which her 'eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil'. Afterwards, Eve then 'saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise' (Biblia 2019,n.p). In the context of F2F, while the express desire is to contribute to the organisation's cause, excessively growing the company is still tempting 'because it is very easy to find people who want to do the job [and therefore easy] to get big very quickly' (Participant 2). In other words, doing F2F the wrong way – violating its symbolic Law – can make lots of money very quickly.

As a result, by labelling the 'out of balance' F2F as a result of succumbing to a temptation, it locates its opposition not in the contradiction between the symbolic worlds of charity and the market but in the opposition between those with a resolute desire to 'help out' or to 'make a difference' and those who are in it for short term ends. Those who really care and those who have been corrupted by the 'temptation' and failed to obey the essential Law animating F2F's pursuit of funds.

What this then brings into view is a third aspect of 'temptation' which is crucial to this ideological displacement. If F2F's symptomatic status is disavowed by reconciling its immanent contradiction into a harmonious relation and reified into a formula of F2F's symbolic Law / prohibition, then where does the discord with F2F

come from? If it is not immanently and irreconcilably split then the source of the symptomatic effects is displaced outside the essence of F2F proper, concentrated on specific malignant agents who have succumbed to their temptation. Indeed, F2F is not covered by much direct legal regulation, relying on voluntary codes of conduct agreed by fundraising representatives and local governance structures which are not easily enforceable, and thus the legal context surrounding F2F means much comes down to self-management (Participant 3, Participant 7, Participant 8, Participant 11). Those practicing F2F need to remember what they are really there for. And indeed, the notion of temptation itself implies this: resisting temptation is a question of self-control. Pope Francis for instance recently got into a debate about changing the line of the Lord's prayer which mentions temptation. This was because the text of the prayer implies that God himself is the tempter (and thus aligned with Satan). After questioning the translation, he states that 'I am the one who falls; it's not him pushing me into temptation to see how I have fallen' (cited in Sherwood 2019). Thus, while there is force on behalf of the tempter, ultimately responsibility lies with the individual being tempted. Tempting someone does not remove any room to manoeuvre, rather this is crucially left open. As a result, the temptation of F2F implies a 'solving' of its contradiction by means of externalisation: it is not to do with the business of F2F per se, but rather how it has been managed.

We can certainly see this displacement in various news outlets and blogs, both in more 'detached' reflections on F2F and more engaged ones from ex/current fundraisers. In the first instance, *The Financial Times* report on F2F from 2009 paid particular attention to the problem of 'bad behaviour', solvable through more stringent checks and balances (like mystery shoppers). Paraphrasing a quote from Mick Aldridge, former chief executing of the PFRA (now the IoF), 'most stories of bad practice are exaggerated. Chugging accounted for only 1.4 per cent of complaints...bad impressions are often the result of third parties taking umbrage at

behaviour that is already dying out' (Fickling 2009). Similarly, the reflection from *The Telegraph* on the evidence retrieved from their undercover expose focused on highlighting the multitude of activities which broke the rules, thus framing it in terms of malignant individuals. And the invited response from the accused likewise reduced it to a question of *some* specific agents not abiding by the rules: 'We very much regret the rules of disclosure seem to have not been followed in some instances' (cited in Duffin and Mendrick 2012).

Similarly, on a blog post by fundraising guru and one of F2F's original supporters Ken Burnett, which generated so much interest he decided to publish others' interventions, a consistent theme is the problem of a 'few bad apples'. One respondent's intervention into the debate for instance stated that 'Despite the sterling work of the cohort as a whole there are enough bad apples out there to have a fairly toxic effect on the bushel'. Another respondent, speaking about the 'balance' of asking for money in F2F, reduces it to a question of individual skill thus juxtaposing 'good' fundraisers who are capable of asking without appearing overly pushy or aggressive and the others ruining it for the rest: 'I'm talking about good fundraisers here, not rogue or rude or bad ones.' While this individual does not have the solution, the first step of 'getting rid of terrible fundraisers' is suggested as a useful start. (Burnett 2011b).

Kaye Wiggins for the *Third Sector Blog* similarly made it clear that while most fundraisers are 'young, enthusiastic, idealistic and often deeply committed to a charity's cause – a great asset for the sector', there is a worry that due to their proximity to the public 'it only takes a few bad apples to discredit the whole system of face-to-face fundraising which, if done well, can be a good source of income and an effective way of spreading a charity's message' (Wiggins 2010). In these cases, the problems associated with F2F are located extrinsically, cleansing F2F of its

immanent inconsistency and locating this inconsistency with regard to ‘some-times’ or ‘some instances’ that stand *outside* F2F proper. F2F ‘done well’, or fulfilling its immanent potential, can combine being a source of income while also ‘spreading a charity’s message’.

In the second instance, three anonymous confessionals published by *The Guardian* correspondingly confirm the presence of this displacement, identifying the problems with F2F as a problem of certain malign individuals. One for instance, in attempting to rectify the pure soul of F2F by appealing for respect (because ‘[m]y colleagues and I genuinely believe in helping people’) states that ‘A small minority ruin it for the vast majority and most fundraisers just want to do right by their cause – and anyone who doesn’t is simply in the wrong job’ (Anonymous 2015). Another, taking a broader look at the sector from a more reflexive recognition that there are serious problems, claims that ‘there is a culture within the sector that face-to-face forms of fundraising are separate – that these agencies and third parties are the problem, not us’ (Anonymous 2016b). Lastly, a much more sombre or pessimistic anonymous confessional from an ex-fundraiser (in which the headline claims fundraisers are motivated by money, not charity) states that:

‘fundraising *isn’t intrinsically* aggressive, just as the *majority* of fundraisers aren’t intrinsically deceitful people...unfortunately, we sometimes get lazy, or desperate, and I understand how easy it is, in those circumstances, to cross the moral boundary’ (Anonymous 2016a my emphasis).

In each case detailed above, critical and uncritical proponents of F2F alike reproduce the externalisation of F2F’s symptomatic status onto a conflict between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ fundraising. And certainly, this discursive manoeuvre was consistent



throughout fieldwork. One moment when I approached a CARE International fundraiser, after enquiring why they were in a certain place (Manchester being one of many areas which had limited their activity by defining specific places and times they could operate, and they weren't in that place) I mentioned I was researching F2F. Very quickly they made the move to address F2F's bad publicity precisely through attributing its issues to the '1% ruining it for the rest of us' (Participant 16). Indeed, according to one ex-fundraiser-turned-regulator I interviewed, he'd 'seen good examples and bad examples and the bad examples basically hindered the good ones' (Participant 3). This individual, who set up one of the first 'in-house' F2F operations did so because they felt 'some of their behaviours in management to be unethical and unprofessional' (Participant 3). Another, who had set up their own F2F agency, similarly did so precisely because he was sick of the way the existing fundraising companies worked. Indeed, one thing that seemed constant throughout the interview, was the regular distancing from others in the industry, most notably the recently bankrupt Home Fundraising (who were previously the largest F2F company in the country cf. Cooney 2019). Their ultimate problem was the one noted above: they hired the wrong people, namely those more likely to be motivated by commission or desire for short term gains. In other words, they broke the symbolic Law and succumbed to their temptations. Unfortunately for Home Fundraising, my fieldwork often revealed them to be constituted as *the* bad apple. Not only did this interviewee speak at length about Home Fundraising as emblematic of F2F's problems (recognising something in their fate something that has 'dogged the sector for years' (Participant 2)), but a fundraiser I spoke to in the field alluded specifically to the 'mercenary' attitude of Home Fundraising (Participant 19). To go even further, one of my interviewees worked for Home Fundraising and claimed that in fact even they were in the business of branding other firms as mercenaries (Participant 6).

This has been a similar discursive strategy in other fundraising firms. One Sixty, used by Save the Children in the UK, for instance, frame themselves as a 'genuine alternative to traditional face-to-face fundraising', distancing themselves from the over aggressive, marketised form of F2F by suggesting that they have 'breathed new life into an industry in desperate need of change.' Indeed, 'One Sixty set out to break the mould: we don't do what is easy we do what is right and we are proud of this'. In other words, they run their F2F operations with an intrinsic motivation in which the instrumental rationality of generating ever higher volumes of sign-ups is only ever instrumental, subordinated to the ultimate goal of 'connecting worthy causes with people who are excited to support them'. They do not treat fundraisers as mercenaries, their 'people are at the heart of what [they] do' (One Sixty 2019). For Urban Leaf similarly, their 'about us' page is split 50-50 between an explication of what they are in themselves and section on what makes them different to other fundraising companies. And just like One Sixty they define themselves as distinct from other agencies insofar as they are 'committed to quality' as opposed to quantity, and thus 'measure' the capacity of fundraisers according to 'their passion and enthusiasm in engaging the public with the work our charities do' (Urban Leaf 2019). In other words, they obey the symbolic Law of F2F unlike others, the latter implied by this description coming under a section distinguishing themselves from other fundraising agencies.

### 3.2. *Conclusion*

In conclusion, far from a false representation of a positive reality, a symptomal analysis of F2F's symbolic constitution reveals its constant oscillation around a central contradiction, manifest in its purest form in the 'chugger', 'the point at which the Reason embodied in the existing social order encounters its own inconsistency' (Žižek 2008a, p. 18). This immanent contradiction of its symbolic framework,

repeated throughout the history of F2F, is nonetheless not fully acknowledged by its proponents through two apparently complementary procedures. First, the immanent contradiction is disavowed through its deflation. Rather than confront it as a contradiction as such, the discursive manoeuvring of its defenders brings either side back into relation by subordinating its economistic-productivist side to the banal role of instrumental necessity. As such, the contradiction is simultaneously acknowledged and denied, incorporated into the symbolic network and deflated by appeal to banality and its instrumental necessity. Of course, while this attempts to purify F2F through deflating the contradiction immanent to its symbolic overdetermination, the ongoing actuality – its structuring of the discourse and organisational practice – of this contradiction demonstrates the precarity of this formulation. In other words, the history of F2F bears witness to the fact that it is *not just* a banal instrumental necessity, that it can potentially be a corrosive force which, even if explicitly subordinated to the end goal of the organisation, can directly undermine it. This brings us to the second procedure by which this contradiction is precariously solved. If this contradiction can be managed by subordinating one to the other, then its source is not internal but rather is external. As such, the first form of defence is supplemented by a second, apparently complementary one, which recognises a certain pull or ‘temptation’ on one side of the contradiction and blames its poor management on malignant agents, thus displacing the immanent split by way of externalisation.

However, while this immanent contradiction of F2F is disavowed and displaced, as symptom it *persists*. Certainly, repetition is a key feature of the psychoanalytic symptom, and is also a key feature of F2F: not only is the contradiction continually played out in various forums, animating its popular discussion, but the practice itself still survives in large swathes of the NGO sector and thus continues to repeat the condensation of opposed registers. Even though fundraising firms come in and

out of existence, liquidating their assets and then restarting under a different company name, and fundraisers are constantly being recruited (and thus also constantly sacked) F2F still *persists* in a contradictory symbolic form. Certainly, although these two modes of defence work in tandem – and indeed imply one another – in solving F2F’s immanent contradiction they reveal themselves to be in tension. Whilst one reduces the economic aspect of F2F to its pure instrumental banality, the other recognises some pull of its economic side which far exceeds any sort of banality. In other words, it is simultaneously dangerous *and* banal, potentially disruptive of F2F while also being one of its conditions of possibility; dull, a fact of the matter, as well as being capable of hijacking us for its own tempting ends.

So then, if F2F is so contradictory, why does it persist? While such a symptomal analysis provides a ‘moving’ explanation and thus continuous subversion, this is insufficient unless connected to and unfolded in the material externality of ideology, the locus of its fantasmatic structuring of *jouissance*, the pre-ideological kernel of enjoyment. Certainly, its repetition and function are not explainable by pure reference to its symbolic dance around its immanent negativity, and nor is its subversion fully practiced by identifying such points. Instead, we must understand how it ‘captivates our desire’, how it ‘enters the framework of fantasy structuring our enjoyment’ (Žižek 2008a, p. 141), and how this is discernible on the level of what we *do*, rather than simply what is said. And Indeed, insofar as F2F is symptomatic, it is not just a ‘signifying formation’ but a ‘binding of enjoyment’ (ibid, p. 81). Crucially however, not only does this further accentuate the explanatory and subversive need to critique such ideology without recourse to a ‘true’ representation of social reality, but it also, through the non-relation between doing and knowing, or enjoyment and signification refuses the idealist tendency toward functionalism or reproductionism in ideological analysis. Indeed, like F2F’s symbolisation, its

material externality oscillates around its central contradiction, performing (and enjoying) it at the same time as it is disavowed.

## Chapter 4 - Ideology for-itself: Fantasies of Humanity, Enjoyment of Capital

The shift from ideology in-itself to for-itself, while training our view onto a particular aspect or segment of the phenomenon in question, concerns, in a more radical sense, what happens in the second step of the dialectical process in which the explicit articulation of F2F is 'externalised' in a set of material structures/institutions/rituals and so on. In other words, how it becomes 'for-itself', not simply posited but 'realised'. In the corresponding 'ideology for-itself' sections in Chapters 1 and 2 (1.3 and 2.2), I argued that while extant Gramscian approaches consider the constitutive role of ideology and affirm its epistemological significance against the crude materialist-realism of 'orthodox' Marxists, they are nonetheless limited by an idealist appreciation of the subject, being and dialectics which engenders some problematic critical/explanatory implications. Indeed, not only do we see capitalism with a human face reduced to a mere cognitive misapprehension of the basic 'ontological centrality of class' (cf. McSweeney 2014) but the seamless 'dialectical' synthesis of material and ideal generates a tendency toward one-dimensional functionalism or reproductionism in analysis. However, given the more general ambivalence of NGOs, as arguably the 'major purveyors' of 'capitalism with a human face' (Lal 2006, p. 205, 183) providing a 'development alternative offering innovative and people-centred approaches' (Banks and Hulme 2012, p. 3), and the deeply contradictory symbolic constitution of F2F, such tendencies are critically problematic. Indeed, as this chapter affirms, the shift from ideology in-itself to for-itself is by no means a simple one-to-one translation of ideological edifice into supportive or functional practices/institutions. Drawing on fieldwork observations, interviews and secondary data, I argue that F2F materialises the tension animating its symbolic substance and operates as a

phantasmal means of structuring NGO enjoyment. The *jouissance* of F2F – discernible in its external materiality – promises an antidote to neoliberalism, but enjoys its excesses, reversing the central contradiction meaning that, contra Vaughn's (2004) claiming concerning capitalism working for good, in fact good works for capitalism.

While the materiality of F2F is on first appearance a challenge to neoliberal ideology, organising its desire in an attempt to realise unmediated 'human' social relations, on closer examination its organisational form (and thus the concrete ends towards which its more 'human' materiality is guided) reveals not only an implicit enjoyment of fundraising in itself (and thus the generation of surplus-value, or the *jouissance* of capital) but also a certain transgressive enjoyment in exploiting what should be considered 'obscene' from within 'human' ideologies: enjoyment of global inequality, precarious labour in non-decent conditions, and the performance of predatory hyper sexual masculinity and sexualised femininity. This chapter therefore performs the second procedure of ideology critique highlighted by Žižek: after the 'discursive' or 'symptomal' analysis in which I deconstructed the explicit symbolic formation of F2F and its subsequent twists and turns in order to maintain its symbolic harmony, the emphasis of this chapter moves to extracting 'the kernel of enjoyment, at articulating the way in which – beyond the field of meaning but at the same time internal to it – an ideology implies, manipulates, produces a pre-ideological enjoyment structured in fantasy' (Žižek 2008a, p. 140).

The chapter will be structured as follows: first, in Section 4.1., I highlight the very 'human' materiality of F2F, and how it materialises a certain *desire* for abstractly 'doing good', for 'making a difference', and the prefiguration of a more 'human' or 'personal' set of social relations. However, given that level of abstraction and the metonymic function of desire, this promised enjoyment never arrives. Fundraisers

do not solve 'underdevelopment' in a day through establishing a 'human' economy. Once the donor leaves the situation, the 'human' interaction dissipates, and the most important connection left is between bank accounts. Therefore, in Section 4.2. I demonstrate the extent to which the concrete organisation of enjoyment is directed towards the enjoyment of fundraising itself, filling the gap of 'making a difference' with the production of surplus-value. What this reveals however, is that the all-too-human materiality of F2F is not so much an attempt to live the values of NGO ideology, but a mechanism which makes fundraising all the more effective. Lastly then, in Section 4.3., I turn to the 'obscene' examples of transgressive enjoyment prevalent within F2F's practice: enjoyment in staging the inequality they seek to remedy, revelling in personal descriptions of poverty/struggle and the power of the donor/NGO to end them, the exploitation of precarious, deteriorated and affective labour, and the subtle mobilisation of (sometimes aggressive and predatory) normative heterosexuality.

#### ***4.1. The Stabilising Fantasy of Global Human Society and desire for 'Making a difference'***

As established in Chapter 2, the materiality of NGOs as an institutional form is ambivalent. On the one hand, NGOs have been theorised as privatising the public sphere (Kamat 2004) and materially supplementing the neoliberal hollowing out of the state such that they represent neoliberalism's 'favoured institutional form' (Kamat 2013, p. ix). On the other hand, others have highlighted that NGO practice is decidedly more 'human' or 'personal', in that they operate as 'organisations fostering *people-to-people* exchanges' (Kapoor 2008, p. 93 my emphasis), thus performing a 'philosophy that recognizes the centrality of people in development policies' (Lewis 2010, p. 264). For some proponents this is the crucial terrain for NGOs to consider, especially in the arena of fundraising: for those who worry that



their anti-neoliberal counter-hegemonic possibilities might be waning, or they may have been co-opted by neoliberalism after a promising start, what is required is a return to a 'community-driven and grassroots approach' (Banks and Hulme 2012, p. 14), away from the co-opting hands of state and private funders and towards 'people-centred approaches to development' (ibid, p. 11). And indeed, as was established in the conclusion to Chapter 2 (2.4.), F2F in some sense represents this ambivalence. On one hand, although it doesn't obviously sell a physical commodity (as we see in cause related marketing for instance) it is organised within a market setting. On the other hand, it is definitively 'human' and 'personal', with its title codifying the direct (human) facial interaction that occurs in its practice. As one interviewee put it, with F2F 'there is definitely a human connection, a personal connection' (Participant 4). Unlike with television adverts or direct mail 'they are getting the human side of it' (Participant 4).

Indeed, there is a certain contrast between F2F and its surrounding environment. Although charity shops are distinct from others on the high street, with Oxfam's typically being decorated with slogans like 'Fight poverty! Empower women!' etc., the visible *human* on the street actively trying to engage atomised shoppers, provides a much more personal materiality than the impersonal bricks and mortar surrounding them. When walking down a high street, surrounded by big name brand stores and the hustle and bustle of a busy city centre, the smiling faces of 'perky people' (Napier 2002) wearing charity insignia and wanting to speak to you about 'helping out', might offer some very 'human' respite.

However, with the advent of neoliberalism, one could contend that this process has been accelerated. Much of the literature on urban public space is clear that the tendency has been towards the production of 'urban environments and public spaces conducive to commodification and capital accumulation' (Leary-Ohwin

2016, p. 11). While it is important to note the context specific, uneven and contradictory character of 'actually existing neoliberalism' (Brenner & Theodore 2002), the tendency has been towards the 'elimination and/or intensified surveillance of urban public spaces' (ibid, p. 24). For instance, Mike Davis (1990), in his examination of Los Angeles, sees the history of its spatial production and transformation as being archetypical of late capitalist development where public spaces have all but disappeared (or their potential uses circumscribed). Indeed, Marina Peterson's more focused account of California Plaza in Los Angeles, considers it to be 'emblematic of a shift to the privatisation of urban public space' (2006, p. 377). Some like Don Mitchell (1995) and Michael Sorkin (1992) even go as far as to posit the possibility of the *end* of public space.

In Manchester, its city centre is run primarily by CityCo, a private management company, who run and implement its sister organisation the Manchester Business Improvement District (BID). The latter – 'a consortium of 400 leading retail and restaurant brands spanning Market Street, New Cathedral Street, Manchester Arndale, Exchange Square, Barton Arcade, St Ann's Square, King Street and Deansgate' which aims 'to make the centre of Manchester a better place to do business for our levy payers' (CityCo 2020) seems exemplary of the neoliberal city: central government abdication of urban governance to private capital and its representatives, and its management according to a market rationality with its primary 'remit...[being] to provide added-value' (ibid) to its members. Certainly, BIDs have typically been addressed in academic literature from the perspective of neoliberalisation (cf. Kizildere and Chiodelli 2018, p. 786, Peyroux et. al. 2012, p. 112) and the move towards 'urban entrepreneurialism' (cf. Harvey 1989) within which Manchester had featured as a prominent case (cf. Ward 2003, Ward and Cook 2017).

According to Leary-Ohwin however, these literatures are hindered by the ‘slew of negativity and debilitating pessimism’ (2016, p. 3) which only sees the production of ‘public spaces conducive to commodification and capital accumulation’ (ibid, p. 11). Again, taking Manchester as one of his case studies, he argues that this literature misses ‘the importance of civil society, civic values, spatial coalitions and what Lefebvre calls counter-projects’ (ibid, p. 4). Looking specifically at the regeneration of Castlefield – an ex-industrial area in central Manchester – he highlights how non-profits and those ‘who championed the *intrinsic...value* of Castlefield without regard for potential land prices and exchange-value’ (ibid, p. 204 emphasis added) were crucial to this move. The material presence of non-profits in Manchester therefore, as part of so-called civil society, who, as established in Chapter 3, are keen to highlight the *intrinsic value* of their work (with the ‘economic’ fundraising aspect relegated to the role of pure instrumentality) on first appearance bear a direct material contrast to the rest of the high street. With F2F we have individuals eager to establish a ‘human connection’ (Williams 2020), a ‘real one to one, with people actually face-to-face’ (SOFII 2009) discussing the potential transfer of some defined (or imagined) non-instrumental altruistic utility. From my fieldwork, I found that, after I had told them I could not sign-up, fundraisers were often quick to suggest that that wasn’t a problem. As long as they had spoken about the charity and the work it was doing then their job was done. Indeed, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, proponents – including those in charge of deploying it – often emphasise the awareness-raising and supporter-communicating aspects of F2F, against the presumption of its total subsumption by the desire to accumulate more donations. As such, the connective or interpersonal aspect of F2F is foregrounded, and its extractive or (economically) productive aspect is pushed to the background.

Thus, in contrast to the materiality of the neoliberal high street/shopping centre, F2F’s materiality introduces a distinctly ‘human’ element to the alienating and

disorienting world of modern cities, along with a speech-practice which emphasises the importance of its role *in itself*. Indeed, this is arguably something specific to the organisational structure of *charity*. Despite the multiple scales and crossovers between the institutional forms of charity, the state and market, there is something deemed distinct about charity vis-à-vis market and state actors (as attested to in Chapter 2). It is often theorised as a ‘third sphere’ which ‘remain[s] outside the sphere of exchange that is supported by the price mechanism and the sphere of redistribution that is organized through governmental transactions’ (Adaman and Madra 2002, p. 1050). And this translates to distinct institutional arrangements. On the broader level of charity in the United Kingdom, in order for something to count as a charity it must be about the ‘public benefit...or a sufficient section of the public [and] not give rise to more than incidental personal benefit’ (GOV.UK 2013). While this doesn’t always need to hold for charities dedicated to preventing or relieving poverty, insofar as it benefits specific parts of the public rather than the public *per se*, the caveat that ‘a charity must not have a purpose which is for the benefit of *named individuals*’ (Charity Commission 2017, p. 15) demonstrates the commitment to humanity as such rather than parts of it. On the more specific level, while the precise spaces of F2F are generated as a result of negotiation between local authorities, BIDs and the IoF, it is the latter that takes responsibility ‘at no cost to the local authority’ for managing the sites and any disciplinary issues which arise (cf. IoF 2020a). Unlike the local council and the BID representing private capitals, the IoF is a registered charity which works towards the vision of ‘Excellent Fundraising for a Better World’ (IoF 2020b). As such, the presence of the third sphere’s representatives and the institutions which manage them, clearly marked out on the street with a high degree of visibility materialises an opposition to neoliberalism, institutionalising a ‘human’ economy in the high street in

conspicuous contrast to the more general materiality of commodity-exchange and consumption.<sup>49</sup>

Beyond this invocation of F2F's 'human' materiality in the actuality of its notion (i.e. humans meeting face-to-face) and in its institutional contrast with the rest of its urban environment, my fieldwork observations discerned some specific dynamics of F2F's practice which render this thesis even more palpable. In each case, the rituals highlighted (the smile, the handshake, the chat, and the mobilisation of individual human stories) manifest a desire for authentic human/personal relations and the fantasy of shared/common humanity. In the first case, as alluded to previously, before any discourse takes place between the fundraiser and potential donor, the latter encounters a *smiling face*.<sup>50</sup> Obviously this seems like common-sense – standing there looking miserable is not going to entice people to stop and listen to you – but its presence is more than accidental, having also been a deliberate piece of advice offered to fundraisers. As one interviewee noted, they were told to 'play up smileyness' (Participant 6).

---

<sup>49</sup> From the perspective of the governance of Manchester's (neoliberal) city centre, this apparently antagonistic relation to the business sphere of the high street was confirmed in interviews. Two individuals for instance, working within the governance of the city centre noted that not only 'if you just talk to some of the local businesses around market street, they'd have said chuggers were a major irritant' (Participant 7), but that they were 'causing a detrimental impact on their business because people were actively avoiding them' (Participant 8).

<sup>50</sup> A google search of face-to-face fundraising reveals numerous images of smiling faces (Google 2020). Further, a video recently published by Oxfam on their F2F operation – which included footage of fundraisers at work – similarly demonstrated the consistency of the smile in the pre-stages of the F2F interaction (Oxfam 2020b).



Figure 4.1. Smiling Fundraisers in Manchester (Source: Oxfam, 2020b).

The impression it gives is one of sociality, that we have some sort of connection to one another. Unlike some animals, in which baring teeth is an aggressive warning, smiling in humans (at least in the West) implies friendliness, and according to a recent study, is crucial in the forging of cooperation and the strengthening of social bonds/connections (cf. Campos et. al. 2015). Indeed, in the famous words of Jazz musician Louis Armstrong ‘when you’re smiling, the whole world smiles with you’. Thus, in F2F, the smile functions as a material-ritual marker of interpersonal connection against the unsociable quality of the blank face, or the face which entirely avoids eye contact. One fundraising company I discovered were even named after this quality of the F2F interaction: at SMILE, they ‘like to see happy fundraisers and at SMILE we create a positive, happy atmosphere’ which then translates to not only ‘make the people we are fundraising for smile... that because of our work, people lives are vastly improved’ but also they ‘want to make sure that everyone we speak to is left with a smile on their face, whether they donate or not’ (SMILE 2019). As such, not only does the smile appear to be a personal-relational

operator, but the interaction again is not primarily geared towards the brute donation but a translation of a smile from fundraiser to member of the public. The materiality of F2F is thus one that reverberates smiles through the high street, adding a semblance of human connection to the alienating and impersonal experience of modern urban shopping areas. But also, as demonstrated by the last line of the quote from SMILE, this is done for its own benefit rather than being a means to an end of generating donations.

Alongside a smile, those who engage with fundraisers are often confronted with another personal operator: a handshake. There is no clear consensus on where the handshake first originated, and the nature of its purpose. Certainly, as I highlight in Section 4.3., handshakes are also common in business, signifying an agreement of a transaction, and thus seemingly opposed to the materiality of any human economy, but insofar as F2F's proponents disavow/displace the transactional or economic aspect of F2F, the handshake appears to manifest something else. Indeed, an outstretched arm gesturing towards some direct human to human contact seems far from competitive or impersonal; even in the context of more antagonistic business setting, a working paper from the Harvard Business School demonstrates that handshakes increase cooperation and that this 'social ritual' can 'induce prosociality', 'increase harmony' and 'decrease antagonistic behaviour' (Schroeder et. al. 2014, p. 22-24).

This human or personal aspect of the handshake also has historical precedent. One of its earliest representations comes from ancient Greece and was designated a practice called *dexiosis*. According to the archaeologist Janet Grossman, while the representations of handshakes on ancient Greek sculptures could be interpreted as expressing an 'oath or contractual relationship', the more 'probable' interpretation is that the handshake 'physically symbolized the bond between family members in

attic [ancient Athenian] society, even in death' (Grossman 2013, p. 38). By symbolising a *bond between family members in society*, the practice functions as a social operator which generates a certain connection between its practitioners. Not only does 'bond' presume a much more interpersonal connection than some form of impersonal transactional or contractual obligation, but insofar as it occurs between family members *in society*, it gives the impression of some social connectivity with intrinsic value. As her definition of dexiosis demonstrates, the handshake is a 'gesture symbolising connectedness' (ibid, p. xxxi), and thus provides some form of antidote to the atomising experience of the high street and its associated consumptive egotistical calculation. As anthropologist Michael Lambek has also argued, the performative value of dexiosis means a monetary value cannot be placed on it, that 'one cannot buy or sell acts of...dexiosis' (2013, p. 149). Further, as scholar of antiquity Jas Elsner has suggested, the handshake has historically represented as an 'exchange of human goodness' (2015, p. 61).

Within the Quaker tradition, which humanitarian organisations, including Oxfam, were born from (see Chapter 2), the handshake was generally substituted for other forms of interaction (such as bowing or curtsying) on grounds of its non-hierarchical character. Crucially though, the handshake represented something in principle to be 'extended to everyone regardless of station' (Zuckerman 2003, p. 12). As such, the handshake seems to materialise the fantasy of global society, and the existence of One human community. It operates as a human, interpersonal connection which establishes an unmediated link between two fellow 'humans' who altruistically relate to others through intrinsic love. It is no coincidence for instance that an edited volume on *The Human Economy* chose for its front cover a series of hands extending from either side of the page into the middle in connection to another.



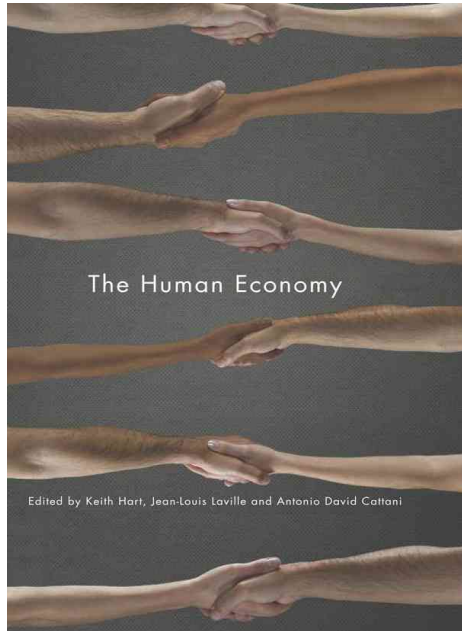


Figure 4.2. Front Cover of *The Human Economy* (Source: Hart et. al. 2010)

And nor is it a coincidence that fundraising guru and champion of F2F Ken Burnett chose an image of a handshake for the front cover of both his textbook on the fundraising ethic underpinning F2F and a follow up book on the ethic in practice.

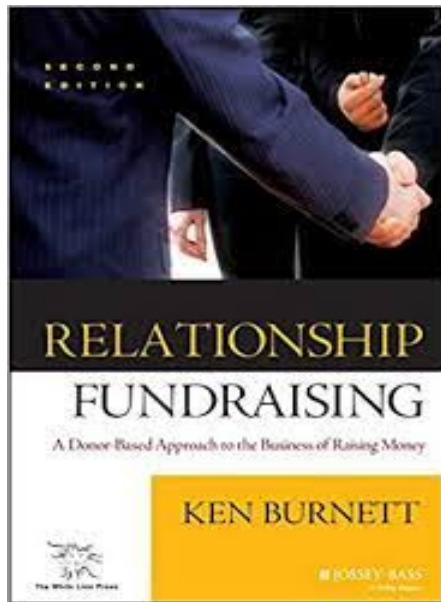


Figure 4.3. Front Cover of *Relationship Fundraising* (Source: Burnett 2002)

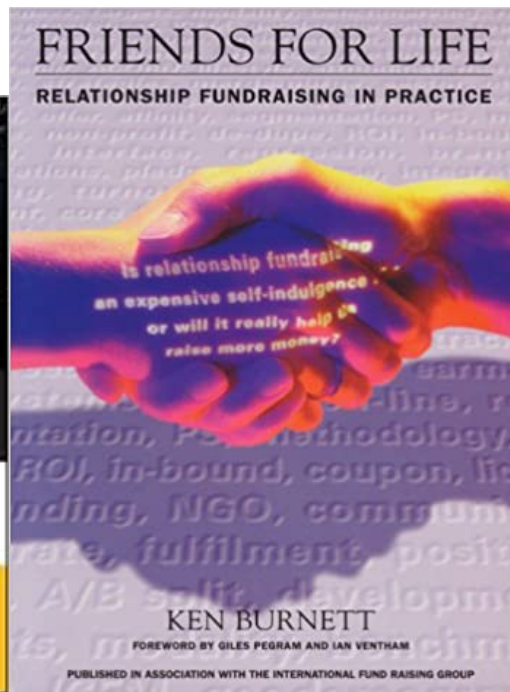


Figure 4.4. Front Cover of *Friends For Life* (Source: Burnett 1996)

Lastly, after the confrontation with the smiling human face and the outstretched arm of the fundraiser, the general rule I gleaned from my fieldwork was that the next stage of the interaction did not dive straight into the 'pitch'. What was typical in fact was a more general chat about how I was, or what I was up to that day. One interviewee described this process as follows:

'There was like a rule, so ten metres away you get someone's eye contact, and then you start waving at them, and your like 'hey, you're not going anywhere' and then two metres away and you start speaking to them saying 'Hey how are you doing today?...and then you'd stop and have a couple seconds of rapport' (Participant 12).

Indeed, as highlighted in Chapter 3, F2F proponents are regularly at pains to distance their activity from not being solely about the sign-up, which this aspect of the interaction seems to support. There is a sense in which this chat signals that the interaction is more attuned to communication between organisations and their potential constituencies rather than a more purely economic transaction between two contractual parties. Furthermore, an extended chat focused on how the potential donor is/what they have been up to indicates that this is a more *personal* interaction – the CARE International fundraiser who said 'helping out' instead of 'signing-up' kept repeating my name throughout the interaction (Participant 15) – denoting the relationship between the fundraiser and potential donor as one of *friendship*. Indeed, in the first case, small talk has been described as 'non-task-oriented conversation about neutral topics' (Bickmore and Cassell 1999, n.p.), and as such is a sort of conversation which functions as an end in itself or is seemingly non-instrumentalised. More importantly however, in the second case it is *interpersonal*, allowing parties to 'establish some degree of mutual trust and rapport'

(ibid). Its incipient treatment in linguistics scholarship conceived of small talk (or 'phatic communication') as a sort of talk 'in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words' (Malinowski cited in Bickmore and Cassell 2000, n.p.). Later, Roman Jakobson would conceive of small talk as primarily concerned with the establishment of relationships and stressed the primacy of this relationality between speakers rather than the content of the message (1960). Thus, this type of language has been conceived as 'crucial to the establishment and maintenance of any collaborative relationship' (Bickmore and Cassell 2000, n.p.).

As such, even before any 'ask' has occurred, the materiality of F2F suggests an embodiment of a human economy: the various performative rituals of the F2F interaction emphasise the importance of interpersonal connection and attempt to enact a certain distancing from the alienating aspects of egotistical commodity-exchange in favour of more direct *human* interaction with intrinsic motivations (as opposed to being a means to the end of accumulating funds). And there is definitely a case that this continues to manifest in the content of the speech. Not only was a focus on individual human stories – as opposed to abstract statistics – a regular feature of the F2F interactions I observed, but it was backed up by my interviews. One ex-fundraiser for instance was told to make their pitch 'about individual human stories' (Participant 6) in order to 'relate it to the experiences of the person' (ibid). The latter point was important: individual human stories not only brought the experiences down to a very human or personal level but provided a space in which a more general connectivity between potential donor and beneficiary could flourish. Another interviewee's experience of fundraising similarly noted that 'they try and get you to make the person relate to your cause' (Participant 10). Certainly, the abstract nature of the latter obscures the 'human' from sight, whereas vivid descriptions of actual individuals generates the possibility for more human connection. Indeed, as another interviewee – who had fundraised and then ran their

own fundraising company – noted, good fundraising was about telling a story which would ‘emotionally resonate... in a way that feels very real and very tangible and almost in front of them’ (Participant 2). The best, ‘generic’ (ibid), way for this to occur, they claimed, was to begin with individual human stories and then link that to broader currents. Indeed, Ken Burnett’s textbook on the fundraising ethic behind F2F refers to the need for any ‘ask’ to:

‘Explain in *human* terms what their support will achieve, not just the millions of pounds you need for a large-scale project. The *people* that will be involved, the work they will do, the children they will help, the kind of land that will be reclaimed, the pain that will be replaced by *smiles*, or whatever...Make it *human*’ (2002, p. 147 my emphasis)

So, what does this demonstrate about the ideological materiality of F2F? From what has been covered so far it seems pretty uncontroversial to designate the materiality of F2F externalising the stabilising fantasy of One human society (i.e. our common or shared humanity) and the promised *jouissance* of its realisation, against the social disintegration of neoliberalism: Its ‘human’ form; the smile, handshake, chat and use of individual human stories suggests a desire for realising human interconnectedness and personal-relational sociality. However, despite the materiality of F2F expressing such a stabilising fantasy and desire of NGO ideology, nowhere does this appear in the F2F interaction. From my experience, the pitches I witnessed were on the whole decidedly apolitical. And many of my interviewees echoed this. Pitches typically centred around individual issues like clean drinking water, girls going to school etc. Even then, when a donation is made, there is no guarantee that there would be any correlation between the content of the pitch and what the money was used for.

What becomes apparent therefore is F2F's almost *indifference* toward its explicitly articulated purpose. Whilst fundraisers may wax lyrical about a certain issue being really important to them, the nature of the industry requires not only the careful picking and choosing of what issue is pitched to potential donors, but also the diversity of possible organisations to work for/with. When spending days in Manchester city centre observing fundraising, I would regularly see the same faces, often in different charity insignia as to what I saw them wear previously. On one occasion I spoke to a fundraiser who spoke about her team leader's commitment to Bernardo's Children's Charity, as having been a Bernardo's child himself. However, only one week earlier I had observed him working for Shelter. Further, for the interviewee I noted in Chapter 3 (whose motivation to enter fundraising was their support for Amnesty International), told me that their first agency job led them to fundraise on four different charities, team lead on twenty, and was trained on thirty-five (listing almost every charity you could think of) (Participant 3).

The ex-fundraisers I interviewed similarly stated the almost incessant shifting from one organisation/cause to another in their tenure as fundraisers. One told me that his agency had multiple charities on the books and 'for each one you were taught a pitch', later remarking that when on the street you would sometimes forget what bib you were wearing (Participant 9). Another said that their agency would rotate what team was working for which organisation on regular occasions, which ultimately was more fun (Participant 4). Specifically, regarding Manchester, one ex-fundraiser remarked that:

'All the fundraisers would kinda know each other in Manchester. When we went for a drink on Friday we'd go with the other fundraisers. So, the Oxfam people knew the Amnesty people who knew the Shelter people. So even if you get fired, you can get hired so quickly in another one, like

straight away. So it was quite a funny community of people, the kinda core people who'd stay there for a long time, and a lot of them have been through a lot of different [charities]' (Participant 12).

What that last comment suggests is that in the activity of F2F the explicit purpose fades into the background, and that the Real fun of F2F does not reside in the fantasmatic promises of a future state without antagonism or in the performance of its realisation on the high street. Rather, in F2F the concrete measure of 'making a difference' or 'doing good' ultimately resides in the generation of a sign-up. F2F mobilises a variety of issues in order to demonstrate their 'doing goodness' and is indifferent to the precise object which fills in this lack in desire. The only thing that remains a constant aim irrespective of the explicit goal (i.e. ending poverty, educating girls etc.) is the sign-up, and as I go on to demonstrate, generating such an abstract 'sign-up' is imbued with a level of affective intensity. It thus comes to stand in for the object of desire, but its achievement, while within the horizon of F2F's explicit desire, is not fully satiating. Desire always involves a 'that's not it', which urges us to continue the search. However, it is here, in the futile attempt to realise this desire that some (surplus) enjoyment can be generated. In other words, in such 'indifference' to the expressly desired outcome, we can read the shift from desire to drive.

#### *4.2. Destabilising Fantasy and Fundraising for the sake of Fundraising*

As Chapter 3 demonstrated, the symptomatic contradiction of F2F is disavowed by appealing to the banal necessity of fundraising and its purely instrumental/secondary role. And indeed, as the last section showed, the materiality of the F2F encounter seems to reveal a primary concern for the human/personal aspect of the practice over its 'efficient'

productivist/accumulative purpose, and thus materialises the fantasy of shared humanity and the desire for its realisation. However, as Žižek has previously mentioned, not only is the appeal to pure utility never innocent, but the external materiality of ideology often reveals the antagonisms of an ideological edifice in more explicit terms (2008b, p. 2). He gives the example of an instance of Soviet architecture whereby a ‘gigantic statue of the idealised New Man’ – the official desire of Soviet ideology – would be placed on top of an office building and over time would ‘have the tendency to flatten’ it, thus creating an ‘ideological monster which crushes actual living men under his feet’ (ibid). Certainly, as this section shows, while the materiality of F2F is indeed in line with the ‘human’, ‘personal’ or intrinsically motivated ideology of NGOs, it simultaneously embodies an ‘imp of perversity’ (ibid): its material organisation is oriented towards the creation of surplus, measured in monetary terms, and requires this creation in order to continue to function. In other words, it *must generate more than was originally invested*. Despite the assertion that F2F is *not just about money*, ‘raising awareness’ or garnering support for the organisation’s social purpose is not a particularly tangible measure. As such, although F2F’s materiality attempts to realise the (impossible) promise of a future state of pure *jouissance*, the concrete measure of ‘making a difference’ or ‘doing good’ is precisely the moment of getting a sign-up – which provides a surplus satisfaction – and thus manifests a surplus-*jouissance* of the process of fundraising itself. Beyond the implications that fundraisers working for a variety of different charities are less concerned for concrete causes and more for fundraising itself, the typical trajectory of those successful fundraisers I interviewed was one from an idealistic desire to ‘make a difference’, or attachment to a particular cause, to a more general attachment to F2F or fundraising as such. As the ex-fundraiser turned regulator, who got into F2F due to ‘Amnesty International’, then commented ‘once you start doing it you meet loads of people and its fun, you go to different places, and you’re working with like-minded people most of the time and

you kinda get immersed in it' (Participant 3). Moreover, recall the ex-fundraiser turned owner of fundraising company I interviewed who got into F2F because in a 'cliched sense [they]...wanted to help' (Participant 2). After this statement, he qualified the claim of cliché by stating that despite wanting to help 'you don't know what that means', and then spoke enthusiastically about various business books.

Indeed, despite Daryll Upsall's claim that F2F was merely a reinvention of some prior essence of charitable fundraising, the context of its emergence and thus the impetus behind this 'reinvention' was primarily 'economic'. It wasn't as if a whole host of issues needed resolving at that time, but rather that existing fundraising mechanisms were losing their efficacy. In his re-telling of the story of F2F's genesis, he begins with the background that 'In 1993 Greenpeace's fundraising worldwide was facing tough times – many major markets were slowing down considerably; in some, such as the USA, it was in serious decline' (Upsall 2009). Although there was no consensus as to the reasons behind this, it was clear that existing fundraising 'tools were no longer performing as they had in the past' (ibid), and that if nothing was done, Greenpeace both nationally and internationally were going to 'hit a major financial crisis' (ibid). After a thorough audit by fundraising professionals, the conclusion was that

'Fundraising...at that time was largely undervalued nationally and internationally. The supporter base was in decline, ageing and largely based around special appeals and one-off gifts. The different techniques to recruit new donors were becoming less effective and Greenpeace's fundraising in most countries was mostly for low-value donors' (ibid).

F2F plugged this gap exceptionally. After having been rolled out 'Greenpeace Austria found itself with 13,000 new, regular supporters who were recruited with



almost no loss in their second year' (ibid). A year later it was extended worldwide, becoming a success almost wherever it went. Of course, success here is not measured in terms of 'awareness raised' but rather the fact that 'Over the years many, many millions of euros of long-term income have been raised and over a million new donors recruited by this one method' (ibid). After a fundraising conference organised by Greenpeace, one of its participants, David Coe of Amnesty International UK, was convinced of its capacity and copied it. At that point 'the genie was out of the lamp' and since then F2F 'has raised millions, perhaps billions of dollars in the process.' (ibid).

Indeed, F2F is a very efficient mode of fundraising, and as Chapter 3 demonstrated, this fact is not lost on its proponents: 'cost-effectiveness' represents one of its key symbolic determinations. However, although this determination is played down (disavowed/displaced) in symbolic meditations on F2F, the materiality of F2F demonstrates its central role: not only was its original instantiation determined precisely by 'economic' context, but its subsequent organisation was thoroughly 'economised'. But what about what I am tempted to call the 'business model' of F2F? How does it materially organise itself so as to be sufficiently 'economised' or 'cost-effective'? Although there are shifts across the sector, with various compositions of in-house and outsourced elements of the operation, the IoF claims that it:

'requires an investment of time and resources by a charity to ensure it is run effectively, with appropriate materials, planning and preparation, and carried out by fundraisers who are trained to a high standard' (IoF 2019).

If private companies are used, which is typical and in fact suggested by the IoF ('It's a good idea to think about... partnering with fundraising agencies' (ibid)), this doesn't substantially alter the form of the process. It takes a set of tasks necessary to complete and outsources them (for instance, recruitment, training, managing and in some cases fully running the operation), but without substantially altering how they are conducted. While some are keen to distance themselves from fundraising companies, this seems to be a problem in terms of their excess – as the 'bad apples' we spoke about in Chapter 3 – rather than the more fundamental quality of their practice. In other words, whether outsourcing or not, F2F's organisation still functions in more or less the same way (although of course, according to its proponents some will take this and distort it): There is an 'investment of *time* and *resources*', or an *investment* of labour and money. While some prefer to see that investment of labour as more voluntaristic/altruistic – as engaging people who want to 'make a difference' – the fact of the matter is that this is filtered through wages. Indeed, the investment of resources not only requires the iPads, T-shirts with charity insignia etc., but importantly the purchase of labour-power. Even when conducting the operation in-house, the (nominally) non-profit organisations engage in the purchase of labour-power, and its marshalling in order to create a surplus over and above its original investment.

As Chapter 3 showed, the problematic status of this aspect is often disavowed by reference to its banality, or instrumental capacity. While in a certain sense this is correct: it does not form the primary point of ideological identification for the F2F practitioner. But of course, this more explicit desire is impossible, relying on a fantasy of society cleansed of antagonism. Moreover, the fantasy of a non-antagonistic F2F – with its materiality directly overlapping with the specifically ideal aspects of a human economy – presumes a proper management of *jouissance*, regulated by a right measure. However, with F2F, despite the apparent 'right'

measure of this enjoyment explicitly being the extent to which it 'makes a difference', the impossibility of this measure is foregone, with its concrete 'measure of pleasure' (Tomšič 2019a) being the generation of sign-ups, and the surplus they generate. As such, despite protestations about F2F being concerned with more than just a sign-up, this is the only accurate and reliable measure of F2F's success. According to one anonymous confessional 'fundraising is no different from sales... the business model relies on acquiring a specific *quantity* of donors on behalf of the client, *and so fundraising is necessarily results-focused*' (Anonymous 2016a, my emphasis). As one ex-fundraiser I interviewed remarked:

'it was very statistical... At the end of each month they'd give us the stats of everyone who worked in our team, so you'd see yourself against everyone else. So it would be 1, 2, 3, you know, who's got the most...And then you'd get a prize if you were the top person, and also every Friday each regional team would compete against each other. And I found it weird because they added us on Facebook, so they used my personal...we were communicating through our personal Facebook on this Facebook page. So on Friday there'd be people posting pictures on this Facebook page... so it was kind of like a competition I suppose' (Participant 12).

Yet, as a result it comes to function as a destabilising excess, a surplus-enjoyment which serves its own ends, a surplus-enjoyment in the process of fundraising itself. One quote in particular, from an ex-fundraiser, stood out. Training

'was almost exclusively on the pitch...[it] was based on a little bit of the history of the organisation, the work they did and stuff...but mainly it was about the steps you should go through if you want the best chance of selling it...I remember it just being a game... you'd forget what bib

you were wearing...it was just how good are you at blagging someone to give you a few quid a month...You could blag yourself that 'oh yeah at least I'm working for a charity' but at the end of the day it was 'oh I got three sign-ups today'... It was funny times, I don't remember it being bad times at all, it was quite fun' (Participant 9).

What this suggests is first that the explicit purpose supposedly served by fundraising appeals (i.e. money *for* something) fades into the background, with the brute measure of a sign-up taking its place. Within the industry there are stringent targets to be hit (cf. Yates 2018, Thornton 2002) which are measured in monetary/quantifiable terms, not in terms of awareness raised. Indeed, the accuracy of 'awareness' itself seems to be of less importance. One interviewee reflected that the pitch was of 'little substance...there were some statistics, but it was mostly about [delivering] the spiel in a way that didn't have that much to say' (Participant 10).<sup>51</sup>

However, the aforementioned quote secondly suggests some sort of satisfaction in the process, which came up in other interviews. The interviewee who had worked at all levels of F2F for instance often made reference to F2F being 'fun', that 'it's a nice feeling'. However, asking them more specifically about what made it 'fun' or enjoyable, they didn't respond with any grandiose terms about commitment to some broader cause. Rather, what they enjoyed or found 'fun' was 'working out strategy, tactics, positioning...it's like going into battle against the general public' (Participant 3). What this quote suggests is again not only an enjoyment to be gained from the activity itself, but also its disconnect from its expressed (desired) object.

---

<sup>51</sup> This tends to be the case for 'awareness raising' more broadly. As both Budabin and Hudson (2021) and Richey et. al. (2021) demonstrate, there is little evidence to suggest this actually 'makes a difference' and in fact 'awareness raising...is often superficial, self-indulgent and apolitical – obscuring structural and political issues' (Richey et. al. 2021n.p.)

Going into 'battle' with potential donors implies an antagonistic dimension, a zero-sum game in which 'shared humanity' disappears and the prefiguration of more personal or human relations is replaced by extreme competition, with its object becoming the production of donations. As one ex-fundraiser I interviewed remarked:

'one day I got three sign-ups in an hour and I was like woooo! But I think it's the target driven stuff though at the end of the day, the minute you get a few you're like ah [relieved/relaxed noise] I'm gunna be fine...Occasionally it's like oh I'm raising money for charity...but the happiness would be more like, oh now I don't have to stress for the rest of the day' (Participant 12).

There are also glimmers of this satisfaction on the webpage published by Oxfam which introduces their UK F2F team. The short bios betray that this is no longer an instrumental activity – a purely utilitarian desire to generate resources in the most efficient way possible – rather it is the activity of signing-up new 'donors' which provides enjoyment. For instance, all of them appear to be 'professional' fundraisers, having worked with a variety of charities, thus loosening their attachment to the specificities of Oxfam's desire (Oxfam 2020a). While this isn't conclusive, it suggests that loyalty isn't to some particular issue but rather to fundraising for charity more broadly; fundraising for charity over the explicit message delivered by the charity. Further, although the Glasgow regional manager identifies more directly with Oxfam's explicit message, his short quote ends with a nod to an enjoyment of the fundraising process in itself: 'persuading people to do something about it is addictive' (Dyer 2020). However, the clearest identification with the accumulation process comes from the Manchester regional manager. After celebrating his long stint within the fundraising industry, he remarks that his

favourite moments with Oxfam are not about engaging in a struggle for a better world, but rather are 'when I have trained a new fundraiser and they sign-up their first ever donor. They are always so excited and proud' (Pancoust 2020).

Of course, we can imagine proponents responding in the manner of the disavowal detailed in Chapter 3 (3.2.): the sign-up is merely a means to an end, and any adoption of sales tactics is merely a banal instrumental necessity. Really F2F is governed by the symbolic Law of common humanity and our duty to them. If fundraising becomes anything other than banal instrumental necessity, we have a distortion of F2F proper; chuggers not fundraisers. However, we can also imagine a scenario in which a fundraiser, called up on violating this symbolic mandate, would resort to the defence of 'I was just doing my best to help the charity by generating as many donations as possible, it was all motivated by my sincere desire to make a difference'. However, this misses that the action is not simply licensed due to the symbolic disavowal. Rather, there is also a certain surplus-enjoyment generated in the meaningless carrying out of the organisational imperative, in 'the routines, repetition, and dictates of doing business' (Kapoor 2020, p. 86).

Indeed, one of Žižek's main critiques of Hannah Arendt's notion of the banality of evil is that she remains at the level of the symbolic, forgetting both the levels of the imaginary and of *jouissance* (2008b, p. 69). Arendt had argued that Adolf Eichmann, one of the perpetrators of the Holocaust, was hardly a scheming evil genius imbued with some diabolical motivation to exterminate all Jews. Rather, he was a 'model civil servant' (ibid), justifying his role by reference to the Kantian categorical imperative towards fulfilling one's duty. As such, the evil committed was ultimately banal, manifested in the dull routine of the bureaucratic machinery. While certainly not suggesting that fundraisers mirror Nazi civil servants, this follows a very similar (symbolic) logic as the excuse from the imagined fundraiser

above. However, by remaining at the symbolic level it not only misses the imaginary, or fantasy frame which enables an individual to ‘maintain a distance towards...the horrors they are involved in’ but also the ‘*real* of the perverse...*jouissance* in what they were doing’ (ibid). As we have seen, F2F is animated by a fantasy of One human community and its activity abstractly embodies the desire for its realisation (i.e. ‘doing good’, ‘making a difference’) – but, aided by the fact that its excesses are displaced onto a ‘few bad apples’ (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.), the fantasy of ‘doing good’ in the prefiguration of One human community allows proponents to maintain a distance from these excesses (which result from the immanent contradiction of F2F) and enjoy their symptom: the ‘perverse’ (and disavowed) enjoyment of the fundraising process itself, separated from any express purpose or utility.

The bureaucracy of F2F however is of a different sort than the state bureaucracy referred to by Arendt. There is what Kapoor calls ‘institutional’ or ‘administrative enjoyment’ (2020, p. 273, 278), but in F2F this is oriented towards the generation of monetary surplus.<sup>52</sup> As such, the surplus-enjoyment of F2F – the enjoyment of fundraising for the sake of fundraising – figures in the surplus-value generated by it. It consumes the labour-power of fundraisers on the promise that the concrete labour conducted generates the *plus* on top of what was originally invested. Of course, we can imagine outcries from F2F practitioners to this claim. As previously demonstrated, they are always keen to highlight that they are not only concerned with the sign-up, and that when the sign-up is concerned it is strictly a means to an end. However, inasmuch as large NGOs segment their organisations, the specific ‘fundraising’ sections simply *are* only concerned with the production of surplus. Despite a different status to profit-seeking organisations, they simply *have* to stay

---

<sup>52</sup> Indeed, as Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) identified in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, such technocratic, administrative and instrumental logics are deeply connected to the commodity principle.

economically viable: although they need to maintain a semblance of utility, of fulfilling the goals of the organisation, they don't go bust because underdevelopment still exists (this in fact gives them all the more reason to be sustained, and even expanded). Further, given the detachment of the F2F interaction – in terms of its outsourcing to for-profit organisations and the distance between the content of the pitch the actual cause it serves – its own object is precisely surplus-value. The surplus-enjoyment of F2F therefore is seemingly consonant with the surplus-value generated by the F2F 'business', and thus manifesting the enjoyment of accumulation for its own sake, detached from any sort of purpose. The material structure of F2F (*qua* its political-economic organisation), despite being abstractly oriented towards 'making a difference', is concretely oriented towards the measurable aspect of its success, the generation of surplus-value.

What this hints at – F2F's bottom line – is that concrete measures to conform to the 'human' economy in its practice, are simply means towards the ends of surplus-value production. The 'human' makes it ultimately a more sustainable and effective mode of fundraising. While in some sense it materialises the desire for a human economy, an attempt to counteract the neoliberal absolutisation of market atomisation by prefiguring 'human' relations apart from instrumental calculation, the 'human' aspect of F2F functions as a means by which to generate further revenue. As ex-chief of the PFRA Mick Aldridge stated, unlike direct mail and telephone fundraising, F2F is remarkably resilient, even to financial crises (cited in Kelly 2011). Indeed, for one interviewee:

'F2F is a much more powerful catalyst than, you know, say getting a letter through the post because it's easy not to read it...That person is saying, looking you in the eye, can you stop and talk to me, and then telling you that thing in a way that is probably the most emotionally



resonant which is a human being talking to another human being...I'm confident we didn't see a drop in sign-up rates [during the economic crisis]' (Participant 2).

As such, the all too human materiality of F2F is not simply opposed to its cost-effective aspect. Rather, its human materiality makes it all the more cost-effective. Another interviewee rendered this dimension clearly: When speaking about what makes a successful fundraiser, they told me a story about one colleague who did not fit into that category. This individual had a chronic eye condition, and as a result was allowed to wear sunglasses while on the job (which is typically not allowed cf. Thornton 2002). According to the interviewee, this was the crucial reason for his lack of success: 'its gunna really put a barrier between you and people and your gunna struggle' (Participant 4). As such, a lack of a 'human' or 'personal' connection effaced the efficacy of generating sign-ups.

Interestingly, this interviewee also pointed to the 'chat' as an essential ingredient of any charity pitch, and something that unites the variety of possible spiels. In Section 4.1. I highlighted how this aspect of F2F suggests an understanding of its external material ritual as functional with regard to a 'human' economy. That is, the extended chat at the beginning of the interaction suggests a performance of concern for others, and the establishment of a more 'personal' connection whilst distancing the F2F interaction from obsessively circling around the sign-up. Not diving straight into the (often rehearsed) pitch suggests the first communication of the F2F interaction is not geared towards necessarily signing someone up, but towards establishing a rapport between the fundraiser and potential donor so that the experience 'a positive influence, a positive experience for both parties. Not always ones that would lead to people signing up' (Participant 3).

However, what those articles on ‘phatic communication’ also emphasise is its non-utility and Jakobson characterised it as something without concern for the content of communication (cf. Bickmore and Cassell 2000). In Samo Tomšič’s 2019 book – a continuation of the lines of thought initiated in *The Capitalist Unconscious* (2015a) – he turns from outlining a certain logical homology between the procedures of Marx’s critique of political economy and what might be called a psychoanalytic critique of libidinal economy, to outlining various historical paradigms of libidinal economy. During so, he speaks at length on Aristotle and his attempt to ground logic and argumentation in stable. Language for Aristotle was supposed to be an ‘organon’ or a tool used by humans to communicate. However, in doing so he externalises the immanent tendencies of language which appear to him as irrelevant and useless excesses, thus displacing the lack inherent to discourse onto some external agent: in his case, the sophists. In his framework, they appear as his eternal enemy, insofar as they revel in the relative and exploitative use of language which bypasses its communicative function or use-value. And do we not get something similar with F2F? That is, in engaging in a ‘chat’ prior to any details about the organisation/cause and so on, fundraisers directly practice sophistry. Insofar as one of F2F’s professed values is its capacity to raise awareness, it seems problematic that a typical component of the interaction – indeed, one that could confirm its material congruence with the ‘ideal’ promise of a human economy – completely dispenses with its communicative potentials. Combined with its indifference, or the lack of any referentiality between the content of the pitch and the gifts it claims to deliver, the F2F interaction appears as a great exercise in sophistry, in speaking for the sake of speaking. It thus betrays a surplus-enjoyment in the process itself, apart from its professed ‘utility’ of raising funds and awareness.

However, considering the extensiveness of the ‘chat’ in the F2F interaction, it surely serves *some* purpose. While the practitioner may point to it playing the role of

forging bonds between speakers, from the perspective of 'raising awareness' the chat is utterly useless. Further, from the perspective of generating sign-ups, insofar as the chat doesn't deal in any substantial detail, it seems like dead (unproductive) time. What it does do however is make it more difficult for the potential donor to leave. It thus functions as a proverbial spider's web, cornering potential donors and forcing them to eventually hear the pitch. It is much easier for an individual to walk past and say, 'sorry I'm busy', and carry on. Once you've stopped and had some light-hearted conversation with the fundraiser, it becomes much more difficult to not hear their pitch and then much more difficult to say no to signing-up. I'd even argue that this function should be accorded to the smile and the handshake. In both cases, once engaged, it makes it very difficult to exit the situation. The contact between eyes or hands entails the explicit recognition of one another, and the generation of a shared space in which a normally polite individual might get stuck. Again, the 'human' aspect of F2F becomes a vehicle for its production of surplus-value. When asking one ex-fundraiser about their experience of the chat they rendered this 'bottom-line' in the clearest terms possible. While the chat was a crucial instruction:

'I would also get told to not have such long conversations with people if I knew they weren't going to sign-up... That's the bottom line at the end of the day. Because I'd always end up in like really amazing conversations with people about all these complicated things but if I wasn't getting sign-ups that day they'd always be a bit like...[sceptical face]' (Participant 12).

Such a dynamic was also mirrored in the handshake, as this interviewee remarked 'yeah, I'd always shake peoples' hands, because once you shake someone's hand, you're locking them in' (Participant 12). Thus, whilst the materiality of F2F

manifests the fantasy of shared humanity and the desire for its realisation, it simultaneously procures surplus-enjoyment in the performance of the ritual for its own sake. As such, insofar as the concrete object which fills in the lack in desire is the sign-up, the (surplus-)enjoyment of F2F manifests the *jouissance* of capital, of accumulation for the sake of accumulation. In this sense, the fantasy frame of F2F – in locating its object of desire in the sign-up – and the *jouissance* it directs destabilises at the same time as it stabilises. The ‘human’ or ‘personal’ motifs of the interaction provide an image of F2F as realising authentic human social relations, while its production of surplus-value – exploiting these very human motifs – introduces a destabilising excess, disavowed at the same time as it is enjoyed. Certainly, when the production of surplus-value, or the measure of F2F’s success, is accounted for in purely monetary terms, this bottom line can have the effect of directly undermining the other professed ‘bottom lines’. Indeed, as I demonstrate in the next section, F2F implicitly relies on a variety of obscene transgressions.

#### *4.3. From destabilising enjoyment of Capital, to transgressive enjoyment of inequality*

So far, I have argued that F2F, while materialising a certain desire for the realisation of shared humanity, procures a perverse enjoyment in the banality of fundraising, in the brute measure of generating a sign-up, and thus in the process of producing surplus-value. Whilst gravitating towards an obscene practice from within the coordinates of its symbolic Law (i.e. rather than ‘cost-effectiveness’ serving the ‘human’, the ‘human’ serves its cost-effectiveness), the properly transgressive aspects of its ritual appear in what precise dimensions of the ‘human’, or what ‘humans’ are exploited in producing its surplus-enjoyment/value through attaining the sign-up. The production of surplus is openly admitted, it is only its excessive side which is disavowed. Thus, enjoying the process is not necessarily

transgressive, especially as it is always set within the fantasy frame in which it 'makes a difference'. It is only transgressive in the enjoyment of what could not be explicitly acknowledged in the ideological edifice. Indeed, what I have discerned from fieldwork observations, interviews and secondary data is that alongside (and sometimes in pursuit of) the production of surplus-value, F2F exploits various points which demonstrate the falsity of the ideological notion of shared humanity; the global inequality of wealth and power between rich and poor, a precarious labour force and predatory normative heterosexuality.

In the first case, although the content of the pitch is often very vague, the implications of the minimal reference it does make renders it all the more obscene. Not only are they instrumentalised towards the brute measure of a sign-up – and thus undermining 'raising awareness' – but the tactical references deployed often stage the very inequality they seek to remedy. This is not so much a direct representation. Rather it crucially remains implicit, located in the juxtaposition of emotive descriptions of poverty/struggle with the simultaneous affirmation of the potential donors' power/wealth. Indeed, the academic debate on NGO representations has been around the use of positive *or* negative imagery (cf. Dogra 2012, Lidchi 1999, Manzo 2008), and from my experience observing fundraising in the field this is the dichotomy within which F2F pitches would oscillate. On the one hand, we would get some description of the problem. It would emphasise the dire condition of some people elsewhere in the world, but it wouldn't do so dispassionately. Rather, on the other hand, not only would the content of the pitch often abstract from any political context, but it would typically focus on the transfer of emotion.

Many of my interviewees noted the often apolitical or vague nature of the pitch and how it would often resort to emotional representations and an attempt to 'pull on

the heart strings' (Participant 9). During my interview with an ex-fundraiser and current owner of fundraising agency, they spoke about the importance of a vivid pitch. A good fundraiser, according to this interviewee is able to 'paint a picture with words', or in some cases, actually use a picture on an iPad to make them 'emotionally resonate with that in a way that feels very real and very tangible and almost in front of them. What you also have to do unquestionably is make them feel' (Participant 2). After confirming the use of individual human stories as 'generic', this interviewee moves to discussing their love for reading books on behavioural economics, taking the crucial insight that we are often much more capable at engaging with individual suffering. Thus, not only do the descriptions of individual human stories have an affective dimension, but their use is also marshalled for the production of surplus. While this interviewee was keen to note 'it's not just some clever manipulative technique, it's just what people say when they need help' (Participant 2), it of course isn't the fundraiser that needs help but rather the abstract girl in Bangladesh for example. One ex-fundraiser I interviewed told me they were told 'to focus on...homeless children because it is more emotive', however they then went a step further saying 'we'd have to kinda create characters that we'd give names, talking about a homeless family [pretending to do a pitch] imagine like small Jimmy, we're gunna go paint his room for him, kinda thing' (Participant 12).

However, the F2F interaction doesn't stop with a 'pornographic' (Lissner 1981, p. 23) description of suffering. Rather, the obscene enjoyment is doubled by the pitch positioning the donor (and of course, the beautiful soul of the fundraiser) as the agents capable of solving it. Certainly, against the 'phantasmatic image of the Third World as Hell on Earth...no political activity, only charity and compassion, can alleviate the suffering', and with F2F potential donors are offered 'the chance of a kind of substitute-redemption by making financial contributions' (Žižek 2008b, p.

24). Thus, against the absolute impotence of those to be 'developed', we get a simultaneous attribution of power to the donor, thus staging their inequality and deriving satisfaction from it.

Indeed, from my interviews with those who had worked with/in F2F for an extended period of time complained to me that fundraising should veer away from negativity. One ex-fundraiser and owner of fundraising company remarked that:

'What you have to do unquestionably is make them feel...that they can have an impact on that, otherwise you are just you are just creating hopelessness. If you are saying this is awful, this is what the world is like, if they don't see that there's an answer to that problem then all you've done is upset somebody, but if they can be part of that solution that's an empowering thing, it's a positive thing and its true obviously' (Participant 2).

As such, the emphasis on what the potential donor could do is designed to prevent them being upset, to positively affect the donor or make them happy. For another interviewee, involved in F2F's emergence and fundraising consultant, the pitch should aim at

'showing [how] you, particularly you, as an individual can get involved in something where you can really make a difference. That is a powerful argument... we don't adequately reflect the fulfilment and sense of meaning that people get when they support good causes' (Participant 1).

During this interview, I got the impression that what mattered most in F2F was less what work was done as a result of the donation and more about the experience of

the donor. Fundraising for this person hinged on generating a 'sense of joy' or a 'joy of giving' (Participant 1). Indeed, 'if fundraising is not an enjoyable experience for the donor, don't do it' (Participant 1). And indeed, this happens in practice. One ex-fundraiser told me that if they signed someone up, they'd have to do something called an 'inspirational minute' whereby:

'you tell them how amazing they are and while doing that you'd have to write them this little thank you card that was like 'Gary, had a great chat with you today da da da [as if they were saying bla bla bla] and it had to be like 'put this on your mantelpiece when you get home and think about how amazing you are'...I guess people love that stuff though, because they say that if you did that that's the reason why people are gunna stay signed-up for longer, you made them feel good' (Participant 12).

However, if there is any 'joy of giving' generated in the potential donor – again couched instrumentally in terms of retaining income – as demonstrated before, it must be framed in what can be done. The joy is thus generated not solely in the capacities of the donor but crucially through its relation to the implicit incapacities of the potential recipient. This staged inequality of power, however, is doubled in the simultaneous staging of inequality of wealth. A ubiquitous tactic has been to equate the value of the donation to the value of some banal commodity we consume on an everyday basis: a cup of coffee. Not only have I experienced this speaking to fundraisers, but it has appeared in my interviews and repeatedly in online confessionals and even business textbooks.

Two ex-fundraisers for instance noted this particular motif. One said that 'we would say that it's only a price of a cup of coffee' (Participant 6), while the other said that 'we framed it as "that's the price of a cup of coffee a week"...you know that's not



much' (Participant 10). Similarly, an anonymous confessional, in describing the purpose of F2F, stated that 'my job is to sign-up members of the public to a regular donation, less than the price of a cup of coffee a week' (Anonymous 2016a). Another confessional, once again showing not only the inequality of wealth and power between fundraisers/potential donors and their beneficiaries but its libidinal content, stated that they are 'saving lives through direct debit monthly donations for as little as £6.50 a month (Less than a cup of coffee a week!), and it feels freaking awesome' (Warwick 2017). And finally, a business ethics textbook, after consulting three different fundraising companies and concluding that their approaches were all quite similar, also invokes the scenario in which a fundraiser 'will ask whether they would be prepared to give no more than the cost of a cup of coffee each week' (Tricker and Tricker 2014, p. 356).

As such, the 'joy' generated in the F2F interaction is less a joy of giving as such than what Wilson highlights as the libidinal economy of compassionate consumerism: *the joy of inequality* (Wilson 2015a). The 'joy of giving' promised, framed in terms of 'just the price of a cup of coffee' is ultimately a sort of decaffeinated enjoyment, an enjoyment which is of right measure and without the qualities that concern *jouissance* proper. Indeed, as Žižek points out, this decaffeinated enjoyment 'we thus obtain is a semblance of enjoyment, not its Real' (2017, p. 202). The Real, transgressive enjoyment is precisely in the staging of this inequality, in the obscene emotive fascination with poverty/struggle and its implicit relation to the donor's wealth and (paternalistic) power.<sup>53</sup> The ex-fundraiser turned owner of fundraising

---

<sup>53</sup> This dynamic has been similarly highlighted by other psychoanalytic development literature. Gavin Fridell for instance in a critique of 'fair trade' ideology highlights how it invokes the 'exaggerated power of Northern consumers' (2014, p. 1191). Again however, it is 'capitalism' more broadly conceived – and its fetishistic misrecognition – which is absent from this analysis. And as Marx demonstrated, such fetishism always already makes such 'trade' – particularly the trade of the wage for labour – seem 'fair'. In other words, it has to appear as an exchange of equivalents, and the 'appropriation of surplus-value occurs in the very form of equivalent exchange' (Žižek 2017, p. 200)

company I interviewed noted that they worked strictly with international charities because the money went further:

‘In the UK, if you want to impact somebody’s life it costs a lot of money to do that...but for £5 you can immunize a child from, you know, a disease that there’s a decent chance they are going to die from, you know, in the third world. From that point of view, that’s where our passions lie’ (Participant 2).

When I brought up the question of how representing these issues in terms of starving African children might be problematic, he launched into a defence:

‘Yeah, that’s true...I think largely because there’s, not the fear of, but the justifiable fear actually of that sort of idea of the white man coming from the developed world and going to help these poor people who can’t do anything themselves, you know, it’s not real, it’s not the truth of it...talking about empowering people to help themselves is of course the reality of it’ (Participant 2).

But not two minutes previously he quite literally framed it in terms of poor people who can’t help themselves, who can be helped by the Manchester resident going about their shopping. While explicitly it might be about ‘empowering the Other’, written into that, implied within it, is precisely the opposite: the empowerment of the Westerner and the cheap lives of those who need the Westerner to save them from a totally preventable disease. This obscene dimension is further compounded by its articulation in the service of generating surplus-value – exploiting inequality for profit – especially considering the quality of the labour from which it emerges.

One of the questions I asked ex-fundraisers in interviews was the biographical query of how and why they got into the job. In each case, they were either unemployed or students, looking for a job quickly, and F2F seemed to be the perfect answer. One interviewee, having just finished university and needing a job over the summer claimed much of their cohort 'were just in between jobs' (Participant 9) and all around 20-24 years old. Another had taken the job because they had just finished university and were not able to return to do a masters for fear of incurring more debt (Participant 4). This precarity also seemed characteristic of other fundraisers I interviewed: one was just about to start a masters and 'needed a source of financial sustainability' (Participant 10), while another was currently doing a masters and applied because they 'wanted a job and needed a job and needed it quick' (Participant 6). And the interviewee I referenced in Chapter 3 who claimed support for Amnesty International as the primary motivation to enter F2F also disclosed that they had to get into work because they had few qualifications, and they weren't going to be able to claim benefits (Participant 3). This seemed a typical conjunction for many ex-fundraisers I interviewed. While they referenced the desire to help out, make a difference etc., they all came back to the fact that they *needed* a job.

This is similarly mirrored in various anonymous and non-anonymous testimonies. Early into its life, and when tensions were beginning to flare regarding F2F, the *BBC* ran a confessional from a fundraiser whose first line demonstrated the typical scenario of precarity: 'I'm an actor and when I'm not doing acting work, this is my day job' (Napier 2002). Indeed, it is well known that acting is generally casualised, and the choice of becoming an actor then requires taking up further casualised work to supplement their income (cf. Maxwell et. al. 2012), in this case, F2F, which provided a more appealing alternative to 'boring temp work' (Napier 2002). In this instance, it was more a case of choosing F2F because 'it sound[ed] like fun' (ibid),

and being an actor required taking up precarious work. Nowhere in the article does it mention the need to 'make a difference'.

Another confessional from the same year demonstrated a similar motivation for getting the job: 'I chose to work as a street fundraiser because I needed a job that I could drop into quickly – one phone call, an A4-size resume, a 20-minute interview – and bingo' (Thornton 2002). Again, the emphasis here is on *need*. Further, why would someone need to drop into a job quickly? In all likelihood it would be due to 'need' once again. Not 'need' for some expensive holiday – you would have to work a while in F2F to get there – but 'need' for employment, 'need' for reproducing oneself. Unlike the article discussed above, this individual does recognise a more intrinsic/altruistic motivation for entering the sector: 'The belief that I would be raising awareness, support and money for charities was of real importance to me.' (Thornton 2002) but it seems telling that this came decidedly *after* the admission that they 'needed' a job. Further, a paragraph after this nod to the 'making a difference' motivation, it was immediately undermined by presenting that 'rationale' as somewhat instrumental towards getting the job:

'This rationale clearly went down well in my interview, and for £8 an hour it seemed fair enough. Face-to-face fundraising would be a fitting antidote to my previous temping job, talking with enthusiasm to real people about real issues instead of pissing my life away over a mortgage database' (ibid).

However, it would be unlikely that this individual would be 'talking with enthusiasm to real people about real issues' for very long. What was treated as a fortunate aspect of F2F – the ease and speed with which you could get the job – can easily turn into an unfortunate aspect. Indeed, the speed by which you can get the

job – as one interviewee stated ‘I literally called them up, I had an interview the next day, and I was doing training by day three’ – in F2F is an equal speed by which you can be dismissed.<sup>54</sup> If ‘we are constantly recruiting’ (Participant 2), as one interviewee ex-fundraiser/current owner of fundraising agency told me, then it stands to reason that they are constantly dismissing, or at least fundraisers are constantly leaving. One interviewee remarked to me that ‘they had people coming in and out all the time...it was a bit like a revolving door, they treat you as dispensable’ (Participant 10). With such stringent targets the ‘[h]eavy-handed pressure from management leads to predictably high levels of sickness and staff turnover’ (Thornton 2002).<sup>55</sup> One interviewee spoke of feeling as if they were ‘being audited a lot’. According to them, their ‘supervisor would occasionally come and check up on us and how we were doing our pitches...and you’d have to stay there until it was better again’ (Participant 12). While organisations see this as deeply unfortunate, and as something that can be managed effectively (see Section 3.2) it is written into its very functioning. The targets set contribute to its cost-effectiveness, and are thus an essential feature of the practice. Yet, the consequence is a high turnover of staff: ‘if you weren’t doing very well, they put you on target for one week. And if you didn’t get those targets then you’d be fired’ (Participant 12).

Along with precarity however, comes lower work standards and harsher conditions. Standing around all day on the street in the elements no doubt takes a toll on the fundraisers’ health: ‘Being a face-to-face fundraiser means standing on the streets for seven hours a day and talking to as many people as possible, in every

---

<sup>54</sup> This interviewee (Participant 10) who got into F2F precisely for that reason was in fact applying for a whole host of retail and service sector jobs, only taking the F2F gig because it got back to them the quickest!

<sup>55</sup> Of course, this is not to mention the precarious existence of the industry itself. As one interviewee remarked, agencies going out of business or liquidating and restarting elsewhere with a different name has ‘dogged the industry for years’ (Participant 2). What this means is that, like those staff at Dialogue Direct – the first F2F agency – working within F2F is a deeply precarious scenario, embodying flexible accumulation at its purest and exploiting flexible labour in the process, which is then doubly precarious due to the possibility being sacked by the agency and the agency no longer having any money to pay you with.

shade of weather and pollution.’ (Thornton 2002). While this is no doubt physically exhausting, the act of instilling the ‘joy of giving’, of entering into a personal relationship with the potential donor and attempting to discursively affect their body – in other words, to help them enjoy – can take a deep affective toll on the fundraiser. Indeed, the ‘perkiness’ (Napier 2002) characteristic of fundraisers is essential, again not simply for generating sociality and personal relations between fundraiser and potential donor but ultimately for the efficacy of F2F *qua* fundraising. As one interviewee told me ‘one of the key things we were taught, and we had to teach other people was not to look bored’ (Participant 4). Looking bored would not be capable of inciting enjoyment in the potential donor, and thus a smaller chance of generating a sign-up. However, not looking bored is tough, especially when the job simply *is boring*:

‘it’s boring as hell...it is dull isn't it, it’s really dull, you are just saying the same thing over and over...if no one is having that chat with you it is excruciatingly boring, you're literally just getting rejected all day’ (Participant 9).

What this demonstrates is that the work conditions are not only physically but also affectively harsh. And this is then compounded by a convenient link between this latter quality of the labour (affective) and its flexibility/precarity. While precarity and affectivity in the labour process are conceived as characteristic of neoliberal labour regimes, many have highlighted this two-fold character of neoliberal labour as also *feminised* (cf. Cornwall et. al. 2008). This is not simply in terms of actual women in work, but more importantly the type of work that becomes dominant; flexible, and thus precarious and information/service based and thus affective (cf. Peterson 2005, p. 509), a worker that is ‘more caring, responsive and docile’ (Read 2016, p. 328, also cf. Power 2009, p. 20). This has the unintended consequence of

increasing risk for specifically female fundraisers (cf. Coffey et. al. 2018). Of course, being happy all the time is going to bring other unwanted problems.

On one occasion, I was observing an interaction in which two female fundraisers were speaking at length with two male members of the public. I was attempting to speak to people who had been approached by fundraisers in order to get further insight on the nature of the interaction. I remember being increasingly frustrated because I had earmarked these men as people who I was going to talk to (as it was busy, I had to keep my eyes on who I wanted to speak to) and yet even after the iPads had gone away, their conversation continued with smiles and laughter. After they had finally ended the interaction, I spoke to the two men to try and get their reflections. It turned out both had signed-up and when I asked why. In response, one soberly stated – recognising something problematic in what he was about to say by prefacing it with ‘well to be honest’ – that he signed-up because the fundraiser ‘was cute’ and he liked her ‘smile’ (Participant 14). On a separate day I approached an Oxfam fundraiser in order to ask for a formal interview (Participant 18).<sup>56</sup> She was relieved to hear my request. Since I responded to her question of whether she could speak to me for a few minutes with ‘actually I wanted to speak to you’ she thought I might have been hitting on her, which was a regular thing she encountered. A confessional in *The Guardian* similarly highlighted the dangers facing female fundraisers:

‘I learned very quickly how to deal with both relentless rejection and awkward over-attention.

---

<sup>56</sup> I ended up signing up myself after this interaction, because she was the only fundraiser I asked (on the street) who actually said yes, and I felt bad that she had done me a favour and I had essentially just wasted her time. However, and adding fire to my thesis that the ‘human’ aspect of F2F is exploited to get the sign-up, she never responded to any of my emails. Of course, this could just be an oversight, or something else came up which meant she could no longer do the interview. But it nonetheless demonstrates the affective dimensions of such a (successful) labour process which abruptly ended once a sign-up had been generated.

I signed up one man who terrified me by walking past again and again through the day, once hiding behind a newspaper and finally rushing up to give me a bunch of flowers. Another boastfully flaunted his gruesome injuries sustained in a drunken fight, told me he'd just thrown up, and then asked if I'd like to come home with him.

And one charmer, a gentleman with a polka dot bow-tie, demanded that I have sex with him there and then for the princely sum of fifty pounds. Believe me, I began feeling picky about people soon enough.' (Thornton 2002).

This is all the more problematic however, when employers of F2F fundraisers exploit this latent, unintended possibility. Despite the risk associated with female fundraisers' performance of the affective smile – which has been highlighted in the extended literature as a classic instance of objectifying the female body (Di Leonardo 1981, p. 52-53) – there is often an implicit suggestion that female fundraisers should make use of this. The ex-fundraiser I quoted in the first section to support the claim that smiling constitutes an explicit aspect of the F2F interaction, followed up the importance of 'play[ing] up smileyness' with also playing up 'sweetness...or even like femininity or whatever' (Participant 6). She even said that her team leader would often point to younger guys and gesture for her to attempt to sign them up. Although she contended there could be another, less controversial, explanation for this (because they were the same age for instance) she said: 'I definitely think it was a nudge nudge wink wink... definitely it was like 'give them your best *smile*'' (ibid, emphasis added). Another female fundraiser similarly highlighted this *implicit* dynamic. Being worried about perhaps not being great at the job, her colleagues would attempt to assuage her fears:



'A lot of them said "oh you're gunna be fine you're a woman, you've got an advantage" which I actually think is a little bit sexist...there was this subtlety about it where if I'm a woman I can use my looks to pull men over and take advantage of them...it was always said in a kind of jokey way...at that point you can't really turn around and say no because in a way its portrayed as banter' (Participant 10).

This experience seemed consonant with a comment from a different ex-fundraiser I interviewed. I had asked about 'dodgy' practices, in an effort to interrogate the fantasmatic transgressions potentially at work in F2F. He responded:

'one thing close to the line was...women being told to kind of be a bit flirty. Maybe not explicitly like 'flirt with them', but you know, acknowledge what could be a good way of hooking people in... we were told to be aware of our strengths, and that was code for, you know...'  
(Participant 9).

The fact this is not explicit is crucial. As Žižek has shown, fantasy and the enjoyment it procures, has a transgressive, destabilising dimension which if it is to function must remain *implicit* (2008b, p. 24). Whilst the explicit desire (albeit metonymically shifting from one explicit desire to another) or the stabilising dimension of F2F's fantasmatic promise of an end to antagonism and the rediscovering of human community and personal social relations, this (impossible to satisfy) desire is underwritten by an obscene enjoyment of unequal gender relations and traditional/patriarchal heterosexuality – definite stains in a supposed 'common' or shared humanity. Inasmuch as this is an implied tactic for female fundraisers to utilise, it works towards the procurement of surplus-enjoyment/value in the

generation of more sign-ups. In other words, alongside the exploitation of enjoyment in inequality, and of precarious labour, in dealing with the 'deterioration of working conditions' (Dalingwater 2018, p. 9), F2F implicitly exploits female fundraisers sexuality in search of surplus-value. Indeed, as Arlie Hochschild argued in her germinal book *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, the smiles of flight attendants 'reflect the company's disposition' (2012, p. 4), subsumed under the profiteering activity of the corporation employing the smiling subject.<sup>57</sup>

Alongside this, male fundraisers themselves can act in somewhat egregious ways, once again enjoying in the exploitation of an obscene heterosexuality and its congruence with producing surplus-value(enjoyment). One interviewee described the F2F experience as embodying a 'blokeish atmosphere' (Participant 10): 'a lot of the lead fundraisers were men and they had a particular way of stopping people...[that was] actually a little bit creepy saying "oh you look beautiful..." it was just a bit seedy' (ibid). This got more obscene however when I asked about the tactics she would use/was told to use and brought up my experience of the handshake being very common. She recognised this aspect, provoking an anecdote about the one of the lead fundraisers and her team leader:

'he was a little bit touchy feely with people... I found he was a bit, if it was a guy he'd kinda pat them on the back, [whereas] with a women he'd kind of gently caress her arm. But to me *that kinda undermined personal space*' (Participant 10, my emphasis).

---

<sup>57</sup> Hochschild is by no means alone in this thesis. For more contemporary discussions about the 'smile' and capitalism see for instance Fabienne Collignon on how the smile has come to 'behave purely according to the conditions set out by capitalist governmentality' (2019, p. 92), and Sianne Ngai on the smiley face as an 'uncanny personification of the collectively achieved abstractions of the capitalist economy: abstract labour, value, capital' (2015, p. 40).

Thus, the personal aspect of the handshake, the human-to-human contact materialising bonds of friendship and connectedness, when read between the lines also appears as its inherent transgression: an attempt to create a more personal spatial encounter is simultaneously undermined by its involvement in an obscene hyper-(hetero)sexual performance. This similarly occurs with the 'chat'. Not only does it problematically undermine the communicative function of the F2F interaction, suggesting an enjoyment of the process itself apart from any sort of professed utility, but the chat can also be reconfigured as part of flirting. One interviewee for instance, after confirming that the chat prior to any sort of pitch is a regular feature of the F2F ritual, out of nowhere stated:

'you know at the end of the day...guys would sign-up more girls and girls would sign-up more guys, you know, there's a certain flirtatious nature to it, and at the end of the day I've been walking down the street and there's some pretty little hippy girl in the street and they're like 'oh do you want to...'. There's definitely that element to it...yeah just flirt, you know' (Participant 4).

Another ex-fundraiser similarly noted this:

'Yeah you kinda have to like flirt with people, but in a way that you're not [participant mumbling as if they were stuck on how to structure the sentence]...They'd always say like 'make people fall in love with you', like in a nice kinda way but essentially it's a coded way of being like, yeah, just flirt' (Participant 12).

And again, the implications of this are deeply problematic:

'The other side of that [i.e. flirting]...the amount of sexual harassment I had was really bad. And they were very conscious, if I told my supervisor something bad had happened I was allowed to take a break or whatever, but that's the dynamic of you're a young woman on the street and your asking people to talk to you...I had a man wanking on the street to me in the middle of the day, that kind of stuff. I had a girl I was working with who shook a guys hand [and he said] 'oo your hand's cold' and like put her hand down his trousers. That was in the three months I was working there and I had to deal with really gross stuff all the time. I had a guy try to kiss one of my colleagues in the middle of the day on the street, just literally like lurched in' (Participant 12).

As such, F2F exhibits an unspoken hyper-heterosexuality at the same time as castigating inequality by invoking a common humanity. And while there is clearly an enjoyment of this sexualised encounter itself, it also dovetails with the production of surplus-value/enjoyment. For instance, when talking to me about the extent to which the pitch was instrumentalised towards the brute measure of a sign-up and the 'bloke-ish' atmosphere, one interviewee reflected more specifically on her team leader:

'My team leader was called Romeo...it wasn't his real name, he gave himself that name... he was the one who was boasting one day about getting 30 sign-ups in one day...he was the one who was particularly blokey...chatted up women...I'd hear him say "oh you look beautiful today" all the time' (Participant 10).<sup>58</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup> One member of the public I spoke to after she and her friend were stopped by an Action Aid fundraiser said he had been very pushy, at one point stating that 'I'm not gunna let you leave until you sign-up'. She noted that for two women talking to a large man that this was quite uncomfortable (Participant 17). After this I decided to stay and watch the aforementioned fundraiser and it seemed like he almost exclusively approached women.

When I heard this, I was almost in disbelief. Not only have we got a male fundraiser engaging in an almost predatory sexualisation of the F2F interaction, who gave himself the nickname often applied to successfully promiscuous men, but the way he relates to fundraising is evidently (enjoying) fundraising for the sake of fundraising. And considering their coincidence, it seems 'chatting up women' was in some sense instrumental in his success at fundraising. What this demonstrates is the external materiality of F2F reveals (and enjoys) its contradictions more openly than its official symbolic rationale can afford to acknowledge. Whilst it seems to materialise a fantasy of shared humanity, it also 'creates what it purports to conceal' (Žižek 2008b, p. 5) in enjoying the drive of fundraising itself and the implicit transgressions of its symbolic Law in service of this surplus-enjoyment.

#### 4.4. *Conclusion*

In conclusion, the materiality of F2F appears to support its symbolic distancing from its more economic-productivist (*qua* fundraising mechanism) aspects, with the specific features of its ritual (smile, handshake, chat and mobilisation of individual human stories) materialising the fantasy of One human society and the desire for its realisation. However, as desire is always lacking, and the enjoyment it promises illusory, the object which comes to stand in for this desire is in fact the sign-up. As such, F2F manifests a surplus-enjoyment in the process of fundraising itself, in the brute generation of the sign-up. Compounded by the way it organises its production (investment to purchase fixed capitals and labour-power, which then produces a surplus), this surplus-enjoyment of F2F coincides with its homological expression in political economy: the production of surplus-value. With this imperative, what is revealed is a reversal of the explicit symbolic (in-itself) Law of F2F: while in the latter its 'economic' or cost-effective determination is subordinated to its social

purpose, or its 'human' determination, the material externality of F2F exposes the subsumption of its 'human' characteristics under the rubric of the production of value. The smile, handshake, chat and use of individual human stories – although in some sense performative of shared humanity – function to hook potential donors in and make them more likely to donate.

While this appears perverse or transgressive from the perspective of F2F's symbolic Law, within the fantasy frame of 'making a difference' the imperative to accumulate sign-ups is openly acknowledged – albeit in a disavowed form. Rather, the properly transgressive aspects of this ritual reside in the dimensions of the 'human', or which 'humans', are exploited. Indeed, as I demonstrated, F2F doesn't merely exploit its human materiality, but exploits various points at which the fantasy of shared humanity break-down: inequalities of wealth and power between developed and 'developing' world, precarious labour and predatory normative heterosexuality.

Thus, F2F as symptomatic is not only a *symbolic relation* – a point internal to the 'human' ideology of NGOs that, through condensing contradictory symbolic threads, simultaneously undermines its internal consistency – but also a relation of enjoyment. Indeed, the symptom does not simply dissolve on analysis precisely because it functions as a way of organising enjoyment, with 'enjoyment [being] that [which] holds ("glues") different meanings together in a symptomatic way' (Zupančič 2017, p. 66). Enjoyment holds these contradictory meanings together yet is also coterminous with the contradiction; it is functional in a non-functional way, repeating-yet-obfuscating the moments of negativity at which it emerges (ibid). As I have shown, this 'holding together' of F2F's contradictory symbolic determinations entails the reversal of its symbolic Law, symptomatically undermining it at the same time as professing allegiance to it. As such, the 'economisation' of F2F is not a secondary derivative away from the essence of

charitable giving, nor a 'mere necessary instrument', but central to its operation. Indeed, if F2F was not an efficient producer of value, it would not exist. And of course, this brings us to the centrality of the value-form of the commodity, as a particular mode of social mediation, as the formal envelope for the production of capitalist enjoyment (surplus-value/jouissance). However, as I argued in Section 1.4.2., not only does this recognition, albeit in its dialectical intersection with psychoanalysis and Hegelian dialectics, entail an epistemological shift away from articulating an opposition between its ideological mediation (exchange-value) and its underlying material objectivity (use-value) to an opposition between the minimal gap between each and their fetishistic rapport, but it also trains our view to the necessary production of fetishistic appearance alongside the production of enjoyment/value.

Certainly, given the emphasis from proponents/practitioners that it is not just about producing value, this is not the only criterion for continued existence. Indeed, according to Tomšič, the production of value is the production of fantasies of value. We've seen how F2F's drive delivers (surplus)enjoyment/value, albeit in the 'montage' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 124) of performing shared humanity, but with the aim of procuring the object of drive: surplus-value or the sign-up. Although the sign-up and the potential surplus-value generated by it stand in for the realisation of the subject of F2F's desire, with the fantasy of 'helping out', in its abstraction from what is promised to do, it promises merely the infinitisation of the drive, focused not around objects of value, but value as object (Tomšič 2015a, p. 123), or the infinite perpetuation of itself. However, this finally begs the question posed for this research, a question that has been latent throughout the preceding chapters. Namely, what is the sign-up? Or rather, what is its *value*? This is the focus of Chapter 5.

## Chapter 5 - F2F reflected into itself: Value and the Gift

The 'movement' of argumentation or exposition, alongside the emphasis on revealing or thinking negativity, are perhaps the most important elements of dialectical materialism and its tradition of ideology critique. Indeed, as the argument concerning F2F's ideological function has developed thus far, exposing a symptomatic contradiction at the level of its immediate symbolisation was followed up by the reversal of its terms revealed at the level of its material ritual. In other words, the latter does not represent the positive truth obscured by the former, and nor do they combine into a functional internal relationality, but rather manifest a redoubling of the central contradiction. In this chapter, moving to the level of ideology reflected-into-itself, despite the apparent singularity of the object of F2F, we similarly find a redoubling of contradiction. Moreover, rather than signalling the interdependence or mutuality of ideal and material, it manifests a properly dialectical comprehension of materiality, of 'sensuous supersensuousness' and 'theological niceties' (cf. Jameson 2009, p. 3).

The materiality of the psychoanalytic object (qua *objet petit a*) and the materiality of the commodity and value both belong to the species of 'sensuous supersensuous' (Tomšič 2019b) and occupy the epistemological paradigm which oscillates between negativity and its real-abstract mystification. Indeed, as Žižek has repeated on numerous occasions apropos the 'critical Marxist' (read dialectical materialist) critique of fetishism, the task is not simply to demonstrate how fetishism masks a positive network of social relations, nor to supplement the one-sidedness of the abstract logic of capital with a realist political economy of the working class (Leibowitz 2003), nor turn the dialectic of ideas 'on its head' as a mere 'reflection and idealist inversion of...the real world' (Veltmeyer and Wise 2018, p. 10). Rather,



it is to highlight how what appears to be an ordinary object is 'abounding with metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties...[and] changed into something transcendent' (Marx 2013, p. 46, also cf. Žižek 2016, p. 277, Toscano 2008, 2019, p. 296).

While I hinted that such an understanding seems to hold a significant potential for understanding the object of capitalism with a human face in Chapter 2 (Section 2.3.1.), this becomes even more apparent with the specificity of the 'sign-up'. While it appears as a very trivial thing (indeed, as shown in Chapter 3, the process of its generation is cast as banal), not only does it seem to ambivalently straddle the opposed imaginary worlds of commodity and gift, but it occupies the place of surplus-value/*surplus-jouissance qua* figure of negativity, and like value, is 'immaterial but objective' (cf. Wilson 2018). So then, what is the sign-up?

Drawing on interview data, fieldwork observations, and official documents, I argue that F2F's political and libidinal economy – organised around accumulation for the sake of accumulation, albeit with a 'human' or 'personal' montage – is accompanied by the twofold production of fetishist appearance: while there appears to be a radical ambiguity of the (empirical) object of exchange, this is not admitted in its production. Rather, it is fetishised both as embodying a concrete use-value as well as expressing a more abstract act of altruism: charity or a 'gift'.

The argument, however, is not simply that there are two fetishist appearances fixated onto the sign-up, but that they form a contradictory-complementary unity, obscuring but repeating the central symptomatic contradiction of F2F – between its social purpose and its economisation – but *redoubled into each*: F2F's object as concrete use-value, while stressing the immanent (and prioritised) capacity of the 'sign-up' to 'make a difference', still implicitly speaks in the disavowed/displaced

terms of cost-effectiveness. And F2F's object as 'charity' or 'gift', while relying on a fantasy of absolute alterity to capital, is not only generated by the commodity-form but repeats its fundamental gesture, simultaneously abstracting the charity from any use-value, appearing as simply money which, as capital, appears to increase itself automatically every month *by virtue of being a gift*. These fetishses thus repeat the central symptomatic contradiction identified in Chapter 4, between its social purpose and its economic life, but each 'reflected into itself' so to speak.

Such an analysis reaffirms the explanatory and subversive value of the critique of ideology, avoiding both the reductionism and functionalism of extant approaches. Moreover, it also reflects the crucial place of Marx for a contemporary critique of (capitalist) development and globalisation ideologies. Not only does it help us move beyond an explicit focus on *neoliberal* capitalism, recentring the commodity, value and its particular form of social mediation, but the epistemology of such dialectical and materialist critique – and thus the logic of its 'method' – expressed in Chapter 1, does not seek to dissimulate negativity, nor reduce the appearance to a 'mere appearance'. A coincidence of opposites – like in F2F and NGOs more generally – does not gradually work itself out through its dialectical movement but repeats itself negatively. According to Žižek, this 'ontological premise is that reality itself is not the positive outcome of some productive One but the outcome of its redoubled failure' (2017, p. 50). And in this case, the sign-up is precisely the 'redoubled failure' of F2F. It is not that one aspect is reduced to the other, as its 'mere appearance' or functional expression, but that the fetishist attempt to project consistency onto an inconsistent object entails the redoubling of inconsistency.

This will proceed as follows: In the first Section (5.1.) I demonstrate the apparent ambiguity of F2F's object of exchange, and theorise this in light of Chapter 4 as indicating the logical place of *objet petit a*. This is because while it stands as the

'surplus object' of F2F, the object cause of its enjoyment, it simultaneously seems to lack any consistent characteristics, demonstrated not only by it acting as a stand in for (and abstraction from) practically any express 'desire' articulated in generating the sign-up (i.e. sending girls to school, helping protect the rainforest, etc) but also the impossibility of interviewees characterising it effectively. Nonetheless, given what I demonstrated in Chapter 3 – that F2F's central contradiction is displaced onto malignant agents who transgress the symbolic Law of F2F, in which its 'cost-effectiveness' is subordinated to 'doing good' – there evidently is some way of distinguishing false or deviant F2F from F2F proper. In other words, while the object is ambiguous, there is a way of distinguishing the appropriate identity of F2F's object from its corrupt imitation.

Therefore, in the subsequent Sections 5.2. and 5.3. I move on to expounding the two contradictory-yet-complementary fetishistic characterisations of this object, or two fantasies of value inscribed into F2F's object. On the one hand, F2F endeavours to cast its object as concretely 'doing' good, fetishistically bridging the gap between use-value and exchange-value, subordinating the latter to the former while maintaining the differential-quantitative logic of the latter (i.e. cost-effectiveness). On the other, F2F fetishises its object as 'charity' which paradoxically makes its money appear not only as *money as such*, but also as limitlessly expandable. Thus paradoxically, the emphasis on use-value over and above exchange-value at once moves away from the economic cost-effectiveness while simultaneously bringing it back in, and the fetish of charity, while moving away from the 'market', simultaneously totally abstracts from 'use-value' and reproduces the fantasy of money begetting money.

### 5.1. *Ambiguity of the Object (a)*

As shown in Chapter 2, and alluded to throughout the thesis, F2F ambivalence (itself representing the ambivalence of NGOs and their human ideology) is manifested on the level of ideology reflected-into-itself in the apparent manifestation of coterminous, yet antagonistic, logics between gift-giving and commodity-exchange. On the one hand, the in-itself of F2F (Chapter 3) admits some level of commodification, but decisively distances itself from it, presenting it as a mere necessary instrument and one whose misapplication appears external to F2F proper. On the other, the for-itself of F2F (Chapter 4) attempts to prefigure abstractly ‘helping out’ and shared humanity in its material ritual – wrapped in charity garb – but is organised around the production of surplus-value through the purchase and exploitation of arguably *the* capitalist commodity: labour-power.

While this tension explicitly disavowed, there are certain symptomatic slippages from one side to the other. One interviewee for instance, despite repeatedly distancing F2F and fundraising from ‘selling’ more generally – preferring to consider the non-profit sector the ‘change the world sector’ – the language of the market kept creeping back in. While they were at pains to say that fundraising is not about money, emphasising the social purpose of the interaction over any monetary gain, they continually referred to being in a ‘market’ and slipped from emphasising the ‘donor’ experience to the importance of the ‘customer’. A mere 30 seconds after stressing that ‘fundraising is not like selling’ and criticising ‘marketing’ logics in fundraising, they said that ‘we are in a *market* for something to believe in’ (Participant 1, my emphasis). Similarly, Ken Burnett, fundraising expert and champion of F2F, moves, in the first few pages of the 2002 edition of his book *Relationship Fundraising*, from making the definitive claim that ‘fundraising is fundamentally different to a commercial business transaction’ (2002, p. 2), to

subsuming the 'customer' (ibid, p. 3), which implies buying/selling, under the category of donor.

This ambiguity of F2F's object became more apparent when I directly asked my interviewees where the object of F2F's exchange fits within the perceived opposition between commodity and charity. One ex-fundraiser I asked, for instance, recognised the difficulty of the question, mumbled around and then gave an answer which flipped constantly back and forth:

'at the end of the day you are selling something, you are selling the idea of that charity and what that charity does. And if that charity appeals to you and you wanna support those charity's aims, therefore donate something, give them a gift you know what I mean. But you are selling the idea, course you are. You know, it's a sales job at the end of the day, let's be honest about it...[but] you were selling the idea of the charity to someone and then you're also selling the idea of mutual understanding and obviously mutual empathy and all this sort of thing, but yeah, I suppose it's a gift, you are giving something' (Participant 4).

The answer to what we might expect to be a simple question thus moves from frank admissions that this is selling, to bringing either side of the ambiguity together in the synthesis of 'selling charity', to locating the object within the frame of a donation and giving, and then repeating the cycle. And this was by no means an isolated example. This ambiguity was further reproduced by the answer of the interviewee who had worked at all levels of F2F and been involved in its regulation. He began the interview by asking about the third aspect of my research which was provided

to them in my participant information sheet.<sup>59</sup> After I had explained the seeming antagonism between the registers of commodity and gift, he said:

‘when I worked at an agency...a question was “do you think this is a selling job?” and it was generally agreed that there wasn’t a correct answer to that question... [It] very much depends on the individual’ (Participant 3).

In this case, the difficulty of giving a definite answer to the question of gift or commodity, giving or selling, is reaffirmed in much clearer terms, with this interviewee noting the absence of a correct answer. Again, however, this was far from simply an individual idiosyncrasy. Such difficulty was also mirrored in the response to this ambiguity from the interviewee who ran their own fundraising agency. After asking whether the interaction could be conceived as transactional in a market sense, they claimed, like Participant 3, that it ‘depends on the nature of the individual’ (Participant 2). Afterwards, not quite catching the flow of the sentence, they jumped into a sort of thought experiment on the topic:

‘a person – the fundraiser if you will – could be a commission based salesperson who would be just as comfortable selling a mobile phone to somebody or they could genuinely get up that morning and there’s nothing they care about more and they’re about to devote their lives to, you know, the charity sector...and they are there because they have this powerful urge to want to help, the content of that conversation could be pretty similar, or certainly what the fundraisers say [could be similar]...and the outcome might be the same but I would describe one

---

<sup>59</sup> This introduced the question of ‘whether donating through F2F can still be considered a donation or something closer to commercial revenue.’ See Appendix 1.

of those scenarios as manipulative and the other not...and definitely within this industry both those things happen...I don't think there's any fixed way to look at it...It's interesting reading the thing you gave me talked about the degrees to which it is a transaction, or transactional in nature, ummm I think that's down to the two people involved in the situation. It could be like that, or it could not be like that.' (Participant 2).

In this case, while they once again recognise the ambiguity, they nonetheless demonstrate some sort of means by which to distinguish true from false F2F. In the above quote, the same individual who spoke of the 'temptation' to ignore F2F's symbolic Law (which performed the symbolic operation of displacing F2F's contradiction onto malignant agents), makes clear that one of the scenarios would be 'manipulative'. However, the ambiguity is reaffirmed once more, as they follow it up with the reverse, by gesturing that this way of distinguishing it is by no means fixed. Moreover, insofar as the latter quotes highlight its dependence on the individual and their intentionality, these series of behaviours *outwardly* appear almost indistinguishable. While Participant 2 clearly had some disdain for the 'pure' salesman, so long as the salesman openly demonstrated the desire to 'want to help' – which, by virtue of being a salesman, they should be able to do convincingly – it would be virtually impossible to positively cast it as manipulative.

So then, what is the sign-up? While the lack of a definite answer here may appear as a hindrance to answering this question in empirical terms, it gives direction to what it is *for* those who can't tell us what it is. The fact that there is this *lack* of an answer about a positive object allows us to designate – in logico-theoretical terms – the sign-up as occupying the place of *objet petit a*. According to Žižek:

‘when we are faced with two series of behaviour which cannot be distinguished by any clearly defined positive symbolic feature, and yet the difference between the two is the unmistakable difference between true [behaviour] and its clumsy imitation, that unfathomable X, the *je ne sais quoi* which accounts for this gap – in short, the object which makes the difference where one cannot establish any positive difference – this is precisely the *objet petit a* as the unfathomable object-cause of desire’ (2008b, p. 30-31).

Indeed, *objet petit a* is not a substantial entity. Rather, it is a virtual object which is itself lacking, unable to manifest any positive consistency in itself, except as a ‘positivisation of a lack in the symbolic order’ (Žižek 2012a, p. 598). While the symbolic order of F2F is lacking – caught between contradictory strands of meaning (Chapter 3) – the sign-up comes to stand in for the impossible object of desire, capable of metonymically sliding through various signifiers, disguising its fundamental qualitylessness. Certainly, as I demonstrated in Chapter 4, not only is the content of the pitch typically vague, but it is functionally disconnected from the precise utility highlighted in the pitch. While sending girls to school in Bangladesh may have been the hook that got an individual to sign-up, the money secured by the sign-up is by no means tied to this cause. The sign-up as *objet petit a* thus further demonstrates the overlapping of F2F’s surplus-enjoyment and surplus-value. The sign-up is ultimately, in the same way as surplus-value and surplus-*jouissance*, an ‘object without qualities’ (Tomšič 2015a, p. 107), only representable in terms of quantity, of more or less. Indeed, desire is essentially void, and *objet petit a* ‘gives body to this void’ (Žižek 2017, p. 52). It is not conceived as some particular concrete thing always beyond our grasp, but a logical operator which makes ordinary empirical objects appear as ‘it’.



However, the identification of the sign-up with *objet petit a*, just like the gap in F2F's symbolic constitution, cannot appear as such – in this case as qualityless enjoyment/ value as object – and therefore is subject to defence mechanisms which project some sort of quality onto it. In other words, in order for the value F2F produces to be *realized*, the object of exchange must be inscribed with specific *fantasies of value*, fetishistic attempts to 'fixate the logical object in an empirical object and to conceal the gap that separates the two orders of reality' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 173). Indeed, as has been argued so far, if this were to appear as such – accumulation of surplus object for its own sake – F2F would collapse. Thus, the sign-up as *objet petit a*, an object without qualities which 'serves no purpose' (Lacan cited in Zupančič 2006, p. 157) except its own reproduction, must establish itself as a quality. Indeed, according to Tomšič, 'no matter how abstract the produced object...[it] has to be tied to a fantasy of quality' (2015a, p. 28).

In the next section I turn to one such quality I have discerned: utility, the quality of concretely doing good. While this appears to compliment the explicit ideology of F2F in-itself as being about more than just money, emphasising the provision of use-value and the subordination of money to *means* or *instrument*, such a fetish immanently undermines itself. Through fetishistically ascribing a concrete use-value to the sign-up it not only vigorously repeats the characteristic misrecognition that underlines the commodity universe, but also manifests the disavowed/displaced logic of cost-effectiveness.

## 5.2. *Value for/and Money*

Perhaps the most common phrase which surrounds F2F, and charity more broadly, is the phrase repeated *ad nauseam* by many (myself included): 'making a

difference'.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, as has been consistent throughout the thesis – from NGO criticism of excessive economism in global development agendas (Chapter 2), to the subordination of the 'economic' to its intrinsic social purpose (Chapter 3), to F2F's consciously mediated 'human' materiality (Chapter 4) – the purpose or utility of action is emphasised over and above the instrumental economic considerations. And true to form, despite the slippages and ambiguous secondary reflection, my fieldwork observations revealed a consistent demonstration of the sign-up's use-value. In virtually every interaction I was involved in, there was always some sort of flavour given for what exactly I would contribute to. Whether it was sending X amount of girls to school, providing clean drinking water for a community, or vaccinating children, my potential 'donation' was not portrayed as disappearing into the ether, but tied to some particular quality. In other words, it was going to concretely 'make a difference'. Indeed, since a primary criticism of the practice and of charity (in Britain) more generally, exemplified in the critique from *The Daily Mail* detailed in Chapter 3 – that private agencies, or even the charities themselves, are in some way profiting from this at the expense of the charity mission – organisations endeavour to be as precise as possible about where your 'donation' is going. The Commission on the Donor Experience for instance, a series of practical reports 'containing hundreds of pages of charitable wisdom' (Civil Society 2017), published a report specifically on F2F which was very enthusiastic about existing examples of demonstrating the value of the sign-up:

In 2017, St. John's Ambulance plan to hold face-to-face fundraising at the events where their volunteers provide the first aid cover. *Highlighting the value of their charitable output to the potential donor, who can see their*

---

<sup>60</sup> It is also worth noting that one of the main edited collections by the NGO-enthusiastic literature (e.g. Hulme and Edwards 1992, Banks et. al. 2015) that I have referred to regularly to comprehend the 'human' or 'personal' identity of NGOs is titled with the question 'Can NGOs Make a Difference?' (Bebbington et al. 2008).

*volunteers working as they speak with the fundraiser.* The RNLI [Royal National Lifeboat Institution] have taken their face-to-face fundraising to the beaches during the summer months, Greenpeace, Oxfam, WaterAid, Friends of the Earth have all fundraised at festivals, such as Glastonbury. Home Fundraising delivered a private site campaign for Orbis at Stanstead and Gatwick airports, aligning nicely with the work of their flying doctors (Butler 2017, p. 21 my emphasis).

However, while they endeavour to demonstrate the ‘value of their charitable output that would be realized by the potential donor signing up’, what exactly is meant here? While there may be a quantifiable aspect (e.g. the number of girls who will go to school or the number of lives that will be saved/benefitted etc.) in connecting it distinctly to something the charity does/will do, its value is the extent to which it satisfies some need or want. Or, in other words, its *use-value*.<sup>61</sup> Ken Burnett for instance opens a blog post on ‘the real point about face-to-face fundraising’ with the following quote from former mentor Harold Sumption: ‘Fundraising is not about money. It’s about work that urgently needs doing. It’s about *making a difference*, changing the world. If you start by asking for money you won’t get it and you won’t deserve it’ (2013, my emphasis). However, while money is secondary in this schema, and the concrete use-value is stressed, it nonetheless *is about money*, insofar as any use-value emphasised is still represented in money.

Certainly, from my experience speaking to fundraisers, while use-value was always emphasised, its representation in money – although typically secondary in temporal terms – was far from absent. As one interviewee put it, while crucially ‘making them

---

<sup>61</sup> As Helen Yanacopulos notes in her book length study on NGOs and public engagement, ‘the supporter’s charitable donation is offered as a means to address whatever need is identified by the INGO – to ‘end the needless suffering’ – and to allow the INGOs ‘good work’ to continue’ (2015, p. 91)

feel' you have to demonstrate 'tangibly [that] you can impact on that because your donation can pay for X number of children to be vaccinated so that's the kinda simple narrative that is used' (Participant 2). One UNICEF fundraiser I spoke to for instance, after giving the general spiel about the work UNICEF does, removed a prop from their bag and began explaining what it did. Once this finished, they revealed that this is what I would contribute, if I signed-up for a £20 monthly donation. After I gestured that this was too much, as if we were haggling, they pulled out another object, explained what use it had and told me how much it cost. Once again, after signalling that it was too expensive, they turned around to reveal yet another prop again at a lower cost.

Through this representation of quality in terms of money however, no matter how hard one emphasises the utility of the object (which, as we learn in Chapter 4, is nonetheless functionally/empirical distanced from the sign-up, i.e. the pitch does not correspond to where the money goes) it is *logically* distinct. Through this representation, F2F's value is situated within the *autonomy of value*. In other words, its representation is in a system of differences, represented as a pure quantity, which has identity only in its difference to another. F2F then, in its endeavour to establish a positive quality of the sign-up while representing it in terms of money, repeats the fetishist attribution of value to 'a positive quality of things' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 36). And while fundraisers *know* there is little connection between the potential use of the sign-up and the quantity of money that changes hands (or rather, they say they know when, really, they don't know, they can't confirm any direct relation) they nonetheless repeat it continuously within the interaction. However, while such a fetishist relation to the value of the sign-up is on its own terms a paradoxical reversal back to an understanding of the sign-up as a commodity (*qua* contradictory unity of use and exchange-value) which is explicitly denied, such a reversal is more strongly affirmed when recalling the motif of 'just a cup of coffee' discussed in

Chapter 4 (Section 4.3.). It is not simply that F2F asserts a relation between the use-value and exchange-value of the sign-up, but that this is a deeply advantageous relation compared to other commodities.

Visiting the various webpages either for face-to-face fundraising or fundraising more generally, we also see the extent to which the 'donation' not only has a concrete (use-)value but appears to have an excessive use-value. Oxfam's page on telephone and face-to-face fundraising for instance (2019a), has a link after the description of the F2F allowing you to go and see a description about the impact of their work. The reason they give for direct debit – or 'regular giving' – as opposed to one off 'donations' is that it is precisely one of

'the most effective ways of giving to charity, as they reduce administration costs and generate a steady and reliable stream of income, allowing us to plan for our long-term projects *and make a real and lasting difference to millions of people's lives. However, every contribution is very valuable to our work*' (Oxfam 2019a, my emphasis).

The sign-up in F2F then, even if only comprising a small 'donation', is not simply 'valuable' in terms of corresponding to a concrete use-value, but in fact an

exceedingly useful use-value. CARE International similarly reproduce this in the form of a visual aide to demonstrate the distribution of ‘how your money is spent’:

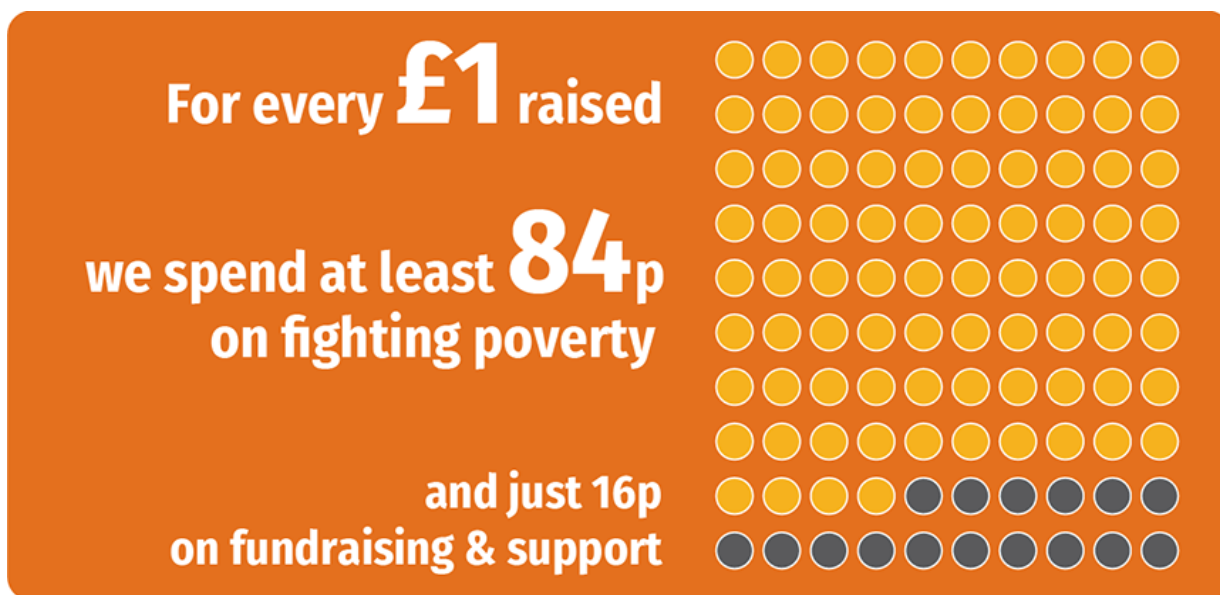


Figure 5.1. CARE International “how your money is spent” graphic (Source: CARE 2020)

After this graphic, the website states that ‘we’re committed to spending as much of our funds as possible on delivering lasting change in people’s lives...we invest the rest in fundraising and the *efficient* running of the organisation’ (ibid).<sup>62</sup> Thus, not only are use-value and exchange-value brought into relation, but ultimately a favourable relation, further implied by the telling use of adverbs in the above graphic. While the 84p spent on ‘fighting poverty’, the primary use-value here, is prefaced by ‘at least’, the 16p spent on fundraising, or generating the instrumental exchange-value necessary to still produce use-value, is prefaced by ‘just’. What this implies again is not simply that a quality of ‘fighting poverty’ overlaps with an abstract quantity (which seems quite cheap) but they are in a preferable relation. With ‘at least’ they imply that *more* may be spent, while with ‘just’ they imply *no*

---

<sup>62</sup> Since the question of how charities spend their money is a prickly issue, especially in the UK (cf. Breeze and Mohan 2020, Rose-Ackerman 1982), this expression is repeated across every charity website. In other words, CARE International are not isolated but are representative of the broader NGO field in this regard. I chose to use CARE because they had a nice visual.

*more* will be spent, which, through their juxtaposition, makes the already preferable relation appear to have potential to translate into further use-value. The paradoxical implication of this however, is that while de-emphasising the importance of money, preferring to emphasise the use-value over and above it, the activity of relating these doesn't simply perform the fetishist illusion of a relation between them, but repeats the disavowed mantra of cost-effectiveness.

As such, even more than with obvious commodity production, F2F endeavours to be more faithful fetishists than the fetishists themselves, demonstrating not simply the congruence between the exchange-value of the sign-up and some use-value connected to it, but its *preferable* relation. Thus, despite seemingly going in the opposite direction to the quantifiable logic of cost-effectiveness, the continuing demonstration of how you 'can get more bang for your buck' (Participant 10), the demonstration of not simply a positive and adequate relation between exchange and use-value – underlying capitalism as such – but a more advantageous relation than other commodities, returns cost-effectiveness to centre stage.

However, this isn't immediately problematic, especially insofar as this cost-effectiveness is about maximising use-values. Indeed, what this appearance of unity between exchange and use-value implies is the reproduction of the economic cycle C-M-C, the 'inner fiction of the circulation (M-C-M)' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 63). The fetishist endowment of the sign-up as (use-)value supports the fantasmatic desire of F2F towards 'making a difference', and thus the economic cycle according to which money is simply a mediator, instrumentalised towards the distribution of utility. Yet, this comes up against not only logical resistance (*qua* the autonomy of value and fantasmatic status of use-value) but also empirical resistance. Not only does F2F operate through the consumption of labour-power (M-C) in order to generate a surplus over and above the original investment (M'), but what is

exchanged in F2F *is not* use-value, nor a tangible object which ‘does good’. They don’t donate a toothbrush, nor does the interaction involve the production of clean drinking water or schools or medicine. While this utility is crucially present – a necessary or objective appearance crucial to F2F’s process (and the commodity universe more generally) – what is produced in the sign-up is a connection between bank accounts, and thus strictly a transfer of *money*. As such, in the microcosm of the interaction the fetishist attribution of value to the sign-up evolves into essentially fetishising the money exchanged as itself a use-value, not a mediator but an *end*. While fundraisers and ‘donors’ know they only deal with money, they nonetheless still hold onto the fiction of use-value, virtually materialised in the interaction.

However, the sign-up as money is of a special sort. Not only does it get incarnated with particular use-values which are more cost-effective than those produced on the market, but one general quality of the sign-up animates its spontaneous appearance: the sign-up as an act of charity, a gift, or a donation. Interestingly, this means it is constituted as a figure of absolute alterity to capital, or, as David Graeber puts it, an ‘impossible mirror of market behaviour’ (2001, p. 161). In the next section I detail this continual fetishist application of gift, donation or charity to the identity of the sign-up, despite the empirical distance from its concept and the impossibility of its concept itself. And similarly, just as the fetishist projection of value onto the sign-up, by emphasising its use-value over its exchange-value, paradoxically reintroduces that which it reacted against (i.e. the centrality of money and ‘cost-effective’ thought) into itself, the fetishist projection of ‘charity’ onto the sign-up reproduces the fantasy of self-expanding value without negativity: F2F as the Golden Goose. In other words, as charity it provides a ‘consoling model of Otherness as exteriority supposedly immune to capitalism’ while not only ‘neglect[ing] its generation within the theological effects of commodity exchange’



(Noys 2012, p. 9) but making it ultimately all the more effective as commodity-exchange.

### 5.3. *Charity as Fetish and the Golden Goose*

Given what I have demonstrated previously regarding the alignment between F2F's political and libidinal economy (fundraising for the sake of fundraising, accumulation for the sake of accumulation), and its subsequent fetishist relation to value (not only as use-value directly represented in money, but excessive use-value) to speak of it as charity appears totally misguided. Nonetheless, as I demonstrated in Chapter 2, this charitable identity of NGOs – not state-based nor for-profit – entails a different constitution of its object. Certainly, there is a general tendency to refrain from identifying the sign-up as a moment of sale and purchase, with the language of *giving* taking precedence.

Indeed, if the reader were to go back to the examples of the sign-up fetishised as value from relevant websites, nowhere do the words 'purchase', 'consume', 'buy', 'sell' appear. Underneath the graphic from CARE International are the options to '*give a monthly gift*' and '*donate £5*' (CARE 2020, my emphasis). On Oxfam's page (2019a), even when speaking in distinctly 'capitalist' terms of (re)investment, what is being (re)invested is not capital, nor money, but 'donations' (Oxfam 2019a). The Fundraising Regulator similarly, an opt-in self-regulatory body for fundraising in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, uses the term '*regular giving*' or soliciting '*regular donations*' in its description of F2F transactions (Fundraising Regulator 2020). Similarly, in its code of conduct, within the section on 'collecting money or other property' it states: 'This section covers collections of money or other property (*including goods and regular gifts*) for charitable institutions' (ibid). As such, money changing hands as a result of the F2F interaction is given the label 'gift'. While the

verb 'giving' only appears once, the verb 'donate' and noun 'donation' (the latter used interchangeably with 'gift') appear as the regular descriptor of action.

From my interviews, not only was this reaffirmed but it is clear how it is defined in opposition to commodity-exchange. When I brought up this tension in one interview for instance, their first response was to solemnly set out their worries that some in F2F would indeed want it to become more like a commodity, later declaring that this move would in some sense destroy any sort of unified identity, claiming that 'if we commoditise fundraising will disappear'. For this interviewee, 'commoditise' seems to refer to a diverse set of 'market' aims, whether that be excessive marketisation, over-emphasis on monetary metrics and the tendency of efficiency seeking towards increases in 'volume', whereby you go for the lowest common denominator. Instead, this interviewee has 'always said fundraising is not like selling' arguing that it is charity, which they characterise in the following way:

'the utterly, utterly irrational premise of a charity is that people will give freely, from their own slender/limited resources, something of significance for people that they don't know and in terms of the human condition...I don't know of any other species could claim to do on anywhere near the scale' of humans...to me giving is voluntary. At its best its selfless...but there is always a degree of self-interest in it, and I would play to that...people really want to make a difference' (Participant 1).

Again, this seems to come into tension with the empirical material I covered in Chapter 4. While this interviewee may be critical of 'volume' and makes an attempt to distance fundraising from the commodity world, 'volume' is the 'measure' of F2F, the bottom line according to which it can be judged successfully or not. It also

organises its activity along the exploitation of labour-power and makes said labour-power redundant if its concrete application fails to provide the measure of surplus. Further, while this interviewee highlights the 'voluntary' status of giving – similarly reproduced by fundraising expert Ken Burnett<sup>63</sup> - F2F's object is definitely solicited, often excessively / aggressively so.

Indeed, as demonstrated in Section 5.2., it repeats the primary fetishist appearance of the commodity world which assumes a relational unity between use-value and exchange-value which has the paradoxical consequence of simultaneously according to the logic of cost effectiveness, 'more bang for your buck' (Participant 10), while attempting to decentre the money form (which, as measure, is precisely the condition of possibility for cost-effectiveness in the first place). Yet nonetheless, the object of F2F's exchange is *still located as charity*, the 'utterly irrational' object which is given 'freely' for the sake of others. Even when this interviewee may show some recognition of the impurity of such selflessness, it is reduced to the extent to which someone has self interest in 'making a difference'. Certainly, this is reproduced at the macro scale, as discussed in Chapter 4 Section 4.1., due to the specific legal and fiscal status of charity.

What does this mean? Despite the ambiguity of the object, and the empirical distance between its standard, spontaneous, image (as per above) and its everyday functioning, the former remains absolutely integral. Indeed, for the above interviewee, without it fundraising would 'disappear'. Yet, as the ambiguity suggests, even though this certainty regarding its integral identity is entertained,

---

<sup>63</sup> For Ken Burnett there should be passion in fundraisers but 'no more persuasion' as 'giving is always voluntary' (2016a)

this is not a certain form of knowledge: once interrogated, its identity begins to dissolve. As such, like in Section 5.2., while on a certain level, practitioners *know* that there is no direct, unmediated connection between the value of the sign-up and the quality it produces (or in this case, they don't know) but insist upon it in the interaction anyway, practitioners *know* it does not strictly conform to the image of charity, but nonetheless it is insisted upon. However, this impossibility is not simply empirical but above all logical-conceptual. Indeed, arguably the founding father of the study of the gift, Marcel Mauss, began his study precisely by trying to distance the gift from its Christian concept of selfless charity (2002). According to Mary Douglas, in her foreword to Mauss' essay (aptly titled 'No Free Gifts'), this is the characteristic confusion people have when speaking of gifts and giving (1990). Like a good social scientist, Mauss grounded his intervention in existing literature, namely Bronislaw Malinowski's prior ethnographic study on 'gift-giving' in Melanesia. What is apparent in Malinowski is that:

'He evidently took with him to his fieldwork the idea that commerce and gift are two separate kinds of activity, the first based on exact recompense, the second spontaneous, pure of ulterior motive. Because the valuable things that circulated in the Trobriand Islands and a vast surrounding region were not in commercial exchange, he expected the transfers to fall into the category of gifts in his own culture. So he expended a lot of care in classifying gifts by the purity of the motives of the giver and concluded that practically nothing was given freely in this sense' (1990, p. x).

For Mauss, gift-giving works on the principle of reciprocity; giving implies receiving and in turn implies counter-gift. Without the latter, the gift could effectively turn to 'poison' (Parry 1986), insofar as it places the giver and receiver in

a hierarchical relation of power. The giver is ultimately able to assert their power, wealth and authority over the receiver (cf. Section 4.3.) whose inability to reciprocate confirms their status as 'below' or unequal to the giver. As such, the Christian ideal of the gift never appeared anywhere in reality. Even in the strongest case of apparently disinterested altruistic giving, there was still the spectre of God, which would register those acts and potentially reward the giver with a space in heaven (Graeber 2001, p. 161).

For this reason, David Graeber uses a specific terminology to describe this modern ideal of gift. That is, according to Graeber, '[t]he modern ideal of the gift, then, becomes an *impossible mirror* of market behaviour: an act of pure generosity untrammelled by any thought of personal gain' (2001, p. 161 my emphasis).<sup>64</sup> For Graeber's positivist intentions this simply appears as a false interpretation of what the gift actually is. From his perspective, the gift either is something specific or it is something else. If there is a discrepancy in how it appears then this requires more detailed study to develop the appropriate categorisation of this object, to bring its concept in line with reality. Yet, from the more 'critical' theoretical approaches embodied by those like Derrida (1992), Bourdieu (1977) or even Žižek (2007) this is precisely the point of the gift. For Derrida, the gift was the figure of 'the impossible' (1992, p. 7). So long as it was recognised as a gift – precisely because in the classic Maussian approach gifts imply counter-gifts – then it was no longer a gift, its recognition as gift 'annuls it as gift' (1992, p. 14). While Graeber looks on this as if he made an absolutely fatal mistake, because Mauss had already demonstrated that 'gifts, being acts of pure interested generosity, are logically impossible' (2001, p. 161) thus creating the need for a new conceptual definition of 'gift', Derrida was arguing precisely that impossibility was written into its very notion.

---

<sup>64</sup> Perhaps the most emblematic example of this absolute opposition is from Chris Gregory's (1982) definition of gifts vs commodities which involve a series of descriptors alongside their direct negation (interested/disinterested, alienable/inalienable, dependent/independent etc.)

Pierre Bourdieu also highlighted a similar mechanism in gift-exchange. For Bourdieu, due to the time lag between gift and counter-gift it was allowed to appear as something other than it was: ‘the operation of gift-exchange presupposes (individual and collective) *misrecognition* of the reality of the objective ‘mechanism’ of the exchange, a reality which an immediate response brutally exposes’ (1977, p. 5-6). Thus, the gift itself is defined precisely by a certain ignorance as to the principle of its exchange, it appears as something other than it is, but this appearance is an objective appearance. Žižek similarly emphasises this discrepancy within the heart of the gift, that it must maintain a pretence of pure generosity, ‘assum[ing] the “mystified form” of two consecutive acts each of which is staged as a free voluntary display of generosity’ (2007) even though the need to reciprocate undermines it. This paradox – the presumption of what the gift is as distinct from its actual existence – occurs again and again in writings on ‘giving’ (cf. McGoey 2015, Dean 2020). Indeed, according to Godbout and Caille’s landmark study:

Almost everyone shares Marcel Mauss initial amazement when, as he began to study gift relationships, he became aware of the need to reciprocate, which turned out to be not only something that required explanation but what the gift was all about, its true nature, hidden behind all affirmations of disinterestedness. The essence of the gift, it seemed, was that it was not a gift (1998, p. 92).

I can even admit that I was subject to this ‘amazement’. In earlier drafts of the thesis, when trying to figure out how to approach F2F through the literature, I was still very much under the assumption that ‘gift’ was by definition an extension of disinterested generosity. However, while Mauss ‘proved’ that the gift was not as we assumed it might be, that it involved the principle of reciprocity and thus was

not disinterested nor totally voluntary, his explicit positivism meant he discarded said initial amazement as simply false interpretation. From the philosophical perspective of the critique of ideology however, it is not a question to try and bring thought and reality/being into closer correspondence but to see in such amazement the (desiring) relationship to the gift we had in the first place, and the relationship it has to negativity.

Since, paraphrasing a well-worn phrase, every literature on the gift is merely a footnote to Mauss – the gift theorist par excellence who supposedly ‘coined the phrase “gift economies”’ (Graeber 2001, p. 8) – it might be worth looking to his position of enunciation to discover the form and function of (the ideology of) the gift. And indeed, there are some telling traces. First, despite the explicitly positivist approach, this study was not simply a detached act of classification or description. According to Mauss, his study had a ‘dual purpose’ (2002, p. 4). First was the classic ‘scientific’ attempt at classification, that would lead one to ‘arrive at conclusions of a somewhat archeological kind concerning the nature of human transaction in societies around us, or that have immediately preceded our own’ (2002, p. 4-5). This would be a process of *description*, which would document the function of this distinct form of exchange that was ‘different from ours’ (2002, p. 5). Second however, was a subsequent deduction of a ‘few moral conclusions’ (2002, p. 5). Indeed, for Mary Douglas in her preface to Mauss’s *The Gift*, the essay ‘was a part of an organized onslaught on contemporary political theory, a plank in the platform against utilitarianism’ (1990, p. x), with the theory of the gift held up as a ‘theory of human solidarity’ (1990, p. xiii).

While Mauss claims that these moral deductions occurred, by definition, *after* the process of empirical description and classification, biographical evidence makes this somewhat dubious. Involved in the journal *Annee Sociologique* – established by

Emile Durkheim (Mauss' uncle) – he was drawn towards socialism, but socialism of a particular sort. According to David Graeber, Marx was not particularly influential in France at the time Mauss was writing. Rather, he was 'more likely to be familiar with the ideas of Saint Simon, Fourier, Proudhon, or even Robert Owen' (2001, p. 158).<sup>65</sup> The point to be made here is that Mauss approached 'the gift' from a position, positively filled not only by a vision of how society works, but also how society *should* work. In other words, his attempt at classifying the gift was already imbued with some sort of prior ideology of the gift. While he by no means painted it in such rosy terms of the Christian tradition of voluntary expressions of pure altruism, he endeavoured to bring 'thought' (the ideas and theories of the gift) into correspondence with 'being' or 'reality' (the actuality of the exchange) and painted his 'moral' conclusions as a secondary derivative of such study, rather than as subjective considerations evidently held prior to said study.

This certain disavowed circularity – in which the gift was always something that it was not, that it was imbued with a certain *fantasy* of the gift – is also implied by his method. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, theorists of the gift – Mauss included – paint it as a universal, as something essential to human society and 'one of the *human* foundations on which our societies are built' (Mauss 2002, p. 5 my emphasis). However, if this is the case, what of his choice of empirical sites? Obviously in research, the cases must be chosen according to a specific rationale, as Mauss himself remarks in terms of method (2002, p. 5). However, this involves the more banal question of 'access' (2002, p. 5). Rather, for Mauss cases of Polynesia, Melanesia and the American Northwest have been picked not simply because they are in some sense accessible but because they express the particular subject of enquiry, namely that they are examples of gift-giving. However, does this not entail

---

<sup>65</sup> David Graeber also conceives of *The Gift* as a 'contribution to socialist theory' (2001, p. 155)



that Mauss had some conception of gift-giving already in mind? Further, the gift was a total social phenomenon which had universal status, emphasised again and again by anthropologists, so why not choose an instance of gift-giving in France? He mentions that the sites were only chosen according to whether there were sufficient possibilities of accessing data, so why not pick an instance of gift-giving in his homeland? While there were references to European cases, unlike the contemporary empirical description of what he termed 'ancient' societies (i.e. in Polynesia, Melanesia etc.), these were all themselves from the past.

Yet, Mauss still retained the title gift. If they were so different from what would come under the category of 'gift' in his own culture, then why use that word? Why assimilate practices distinct from European practices under that same banner? What this suggests is his idea of the gift preceded his empirical discussion of it. And the point to take from this is that, even from the start some aspect of the gift was a fetish, an attempt to pin some sort of 'real outside' to commodification onto an external object, and also to seemingly cast that object as 'it', or the solution to capitalist alienation. This is not to say that things that were described as 'gifts' didn't exist, but that the (European) ideal of the gift – from whence it arose – was always a fetish as such, an impossible image diametrically opposed to that of a commodity.

This is precisely the argument of Lyotard in *Libidinal Economy* (1993). In this book he railed against Baudrillard precisely for his interpretation of gift economies, or forms of symbolic exchange, as some radical alternative to capitalist principles of instrumental, or utilitarian, rationality. Not only did he consider the gift in this sense – both in Baudrillard's appropriation and the history of the concept – as something which 'belongs in its entirety to Western racism and imperialism – that it is still ethnology's good savage' (1993, p. 106) but through this opposition 'one settles in the field of truth, one compares a capitalist state of things and desire, eventually

judged false or at least deceitful, with an authentic state' (1993, p. 130) that of gift-exchange, as that which can potentially 'escape the totalising logic of exchange-value' (Moore 2011, p. 10).<sup>66</sup>

As such, through fetishising the sign-up as gift or charity, F2F imagines itself as outside the commodity universe, allowing it to continue its enjoyed subsumption to its logic while maintaining the appearance that that is not what it is about. In other words, the ideological function of this fetish works by positing the 'great Outside' as a means of covering up 'the Real that is already there' (Zupančič 2017, p. 76), in this case the little piece of the Real, *objet petit a*, enjoyment/Value as object. Further, as per the fundamental paradox of *objet petit a*, that is, the 'coincidence of surplus and loss' (Zupančič 2006, p. 163), whether the sign-up appears as charity or not corresponds to its interpretation as sublime or shit (Žižek 2008a, p. 106). While at one moment, the sign-up can represent all the wonders of making a difference, in another, through an almost imperceptible shift, or 'considered from a different angle' (Zupančič 2006, p. 160), it can become a 'manipulative' (Participant 2) scenario which leaves a bitter taste. Juxtaposing two different interviews, one from someone working for the Manchester BID – the neoliberal institution par excellence – and the other for the local city council, we can see this movement in action. While on the face of it you might expect the former to be less concerned with charity and more concerned with the capacity of business to raise all ships, it was that individual who was most disparaging about the 'salesman' ethos of F2F (Participant 8). They waxed lyrical about the charity work done by the BID, and even mentioned the charities they already donated to, but with F2F, it became 'oh it's awful'. The city council interviewee on the other hand, took the spontaneous assessment of F2F – which they seemed to extend to an opinion of the general public as a whole – as 'oh

---

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Sykes (2005, p. 19-38) for an overview of the 'noble savage', a classic ideological motif within modernist anthropology

what a nice thing to do' (Participant 7). However, once I explained some of the very precarious terms of employment, their demeanour shifted substantially, admitting then that 'it did not sound like a genuine employment arrangement'. In other words, it went from sublime to shit, from a manifestation of a 'nice thing' to deeply exploitative.

What this demonstrates is that the identification of the sign-up (and F2F more broadly) as *charity* persists as the feature which renders it sublime (or at least not shit). Despite its evident commodity characteristics, and even the impossibility of charity as such, the image of charity is held on to. This then provides the subject of F2F the ability 'to fully participate in the frantic pace of the capitalist game while sustaining the belief that you are not really in it' (Žižek 2002, p. 15).<sup>67</sup> And in the same sense, F2F as pure gift is held on to despite knowing better. It fetishises itself as in the realms of the 'great outside' (Zupančič 2017, p. 76), fixating the little piece of the Real (*qua objet petit a*) in the empirical object (the sign-up) and mystifying the gap between them.

It is perhaps unsurprising then that the gift is precisely something that seems to have, like *objet petit a*, emerged as lost. But what exactly intervened for it to then be lost? According to David Graeber's (2011) book *Debt: The First 5000 Years*, prior to what is termed the 'Axial Age' (between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BCE) charity as a concept 'had barely existed' (ibid, p. 249). Although a key feature of this time was the beginnings of institutionalised 'world religions' (ibid, p. 248), it was also a moment which saw the rise of markets and more universal forms of coinage. In fact, Graeber argues that these emerged in relation to one another, in a 'strange kind of

---

<sup>67</sup> Žižek used this language apropos of Western Buddhism, but this is quite apt. Not only does it have a connection with charity as pure gift, but it is a fetish exhibited by seasoned fundraisers. In *The Financial Times*, a review of F2F paid great attention to the man in charge of Dialogue Direct – a now bankrupt fundraising firm - who was also a devout Buddhist. (cf. Fickling 2009)

back-and-forth' (ibid). As a result of the extension of coinage it was ultimately 'inevitable' that some other force would attempt to counter-act this tendency with a 'mirror image of market logic' (ibid, p. 242). Thus, charity became a constituent feature of this revolt against the corrosive impacts of money and the market. Philosophers of the Axial religions thus 'emphasised the importance of charity' (ibid, p. 249) in the attempt to establish 'human economies' (ibid, p. 238) against 'impersonal markets... in which it was possible to treat even neighbours as if they were strangers' (ibid).

It was thus precisely the intervention of the commodity-form, the form which guarantees the infinite exchangeability of various use-values through their equivalent representation in the quantity of 'coinage', which formed the historical condition of possibility for such a charity-gift (*qua* spontaneous fetish-object of such a humanised capitalism). Such a fetish thus, while pointing to an absolute outside, is ultimately internal to the commodity-form and only conceived under its conditions. Indeed, as Anthropologist Janice Boddy has argued, 'in the dualism, commodity versus gift, "commodity" is presupposed, while "gift" is construed as that which is not-commodity, defined as the counter-image of commodity *in commodity terms*' (1998, p. 254, my emphasis). Such commodity terms, while diametrically opposed to such a charity-gift, are the point of reference which generate the conception of such a 'great beyond' of charitable giving. As Žižek has argued, 'the very obstacle that separates me from the beyond is what creates its mirage' (2008e, p. 73). While I'd argue, in line with LiPuma and Postone's recent article on gifts and commodities, that such a universal and singular conception of the gift in this case – *qua* disinterested altruism, an immaculate conception of the pure charity-gift – is a 'particular expression of the commodity form...imagine[d]...through the underlying socially and historically constituted categories of the commodity form' (2020, p. 170, 197), it expresses it in an inverse

way. Namely, it expresses itself as an absolute outside which is nonetheless generated by it. In other words, as James Carrier contended vis-à-vis the ideology of the 'perfect gift', 'when objects are gifts they are transubstantiated in a kind of reverse fetishism of commodities' (Carrier 1990, p. 33).

Such an argument is mirrored in Gabriel Tupinamba's critical appraisal of contemporary and historical politico-theoretical invocations of 'the commons' (2017). While he doesn't mention charity and the gift explicitly, the particular 'ideology' of the commons he recognises has many theoretical affinities with the broader ideological ('human') milieu in which 'charity' is its object. Recalling Marx and Engels' own critique of the deficient Utopian Socialism of *inter alia* Robert Owen, Charles Fourier and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (which, as we have learnt, were a crucial resource for Mauss) as 'belong[ing] to the feudal world that was still in the process of disappearing' (2017, p. 7), he argues that its communitarian ethic and 'Christian understanding of human nature' (2017, p. 8) are precisely generated insofar as they are gone: they are '*in fact constituted by [their] very loss*' (2017, p. 7). Just as the incipient dispossession of primitive accumulation gave rise to the 'idea that sharing – the lost – land and labour could counteract the capitalist tendency towards social mediation through commodity exchange' – an idea that could 'only emerge as a possible social common ground *after*' (Tupinamba 2017, p. 7) the intervention of such social mediation – the Christian image of *caritas*, of the untrammelled altruism of charitable giving (which I've argued in Chapter 2 Section 2.3., represents the object of such a 'social common ground' or fantasy of shared humanity), could only emerge *after* the intervention of commodity-exchange. In other words, this ideology of charity is (negatively) constituted by the commodity-form.

However, the paradoxical implication of this fetish is the further abstraction of this 'gift' from any concrete quality, and by virtue of being 'gift', endowing it with the capacity of actually expanding its original value. Recall Section 5.2. in which I demonstrated F2F's fetishist projection of value as intrinsic to the sign-up, and the casting of its economic cycle as C-M-C, a transfer of use-values with money only their mediator. But of course, from the perspective of F2F what is actually exchanged is not a use-value but a potential something to be supposedly transformed into a use-value: money. Thus, the way F2F deals with the sign-up is simply – logically and empirically – money *as such*. Money as both (logically) autonomous in its own system of differences and organisationally / empirically 'cut off' from the express use-value(s) conveyed in the interaction. Also recall the argument I made in Chapter 4 concerning the 'accumulation for accumulation's sake' logic of F2F's political and libidinal economy. Indeed, F2F's invention was in part down to the difficult financial situations of NGOs and their reliance on ageing 'donors', special appeals and one-off gifts (cf. SOFII 2009). With F2F however, the emphasis became on *regular giving*; not simply agreeing to give and then giving, but agreeing to give in some future, again and again and again. While this is by no means binding – which would totally destroy any semblance of charity – there is nonetheless something significant in regularity of this 'giving' arrangement. While at the same time as fetishising the object of exchange as charity – the impossible mirror of the market – this regularity not only gives it the 'automatic' vitalist appearance of capital but also casts the sign-up's value as infinitely expandable, with the charity-money adding to itself month on month.

This is supplemented by the fact that while money does change hands, it is strictly virtual money. At this point, not only does the sign-up as value appear in the 'ghostly materiality of financial abstractions' (Tomšič 2015a, p. 69), but the sign-up as charity gives it the fetishised quality of producing more out of nothing, a more

which is essentially infinite. Take this quote from the interviewee discussed earlier who produced multiple slippages but was deeply critical of marketing and commodity logics insofar as they threatened fundraising at its core:

‘we are actually in the market for something to believe in and the beauty of the market for something to believe in is that its infinite... we’re not about self-enrichment in the material sense, we are all about self-enrichment in the spiritual sense and that is a fundamental difference between us and the commercial world’ (Participant 1).

Thus, with F2F, at the same time as distinguishing the sign-up as charity *against* the world of the market, F2F as charity makes it arguably the perfect commodity, as infinitely expandable, and in which valorisation is infinitised and distinguished from any tangible use-value. Again, while this is contradictory, not only does it, like the prior fetishisation of the sign-up as having value, complement its function through its obfuscation of negativity, but it complements it by providing a further means for future valorisation. This complementary-yet-contradictory fetishism reaches its apogee in Gift Aid. This refers to a scheme that was introduced in the 1990 Finance Act which essentially allows donations to increase their value if performed by a UK tax-payer. While the express language is clearly framed in terms of charity and giving, it is simultaneously about increasing the value of the so-called ‘donation’. As such, it is paradoxically in this fetishisation of the sign-up as charity that we can see its instrumentalisation towards the abstract accumulation of money as such. In other words, Gift Aid essentially attaches extra value to the sign-up precisely *by virtue of it being a gift*.<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> On the government website, they highlight that the payment for a ticket for a charity event is not eligible for Gift Aid. This is because it must be a ‘voluntary donation’. Accordingly, the ‘money made from ticket sales counts as profit and not a donation’ (GOV.UK 2019)

Thus, while we get the explicit designation of its identity as 'gift', this manifests in terms of an increase in money. Although it may appear as another instance, like those discursive manoeuvres discussed in Chapter 3, of establishing of a proper relation between F2F's conflictual symbolic (over)determination, the relations here are inverted: In the former relation we have the foregrounding of 'making a difference' and 'supporting a cause', followed by an emphasis on cost-effectiveness. Yet, in the relation implied by Gift Aid, while explicitly treating the object as 'gift', this translates into an increase not of qualities but an abstract quantity.

This logic becomes clearer with the consonance between the metaphor Marx mobilises to describe the self-expansion of capital and the phrase repeated regularly by Ken Burnett (2005, 2011, 2013, 2016b) and others characterising F2F (Butler 2017): namely the 'golden goose' or the goose that laid the golden eggs. In Marx's case, in the chapter on the 'general formula for capital', in discussing the apparent 'automatic expansion' of value, he argues that '[b]ecause it is value, it has acquired the occult quality of being able to add value to itself. It brings forth living offspring, or, at the least, *lays golden eggs*' (Marx 2013, p. 103 my emphasis). This reference alludes to one of Aesop's Fables about 'the goose that laid the golden eggs', a story of a farmer who owned a goose that laid a golden egg each day, allowing the farmer to become more and more rich. However, there became a point when the farmer began to get greedy, and, after assuming that there must be loads of golden eggs inside the goose, killed the goose, only to find there were no eggs.

The moral of the story not only captures the modes of disavowal and displacement I identified in Chapter 3 – in which F2F's 'economic' side is reduced to pure banal instrumentality, but simultaneously conceived as a 'tempting' and dangerous excess – but also the fetishist appearance that this occurs out of its own, very much



vital, powers, as a goose which mechanically/biologically lays a golden egg each day. However, while this repeats the fetish of capital, in which money appears as a self-expanding value without negativity, it only does this insofar as it appears as *charity*. Indeed, the occurrence of the metaphor appears in the context of its potential demise. And this demise, the possibility that the golden goose of F2F might become a 'dead duck', is precisely due to the way it has been managed (i.e. *excessive* 'marketing' cf. Burnett 2015, 2016b). In other words, referring to an earlier quote, 'if we commoditise, fundraising will disappear' (Participant 1). Thus paradoxically, as a 'charity' golden goose capable of laying golden eggs, thus expanding value out of its own vital forces, it simultaneously appears as a sort of capital which appears to expand without any reference to use-value whatsoever, at once appearing to complement the prior fetishisation as it being about more than money, while at the same time contradicting it by evacuating use-value completely. Further, just like sign-up as use-value appeared to move it away from just money while at the same time reintroducing the commodity fetish and the logic of cost-effectiveness, the sign-up as charity appears to move it to absolutely outside capital – a fetish of a great beyond produced by the social mediation of the commodity-form – while simultaneously reproducing it in its purest form.

#### **5.4. Conclusion**

To conclude, the contradiction between the ambiguity-yet-clarity of F2F's empirical object, which we established as the object which stands in for the (lack in) F2F's desire (i.e. it acts as the concrete point of identification for the measure of abstractly 'making a difference'), marks the presence of *objet petit a*, and thus reaffirms the 'surplus-enjoyment' in the sign-up. This abstract object in its virtual materiality – quite literally with F2F – is fixated onto the empirical object of F2F's exchange through two contradictory-yet-complementary fetishes which obscure, at the same

time as repeating, the symptomatic contradiction discussed in Chapter 4 but 'reflected into each'. In the first instance, despite emphasising the use-value of the sign-up, it not only repeats *the* capitalist fetishisation of value as inhering intrinsically in the object, but insofar as it represents this in money, it also reproduces the logic of cost-effectiveness and thus centres the calculus of exchange-value. As such, through the endeavour of F2F proponents/practitioners to demonstrate *value for money*, F2F has to be arguably more explicit in attempting to forge this unity than commodity producers themselves. In other words, while selling perfume for instance is very rarely about the concrete use-value of the perfume (i.e. its smell, actually impossible to market through television adverts), F2F's 'sell' moves in the other direction, explicitly laying out the 'use-value' of the 'donation'. In the second instance, whilst F2F as charity seems to decisively distance itself from the money-metrics of market transactions, conceived as the 'great Outside' (Zupančič 2017, p. 76) of commodity and capital, this absolute outside is both generated by the commodity-form and ties it ever closer to it, with the fetish of charity paradoxically allowing it to appear not only as 'just money' but as capital, as self-valorising money.

The inclusion of fetishism in this chapter is not coincidental. Not only do these fetishes – in some sense – reproduce the symptomatic contradiction discerned in the chapter on ideology in-itself, but the concepts of fetish and symptom are closely related. According to Žižek:

'Fetish is effectively the reversal of the symptom; that is to say, symptom is the exception which disturbs the surface of the false appearance; the point at which the repressed other scene erupts. While fetish is the embodiment of the lie which enables us to sustain the unbearable truth' (Žižek 2008d, p. ix).

In other words, fetishism – located within the ruminations on the value-form – is the crucial mechanism which enables F2F *qua* symptom to repeat itself and the means by which its procurement of enjoyment/value can continue. By attempting to bridge the gap between the ambivalent empirical object (sign-up) and the logical object as surplus-enjoyment, it enables the libidinised appropriation of surplus-value for its own sake and the accompanying transgressive practices (the unbearable truth) through the fetishistic fantasy of use-value and gift (the lie). However, in doing so it repeats its central contradiction in each fetish, thus bringing F2F's ideology round full circle, but negatively redoubled.

## Conclusion: The 'Chugger' as Revolutionary Subject

In the introduction to this thesis I posed the central research question:

*'To what extent can the 'critique of ideology' explain and subvert 'human' ideologies of globalisation and development, and what does it reveal about how F2F 'functions' ideologically?*

The answer to this question is that such an approach is able to both explain and subvert such human ideologies to a greater extent than others in terms of the theoretical Borromean knot of epistemology, explanation and politics. I have developed this argument dialectically over the previous chapters, from the elucidation of its preferable epistemological paradigm, to its greater, and immanently 'explosive' explanatory potential, to the concretisation or realisation of this in a critical analysis of F2F (and back). From within existing paradigms of ideology critique mobilised in critical development and globalisation studies – both psychoanalytic and Marxist ('orthodox' and Gramscian) – the formation comprising 'human' ideologies, NGOs and F2F appears as a sort of conceptual blind spot. While by no means unexamined, their various theoretical presuppositions entail a set of somewhat unsatisfactory readings which, as I argued in Chapter 2, failed to capture some key elements of such a formation. On the one hand, the (sometimes disavowed) realist epistemology of both 'orthodox' and Gramscian Marxist ideology critique fails to see such a formation as anything more than a cognitive misrepresentation of the fundamentally 'inhuman' or 'dehumanising' logic of global capitalism. While Gramscians place greater emphasis on the production of an ideological common sense, supported by material configurations of institutions, practices and so on, they fail to take the 'epistemological significance' (Bieler and Morton 2003) of ideology seriously. Implied in their 'intentional-agent' centred

mode of explanation and rendered explicit in their (fundamental) ontology of internal relations elevating 'Gramsci' to the figure of dialectical sublation in the synthetic 'absolute' of materialism and idealism, is a deeply idealist epistemology which, like the more obvious realist or objectivist epistemology of their more 'orthodox' comrades, entails problematic modes of explanation. Indeed, while more sophisticated in Gramscian approaches, both still rely on an attribution of false cognition and the concomitant presumption of conspiratorial manipulation. Moreover, especially in the case of Gramscians, the undialectical model of totality they employ fails to capture the *ambivalence* of such ideological phenomena.

On the other hand, while psychoanalytic ideology critique in critical development/globalisation studies explicitly distances itself from such 'objectivist' understandings of ideology characteristic of Marxian approaches, they nonetheless retain a certain (at least, political) *closeness* to it, and a willingness to engage its key interests and concepts. However, this is conceived almost exclusively in terms of both politics and/or best explanation. What this entails is that psychoanalytic ideology critique, especially when concerning 'capital', risks repeating the same 'objectivist' ideology critique as the Marxists they distance themselves from. In other words, without the epistemological rapprochement between Marx and Lacan, the critique of political economy and psychoanalysis, there is a danger of falling into the trap Ernesto Laclau previously remarked of Žižek: namely, a combination of a 'highly sophisticated Lacanian analysis and an insufficiently deconstructed traditional Marxism' (2000, p. 205). A further explanatory implication of not including the primary point of epistemological rapprochement between these two schools, namely the analysis of the value-form, is the overemphasis on neoliberalism at the expense of capitalism and its core categories i.e. value, commodity etc.

A dialectical materialist critique of ideology however, organised around a three-step process corresponding to three 'moments' of ideological functioning, provides an important corrective to these weaknesses. It allows us to produce an alternative reading of such an important ideological formation which avoids their epistemological, explanatory and political pitfalls, moving us significantly beyond these approaches, importantly in their 'Borromean' relation. The analysis of F2F then – as an exemplary representative of the so-called 'human' ideologies – performs a crucial heuristic function, demonstrating how the 'abstract' epistemological and conceptual determinations explored in Chapter 1 (and to some extent in Chapter 2) can be deployed to make subversive sense of a phenomenon which appears to resist interpretation in terms of existing theoretical-conceptual frameworks.

So, what are the specific arguments regarding F2F? How does it function ideologically as a modality of capitalism with a human face? Far from a case of ignorance, purposeful co-option or de-politicisation of neoliberal capitalism, F2F revolves around mystifying and performing a central negativity – deeply connected to its commodity-form – with its forms of mystification at once tying us to capital while simultaneously disavowing such a connection and fetishizing itself as totally other to capital. With regard to the 'moment' of ideology in-itself, its explicit symbolisation reveals a discursive dance around a central symptomatic contradiction – between its intrinsic motivation and instrumental cost-effectiveness – marked by the figure of the 'chugger'. In order to maintain the symbolic consistency of F2F, to resolve the contradiction between these determinations (without which F2F would simply not be F2F), proponents' resort to two complementary-yet-contradictory modes of symbolic resistance. First, they disavow the identification of a tension as simply a question of *banality*, or

*organisational/instrumental necessity*. That is, from the happy intersection of ‘making a difference’ and cost-effectiveness it moves to subordinating the latter to the former. Second, in establishing such a symbolic Law the problematic aspects of the phenomenon are externalised onto malignant ‘chuggers’ which threaten the fragile unity of F2F’s determinations. Yet, while these complement one another in some sense – the ‘proper relation’ must be established in order to show one to be ‘outside’ it – it also introduces a further contradiction: the symptomatic contradiction of F2F is both banal *and* dangerous, easily reconcilable yet indelibly tempting.

In translating this into the ‘moment’ of ideology for-itself, what is revealed is a reversal of said central contradiction such that instead of capitalism working for good (Vaughn 2004), good works for capitalism. While on the one hand, F2F’s materiality – the various practical motifs present in the interaction – manifest a desire for prefiguring more human or personal social relations, the concrete embodiment which makes the F2F integration ‘successful’ is simply the generation of a ‘sign-up’. As such, it functions according to a disavowed enjoyment of fundraising for the sake of fundraising: while on the level of F2F’s articulation its economic aspect is subordinated to its social purpose, its materiality reveals that its social purpose (including the various ‘human’ or ‘personal’ ritualistic motifs) is subordinated to its economic role. However, this is by no means the more essential ‘function’ or reality beneath the layers of ideological appearance, but it is produced with, albeit heterogenous to, such appearance. Indeed, while the drive of F2F – the repetitive loop of fundraising for the sake of fundraising and the illicit enjoyment generated by such a ‘useless’ movement – comes into tension with its desire for prefiguring human social relations it nonetheless *requires such a ‘human’ or ‘personal’ montage*, which ultimately makes it all the more effective. However, this is also underwritten by the transgressive enjoyment of exploiting that which is ultimately ‘obscene’ from within the dream of common humanity; precarious affective labour,

hyper-sexual heteronormativity and colonial paternalism. Such a contradiction is manifested again on the level of F2F's object, or its ideology reflected-into-itself, in which it simultaneously (and again, complementary-yet-contradictorily) fetishises its deeply ambiguous object – the sign-up – as both the most faithful, and valuable, unity of use-value and exchange-value *and* as the figure of charity as a fantasy of total or absolute alterity. Paradoxically, casting it as an absolute outside to capital is both generated by the commodity-form and ties us ever closer to it.

Taken together, these arguments illuminate such a phenomenon, and the broader ideological formation of 'capitalism with a human face', without reducing it to mere falsity, rational process of co-option or organic functional absorption, or a de-politicisation of neoliberalism. The approach, and its tripartite mode of exposition, grounded in the movement of contradiction thus *explains* such phenomena to a greater extent than other approaches, but also, in its immanently *negative* capacity consistently subverts said formation, refusing to reify it into some functional totality. While there has been an aspect of 'adequate' explanation, the generation of adequacy has been developed *through thinking inadequacy qua contradiction, negativity, excess and so on* (cf. Tomšič 2016). However, preceding this way has not only been in the service of better explanation, but more importantly of subversiveness.

### **6.1. Original Contributions**

In making these arguments, this thesis makes four original contributions: First, I have contributed original interview and fieldwork data on an understudied phenomenon within critical literatures on development and globalisation. I formally interviewed thirteen individuals, including NGO, charity effectiveness and fundraising experts, ex-fundraisers, fundraising regulators and fundraising



company owners, alongside spending eight days observing and interacting with both fundraisers and potential donors (generating a further five field interviews). I started by trying to isolate fundraisers and donors engaged with relevant NGOs (Amnesty International, CARE International, Oxfam, Save the Children, Action Aid etc.), but quickly realised that their tactics were pretty standardised. The substantive findings were:

- F2F is articulated in terms of a compromise between contradictory strands of meaning and proponents either banalise such a contradiction or externalise its mismanagement onto malignant ‘chuggers’ of which the fundraising agency ‘Home Fundraising’ is the primary culprit.
- While F2F outwardly tries to ‘humanise’ its interaction, with the smile, chat, handshake and use of individual human stories standardised, these ultimately function to make it more ‘productive’ in terms of revenue and include an obscene dimension by which F2F functions through the enjoyment of global inequality, exploitation of precarious labour with poor work conditions and an aggressive (hetero)sexualisation of the encounter.
- Although its proponents are adamant that the ‘sign-up’ represents a gift and not a commodity, when asked this directly the answer is deeply ambiguous.

The second contribution of this thesis is the expansion, complication and refining of recent scholarship into ‘commodified compassion’ (cf. Hawkins 2012, Kapoor 2013, Olwig 2021, Richey and Ponte 2011, Richey et. al. 2021). While generating and analysing data on F2F expands the empirical optic of this literature by including an unexplored phenomenon within this milieu, I also conceptually refine their investigation by more forcefully incorporating a discussion of the gift/commodity opposition which is almost entirely absent from analysis of this phenomena. This is especially important as it represents one of the most paradoxical aspects of these

phenomena and may even have broader lessons for this classic opposition. Rather than seeing charity and compassionate giving as having a sort of *functional* integrity to capitalism, as a kind of palliative phenomenon (cf. Richey and Ponte 2011) which smooths over its cracks by attending to its worst excesses (cf. Kapoor 2013), I read this as a kind of spontaneous-yet-antagonistic integrity of charity to capitalism: it presents itself as totally other to capital, as an oasis of selfless altruism, human generosity and so on, yet is only conceivable under conditions of absolute self-interest. It is a mirage of a beyond to capital and the value-form created by the value-form as a mode of social mediation.

Third, through explaining the ideological function of F2F, I contribute to theoretical debates on the 'critique of ideology' in development and globalisation studies. In particular, I both contribute an original dialectical materialist tripartite 'framework' for critique, allowing a greater integration of Marxian (epistemology) themes, and frame the value of such an approach in terms of a 'Borromean knot' of theory (i.e. the registers of epistemology, explanation and politics). Such a 'framework' both functions heuristically, allowing empirical phenomena to be ordered in a logical fashion, while also embodying some of the key lessons of dialectical and materialist thought, and thus reflecting its epistemology into the very heart of concrete analysis and subversion. Not only does it introduce inconsistency or difference into its basic structure and the objects it interrogates, but its form of exposition dialectically moves in and through such differences. While mobilised by Žižek in arguably his most coherent exposition of the concept of ideology (1994, also cf. Vighi and Feldner 2007, p. 145), its promise – which as this thesis has argued, is substantial – for concrete interpretation and subversion is not developed beyond the expression of this original typology.

Fourth, through such a framework, I contribute to a theorisation of NGOs as *ambivalent as such*. While existing approaches (Bernal and Grewal 2014, Eagleton-Pierce 2019, Ismail and Kamat 2018, Lewis and Schuller 2017) tend to dissimulate their contradictory form in a myriad of ways, the history I developed of the ‘human’ turn and the illumination of F2F in terms of its contradictory constitution expanded on this to demonstrate the essential character, rather than empirical quirk, of such ambivalence. Bringing such a dialectical and materialist perspective to the question of NGOs guards against the proliferation of acronyms and extended typologies and allows for an *explanation* – as opposed to description – of inconsistencies and contradictions in and between various organisations that go under the label ‘NGO’.

## **6.2. *Implications and Critical Reflections***

### *6.2.1. Critique and Global Capitalism*

While there is scope for further research on various aspects of F2F, the most important avenues for further research generated by this thesis are broader, and twofold. First, there is a need for more empirically engaged interventions into the world of contemporary development and globalisation – the locus for the extension and maintenance of *global* capitalism – from this theoretical perspective. As stated in the introduction, Slavoj Žižek hasn’t always translated such ‘philosophical’ work on the Critique of Ideology into a sustained critique of capitalist ideology. In the cases in which he *has* done this, they have not been up to the same standard, typically falling back on the very same mistakes we might assume he would not accept. As Wilson notes, his rumination on the ideology of charity (and ‘capitalism with a human face’) is suggestive but ultimately incomplete, repeating the same commonplace leftist critiques of charity as reformist or insufficient (2014b). While this is not necessarily problematic, it marks more of a start than a beginning.

What this means then is that while thinking structure is crucial, this must also be accompanied by more 'conjunctural' thinking. Indeed, this thesis has argued that the critique of ideology in this formulation can help us immensely to explain and subvert the specific formation approached precisely because of its superiority in terms of theory's Borromean knot: epistemology, criticality/explanation, and politics. While readings of the epistemological paradigms of Freud, Lacan, Hegel, Marx etc. are important, they must be accompanied by engaged practical interpretation or risk drifting into the 'purely scholastic' (Marx 1985) realm of philosophical contemplation. And vice versa, engaged practical interpretation without epistemological reflection runs the risk of seeing the issue of interpretation purely practically, which as I have argued in Chapter 1 already implies a detached idealism and the subject as an external observer.

A further implication of this is that, given the conjuncture, neoliberalism should be gradually de-centred as arguably *the* "negative" master-signifier of contemporary left scholarship and politics. Evidently there was a significant shift in the 1970s and 1980s, but we are a long way from SAPs and the Washington consensus. While psychoanalytic political economists Özselçuk and Madra (2010) engage Keynesian and Aristotelian paradigms of political economy, they are ultimately subsumed within the governing frame of neoliberalism. However, as I have shown, much of both the Keynesian and Aristotelian paradigms break in important respects with the figure of homo economicus. The only thing, it seems, maintaining the identity of neoliberalism appears to be the shared investment left academics have in its destruction. It fascinates the left, but is a term used only by the left (Dunne 2017), and it is debatable whether it actually continues to exert such a hold. Arch-neoliberal Jeffrey Sachs recently turned to Aristotelian virtue ethics (cf. 2017), and Paul Collier formerly of the World Bank and 'why growth is good' (cf. 2007) has

recently argued for a revival of communitarian feeling to heal the rifts produced by contemporary capitalism (2018). Although we could speak about ‘variegated neoliberalism’ (cf. Macartney 2015) and its various permutations or its ‘seemingly infinite transformability’ (Wilson 2014c, p. 302), I’m not sure if anything is lost by turning back to ‘capitalism’ as that designator of the character of the contemporary global political economy. However, this is above all a theoretical question, and one which revolves around the relative place of Marx’s critique of political economy. There is probably little coincidence that, as Boltanski and Chiapello note, after the 1980s – the decade of the New Left, and particularly the ‘post-Marxist’ denigration of the critique of political economy – basically ‘no one, with the exception of a few allegedly archaic Marxists (an ‘endangered species’), referred to capitalism any longer. The term was simply struck from the vocabulary of politicians, trade unionists, writers and journalists’ (2005, p. ix).

Moreover, while the rise of Nationalist populism in *opposition* to neoliberalism has been interrogated by Yahya Madra (2017), perhaps it might be more fruitful for left critique to focus its attention on places where genuine dialogue might be more fruitful. While on the level of theory, an anti-capitalist psychoanalytic approach has engaged elements of left reformism (cf. Žižek 2000, Kapoor 2017), this hasn’t always been so in empirical studies – with the work of Kapoor (2013, 2020) and Wilson and Bayon (2017) very much the exception. Indeed, as argued in Chapters 1 and 2, psychoanalytic approaches tend to engage questions of political economy through ‘neoliberalism’. My thesis has sought to refine this both theoretically and empirically, providing not only an empirical tracing of this key ideological formation precisely in its opposition to neoliberalism, but also through theoretically integrating the method and insights from Marx’s critique of political economy.

So, what of this critique? What are its practical implications? In other words, what are the consequences of 'mobilising this inadequacy in order to bring about transformative effects' (Tomšič 2016, p. 66)? Well, despite arguing for the subversive aspect of its immanent and negative mode of critique – the 'destructive side' of the dialectic as Noys, following Benjamin, refers to it (2012, p. 4) – it shouldn't confine itself to self-sufficient criticism. While of course interpretation cannot simply be opposed to practice – i.e. critique is immanently practical – I would be hypocritical if this were solely an 'academic' (and thus somewhat external) critique of F2F, if I was saying 'you are doing what you say you are not, and as a result employing some bad practices which merely maintain the existing state of affairs. You are not radical enough etc'. Moreover, it wouldn't sufficiently answer my research question, leaving the full extent of this approach's 'subversive' capacity underdeveloped. While of course, understanding is a necessary precondition for effecting transformation, and I have argued that existing theoretical devices at some level fail to generate this understanding, this only goes so far. So, how does this theoretically grounded analysis inform the move from interpretation to change? While I've argued it is a powerful form of interpretation in terms of its attention to the place where change can be thought, how can it help think the operator of this change? In other words, what exactly are the political implications of this research with regards F2F?

### *6.2.2. Identifying with the symptom: Chugger as Revolutionary Subject*

Before I begin, it is worth saying that this is necessarily provisional. Inasmuch as my argument here has developed in opposition to those who in some sense believe in some fundamental positivity laid down by 'Marxist political economy' any interventions on 'what is to be done' cannot rely on some absolute guarantee. While there is not only no big Other, there is also no Other of the Other; no figure of the

'real human' against which its capitalist instantiation could be deemed false, nor a 'real human development' somewhere in the future in which all contradiction withers away and such a human achieves full identity with itself. While I am not against some valorisation of certain currents of actually existing socialism – as both Veltmeyer and Rushton (2012) and Lebowitz practice (2009, 2010) – as well as the identification of effective class struggles Selwyn regularly employs (2017), not only does their theoretically mandated emphasis on cognition undermine their regular attempts to position themselves as advocates of a so-called 'bottom-up' approach (Lebowitz 2012, Selwyn 2016), but such an idealism is ultimately ineffective. Moreover, while the Gramscian emphasis on the 'war of position' (cf. Bieler and Morton 2018, Robinson 2013, Rupert 2000, 2003), in engaging particular struggles in order to shift the 'common sense', isn't totally off the mark, they retain this idealist emphasis on appropriate cognition insofar as politics comes down to picking and choosing which positive ideas can operate as 'counter-hegemonic'. While Mark Rupert's (2000) approach to the issue, insofar as he doesn't subsume everything about it under the false reformist reproductionism of capital (i.e. he recognises in the NGO activist or the UNDP's vision, there is the flicker of a potentially 'post-capitalist' vision), is definitely an improvement, he nonetheless distinguishes them in their positivity through the sort of agents undertaking them. Indeed, he at no point demonstrates why the vision of the NGO activist and the UNDP is so significantly more amenable to post-capitalist recuperation beyond the different agents, and their intentions, involved in propagating such vision.

It is clear to see here then how the 'post-structuralist' re-reading of Gramsci (i.e. Laclau and Mouffe 2012) might have a materialist advantage. Unlike its supposedly more 'materialist' forerunner, such an apparently 'idealist' reading of Gramsci (cf. Morton 2005), locates the place of struggle not in identifying the intentionality of agents but in the broader symbolic substance and its rearticulation, along with the

'radical democratic', and materialist, insistence on avoiding any essentialist 'worldview' and/or figure of a future state without antagonism (*qua* 'real human' development). Yet, such a denial of such revolutionary 'meta-narratives', while an absolutely necessary step, runs the risk of turning into another 'transcendental' idealist fundamental ontology. That is, the historicist reduction of the subject to an insubstantial *effect* of discourse undermines itself, insofar as the enunciated content subverts the very possibility of its enunciation. Unsurprisingly, since such an epistemology manifests an issue of criticality or subversion in analysis (as I argued in Chapters 1 and 2). Take Jenny Edkins for instance. While her analysis of humanitarianism and its reference to the 'human' and 'humanity' (as an ideology (2019, p. 75)) correctly avoids grounding itself in some absolute certainty (i.e. in a big Other, in some actual definition of what is 'really human'), her emphasis on not drawing lines, and rejection of large scale change in favour of slow careful actions – grounded in the idea that '[w]e can't help changing the world, all the time' (2019, p. 89) – confirms Ilan Kapoor's analysis of such 'post-structuralist' development theory. That is, such a theoretical perspective leaves us with little tools to challenge global capitalism in any meaningful sense, leaving us with the precise reformism of 'capitalism with a human face' (2017).

In contrast, Kapoor's approach emphasises the crucial role of 'ideology critique' as a 'first key step' (2013, p. 116) not only due to its capacity to articulate the gaps or negative points from which change can be mounted but because it confronts the enjoyment which sustains the ideological edifice. While distancing the psychoanalytically inflected notion of ideology from its 'classical Marxist' variant relies on an (underdeveloped) argument concerning *epistemology* (cf. Bousfield 2018, Kapoor 2020, Wilson 2014c), its proponents also highlight a particular operation which renders its procedure of "reductio ad falsum" impotent. Namely, the ideological function of fetishistic disavowal – with the classic formula of 'I know



very well, but...’ – which renders better knowledge of the situation as insufficient to provide critical distance (Fridell 2014, p. 1181, Kapoor 2013, p. 117, Kapoor 2020, p. 21). Indeed, this equally applies to F2F: they know very well that their activity is not directly ‘doing good’, but nonetheless they stick to this fiction. Critique which proceeds by ‘consciousness raising’ thus ultimately runs into subversive limits. Indeed, ideology ‘sticks’ partly because of the ‘existentially inescapable’ (Wilson 2014b, p. 122, also cf. Fletcher 2018) and non-rational level of libidinal investment.

It is a great strength of the psychoanalytic interventions on ideology critique that in rejecting any epistemic metaposition they go beyond standard invocations of *conscious* reflexivity and positionality to emphasise our *unconscious* implications in a given scenario (cf. Proudfoot 2015). As Kapoor notes with regard the ideology of celebrity humanitarianism *qua* ‘capitalism with a human face’, we ‘are also deeply implicated’ (2013, p. 115, 2020, p. xv). What follows, as Fridell emphasises, is the practice of speaking in terms of ‘us’ and ‘we’, since an occupying an outside to ideology is illegitimate, such an ‘ironical distance’ (2014, p. 1182) ultimately sustains that which we take distance from. Indeed, while Kapoor frames the dangers of complicity in terms of enjoying charity shopping and the belief that these projects really ‘do good’ (2013, p. 115), perhaps a more subtle form of ‘our complicity in the production of our own domination’ (Wilson 2018) is not so much in the active participation with such forms of reformism but with such an apparently critical distance. As Wilson notes, identifying the enjoyment of that which we criticise should also involve questioning ‘the source of our own enjoyment’ (2014a, p. 1156), particularly insofar as we are ‘held in thrall by the monolithic power of global capital’ (ibid). How long have Marxists been subsumed by the ‘intellectual pleasure procured by denouncing [reformism]...the satisfaction of successfully explaining one’s own impotence and failure’ (Žižek 1993, p. 212)?

I must admit that this particular satisfaction was something that drew me broadly to the study of ideology, and something present in my own incipient engagement with F2F and capitalism with a human face. Indeed, in my own experience of being (sacked as) a fundraiser, there was, and still is, something of the characteristic 'pleasure-pain' associated with *jouissance*. While on the face of it, being sacked is not a nice experience, there was definitely something of a 'kick' I got out of experiencing this pain, and having others know or see I was experiencing it. In many ways, my sacking confirmed my cynical Marxist predilections that capital was all about profit and growth, reducing both people and things to mere instruments in the ever-constant expansion of itself. Any sort of attempt to make capitalism 'nice' or 'human' was doomed to failure, and my sacking confirmed my contention that capital would always win. I took solace in the superior knowledge I had of the situation, which these chuggers failed to recognise, stuck as they were in their stupor of really believing they are/were making a difference. My position on charity similarly took the classic leftist cynicism in which charity only ever covers over the cracks, deflecting people's attention away from the real issue of global capitalism. In this sense, my position was almost a slightly adapted position to the 'standard' Daily Mail criticism voiced in Chapter 3. That is, I essentially saw the 'business' of it not corroding the authentic spirit of charity but rather the possibility of an authentic opposition to capitalism. While I analysed the 'chugger' in terms of a symptomatic point within the ideological edifice of F2F, as its negative 'truth', I nonetheless implicitly rejected it based on its presumed irreducible contamination, and instead thought politics outside of it, as if we simply needed to reject 'chugging' and begin directly organising for revolutionary change. Toward the latter stages of the thesis however, I began to recognise and reflect on this enjoyment, even shifting my research question and rationale to include an attempt to think through the concrete subversive tactics implicated by the analysis, as opposed to being content with the (claim to) effective explanation.

Fortunately, psychoanalysis (and Marxism) have plenty of reflections on this task. Certainly, the two closely related procedures of traversing the fantasy and identifying with the symptom (which follow from the epistemological and explanatory innovations of the psychoanalysis defended in this thesis) regularly make an appearance within psychoanalytic development and globalisation literature. According to Kapoor, the former refers to a process as:

‘integrating the knowledge gleaned from ideology critique by fully assuming its consequences. It means learning to disengage from the lure of sublime objects, social fantasies, and the rituals and false promises of our hegemonic social institutions. It means taking responsibility for our desires and enjoyment, striving to reorganise them’ (2013, p. 117).

This disengaging should not be read simply as establishing a distance between ourselves and such ideological phenomena, but paradoxically generated by ‘fully submitting to it’, by ‘adhering to them [the rules] while, at the same time, contesting them, and so destabilising their fantasmatic ground’ (ibid, p. 118). It means ‘acknowledging the Real’ (Fletcher 2018), and ‘confronting the Real...in all its traumatic horror and forging a genuinely transformative politics on the basis of that experience’ (Wilson 2014c, p. 316). According to Žižek, this is ‘correlative to identification with the symptom’ (2008a, p. 143), namely identification with the points at which ideology breaks down, the points which are its ‘Achilles heel’ (Kapoor 2020, p. vx).

What follows from this, which I defend, is the necessity of a *negative politics*. This is perhaps unsurprising given the critical emphasis on the dialectic between

negativity and its mystification. Indeed, in a chapter in Kapoor's recent book critically responding to two particular controversies Žižek has been embroiled in – the European refugee crisis and the perils of Eurocentrism respectively – he defends the possibility of a 'negative horizon enabling a universalist politics' (2020, p. 60). In terms of the latter controversy – particularly germane to the politics of development and globalisation respectively, insofar as Žižek's critics would neatly fit in to a broadly post-development perspective – Žižek is criticised for an explicit eurocentrism (cf. Žižek 1998). His invocation of communism is rejected as the imposition of an 'abstract universal', and his general intellectual schema taken to be a classic manifestation, as is the development apparatus altogether, of the epistemic violence of coloniality, the eradication of difference and the imposition of a universal frame of reference on multiple particularities. As such, the response is to advocate a pluriversal politics (cf. Escobar 2020), to decolonise epistemology and bring other previously excluded knowledges into the fore. Yet, as Kapoor rightly notes, not only does this fail to effectively constitute any sort of radical horizon capable of challenging or disrupting global capitalism, but it also misrepresents Žižek's particular 'ontology' and his subsequent advocacy of communism. It is not a simple reversal of decentring epistemologies, dismissing their dispersion into plural and multiple equally valid standpoints through asserting some core truth or positive universality (i.e. communism as an abstract universal) – which, I might add, is precisely the undialectical way Gramscians had previously dealt with the post-structuralist challenge to the problematic of ideology critique – but precisely the result of the aforementioned move from epistemology to ontology, through the negativity that pertains to each. As Kapoor suggests, it is precisely by 'dwelling on the traumatic Real, which theorises both a thoroughgoing ideological critique and a critical horizon for common struggle' (2020, p. 70). Similarly, for Wilson, drawing on Zupančič, what this further requires is an 'ethics of the Real' which 'demands an unerring fidelity to the event in which a fantasy is shattered, and a ruthless rejection

of all fantasy scenarios through which this event might be explained away or forgotten' (2015b, p. 24). It is a politics which rejects orientation to fantasies of happy reunions and easy solutions. And crucially for our purposes here, it is a politics which rejects 'a humanist understanding of alienation and a vitalist affirmation of a disalienated humanity, which sees capital as deforming a unified human subject who can be returned to fullness through the abolition of class relations' (Wilson 2018).

In line with this, Kapoor occasionally proposes a particular qualifier – like Wilson's critique of humanist vitalism, deeply germane for my purposes here – for this kind of negative politics rooted in the contradictions of the conjuncture as opposed to a more authentic and unmediated outside; 'inhuman' politics (cf. Kapoor 2020, p. 188). The value of such an 'inhuman' approach is its *immanent* negation of the human. As Oxana Timofeeva puts it:

'This is a very interesting expression, in which negativity is so clearly exposed. The 'inhuman' is not simply the opposite of the 'human': these two terms are asymmetrical and, from mere opposition, they leap into true dialectical contradiction. The 'in' of the 'inhuman' has two meanings: it points at that which is not (human) and at the same time at that which is inside (human). The inhuman is thus a human with an alien within, an essential alien as it were, or, in other words, what is in (within) human, its inner self, is an other, an alien' (2016, n.p.).

Thus, the properly subversive counterpoint to the human is not the 'real human', nor a reflexive positing of plural humanity (cf. Dogra 2012) but the inhuman. The various figures of the 'inhuman' encountered throughout this thesis are to be conceived less as a contingent occurrence which signals the incomplete application

of the 'human' development ideal and rather as symptoms of the ideal themselves; the 'inhuman' existence of the worker under 'market fundamentalism' as a mere appendage of the 'economy', the continuing relations of coloniality, or what those (among others) like Dogra (2012) and Manzo (2008) refer to as the *difference* manifested in the representation of common humanity, and the continued acting out of aggressive heteronormativity, are written in to such a 'human' ideal. As such, the 'inhuman' perspective not only provides a space for *explanation* without positing some external ideal against which to repetitively denounce its falsity but highlights the points from which it can be undermined. In other words, such a negative critique simultaneously provides the most effective grounds for *subversion*. However, while the 'inhuman' is by no means an abstract negation, it doesn't tell us very much about the actual subversive operation that constitutes the character of the 'real movement which abolishes the present state of things' (Marx 1845, n.p.). Indeed, while the psychoanalytic development and globalisation literature have some resources, these subversive proposals could be refined in light of my theoretical and empirical intervention. In other words, while all the appropriate groundwork is there, in the concrete subversion of capitalist ideologies, such a psychoanalytic literature finds themselves once again lacking. Indeed, this is perhaps unsurprising given my argument in this thesis concerning the *Borromean knot* of theory. In particular, while enunciated alongside the regular psychoanalytic caveats, the critical response to *capitalist* development and globalisation – the recognition of which is especially important for Kapoor (2020) – in terms of practical subversion reverts to an assertion of an anti-capitalism in favour of some communist idea (cf. Kapoor 2013). Even if it is recognised as a diagnosis of the problem rather than the name of a solution, this runs the risk of repeating its tendency to frame itself in terms abstractness: As Joshua Clover argues in a review of Bosteels *The Actuality of Communism* – taking aim at Ranciere, Badiou and Žižek in particular: 'this flourishing of the communist idea resembles less an

orchid than an air plant suspended above the earth, lacking the practical soil of social struggle' (2014, n.p.).<sup>69</sup>

While I can get behind this, and I am definitely a communist, I worry the specificity regarding this transformative passage in the psychoanalytic literature could be strengthened. In dialectical terminology, what we have here is an 'abstract negation' in the guise of 'determinate negation', and as such while Kapoor says politics should be grounded in concrete contradictions (2013, p. 125), it is not always clear how his 'revolutionary' suggestions are grounded in these contradictions. In what follows, I am going to suggest one avenue for 'determinate negation' – based on the analysis presented so far – which might provide the appropriate link by which a 'post-capitalist' transformation may be born. In short, it revolves around the revolutionary potentials of the chugger.

On first glance, this seems very much 'out there' in terms of the 'classic' reference to the figure of Bartleby from Herman Melville's short story *Bartleby, The Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street*. What Bartleby does, according to Kapoor following Žižek, is precisely resist the ideological temptation to act. Insofar as part of the function of the charitable humanitarianism characteristic of capitalism with a human face is a sort of anti-theoretical activism, premised on the need to act now and thus to foreclose longer-term and complex discussions about how these instances represent a more fundamental logic of the system, Bartleby's characteristic 'I would prefer not to' presents a means of breaking with an established order by refusing to sanction its reproduction (2013, p. 123).

---

<sup>69</sup> Nicholas Thoburn (2013) also makes a similar argument in his critical review of the communist 'idea' proposed in Badiou and other verso edited collections (Douzinas and Žižek 2010).

While it could be confused with ideological cynicism this is not what is being advocated. Rather, in this sense ‘not to act is to take a political stand’ (Kapoor 2013, p. 123) and sometimes ‘it’s better to do nothing than to contribute to the reproduction of the existing order’ (Žižek, quoted in Kapoor 2013, p. 123). In the context of F2F, this does appear to be something of a step in the right direction: we shouldn’t give in to the ideological blackmail. Suffocating F2F of both the labour that produces its product and the public which consumes it would constitute a serious barrier to its reproduction. However, while I find this somewhat convincing, I am concerned about how this is going to be the operator of a shift from the existing state of affairs to the next.

While the *jouissance*, or ‘joy’ as one interviewee put it (Participant 1), of giving in some sense contributes to the reproduction or de-politicisation of the existing order, charity – perhaps *the* example of behaviour to be refused by the Bartleby stratagem (cf. Žižek 2006b, p. 383 Dean 2007, p. 377, Kapoor 2013) – importantly, as established in the last chapter, also gestures to a beyond to capital. Indeed, this would be one of the most important dialectical lessons of Jameson’s work: ‘the works of mass culture cannot be ideological without at one and the same time being implicitly or explicitly Utopian as well’ (1979, p. 144).

This is something Wilson highlights in his book chapter on the *jouissance* of philanthrocapitalism (2014b). Against the philanthrocapitalist’s injunction to enjoy giving, he invokes Robert Noonan’s (published under the pen name Robert Tressell) novel *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists* to claim that the real philanthropists are the working classes who produce surplus-value. For Wilson:

‘The enduring validity of this insight calls for a renewed politics of radical egalitarianism, through which a reimagining and redistribution of enjoyment



becomes possible. This implies the abolition of philanthropy through fidelity to its true meaning: philos-anthropos. The love of humanity is the negation of the exploitative social relations on which philanthrocapitalism is premised. One possible name for such a politics is 'communism' (2014b, p. 122).

He then quotes Alain Badiou at length which is worth reproducing here:

'Future forms of the politics of emancipation must be inscribed in a resurrection, a re-affirmation, of the Communist idea, the idea of a world that isn't given over to the avarice of private property, a world of free association and equality . . . In such a framework, it will be easier to re-invent love than if surrounded by the capitalist frenzy' (Badiou 2012, p. 72–3).

The danger of course with this is that Wilson (and Badiou) might end up reproducing that which their own 'philosophy' purposefully rejects: namely, an idealist humanism which posits an abstract humanity secondarily corrupted by capital, a positive substance potentially re-appropriated by the subject whereby real humanity and its love for one another will come to fruition. Obviously, the emphasis on 're-inventing' love might assuage these temptations, but only under certain conditions. So, what are the conditions? There is a well-documented passage in *Television* where Lacan invokes the 'saint' as a possible subjective position which might find a way out of the capitalist discourse. However, in articulating this, he departs from the standard common-sense image of the "saint" as a figure of "charity" and "love" (qua "caritas"):

'A saint's business, to put it clearly, is not caritas. Rather, he acts as trash [dichet]; his business being trashitas [il dicharite]. So as to embody what the structure entails, namely allowing the subject, the subject of the unconscious, to

take him as the cause of the subject's own desire. In fact it is through the abjection of this cause that the subject in question has a chance to be aware of his position, at least within the structure' (Lacan 1990, p. 15).

On these grounds, Tomšič reacts critically towards “*caritas*”, as the ‘only love that capitalism cultivates for its impoverished subjects’ (2015b, p. 29), and thus suggests that the properly subversive option, *trashitas*, concerns precisely the ‘rejection’ (ibid) of *caritas*. There is something applicable in this. Charity is indeed ‘a form of love which does not seriously problematise the regime that created the conditions for requiring charity’ (2015b, p. 28). As the standard Leftist argument goes, repeated by Žižek (2009) as well (following Oscar Wilde), charity only touches the surface manifestations of the disease, shifting attention away from the real task of reorganising the social structure. But does it not also gesture towards an absolute outside to capitalism? Does it not concern an object which operates as an ‘impossible’ counterpart to the commodity (Graeber 2001)? While this no doubt plays the ideological role of positing a ‘great outdoors’, screening of the immanence of the Real, it nonetheless still *does* posit an outside. However, when combined with the figure of the ‘mugger’ not only do we get an almost perfect empirical instance of ‘*trashitas*’ (qua charity tainted, with the ‘precious gift [changed] into a piece of shit’ (Lacan cited in Moore 2011, p. 68)) but something that can be productively worked with. ‘Chugger’ represents the disavowed truth of F2F, a site of disavowed – and regularly obscene – enjoyment that it relies on, thus making it a privileged position from which to mount a challenge to such ‘human’ ideologies of global capitalism. Identifying with it can generate a shift from the ‘fixation of the drive to the bending of the drive’ (Tomšič 2019a, p. 199), and contra Tomšič, ‘chugger’ as *trashitas* concerns a radicalisation of the ideological Utopia of *caritas*. Indeed, the ‘chugger’, in its combination of the Utopian impulse towards total

alterity with the violent streak of the mugger, reveals it to have some important revolutionary credentials.

I'd argue that the very first 'chugger' – or at least the first who consciously articulated its contradictory essence of love and violence – was perhaps *the* revolutionary Ernesto "Che" Guevara. On the one hand, as the famous quote goes, 'the true revolutionary is guided by strong feelings of love. It is impossible to think of an authentic revolutionary without this quality' (1965). Yet, on the other hand, this is by no means engaging in the sort of *caritas* of 'doing good' and 'making a difference' that constantly bombards us from 'chuggers' and beyond, nor in the 'loving-relation' that fundraisers attempt to construct between them and their potential 'donors'. Indeed, Che was clear about the importance and necessity of revolutionary violence, but it was always already in articulation with the injunction of love. In other words, not only does the 'chugger' represent the negative point, the site of disavowed enjoyment that identifying with would both function to 'de-sublimate' its object of desire and provide a kind of leverage point within F2F to break with it, but it represents a kind of '*love with hatred*' (Žižek 2008e, p. 204) necessary to actualise any 'transformative power of love' (ibid). Making capitalism 'human' or 'loving' cannot be challenged from the perspective of a more authentic love which capitalism drowns out with its hate, but from mobilizing such hate and turning it against itself in the hope that we might re-invent love.

# Bibliography

Action Aid (2008). *Human Rights-Based Approach to Poverty Eradication and Development*. Accessed online: [https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/the\\_rights\\_based\\_approach.pdf](https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/the_rights_based_approach.pdf). Last accessed: 10/10/2020.

Action Aid (2010). *Action on Rights: Human Rights Based Approach Resource Book*. Accessed online: [https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/hrba\\_resourcebook\\_11nov2010.pdf](https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/hrba_resourcebook_11nov2010.pdf). Last accessed: 10/10/2020.

Adaman, F., & Madra, Y. (2002). "Theorising the 'third sphere': A critique of the persistence of the 'economistic fallacy'". *Journal of Economic Issues*, 36(4): 1045–1078.

Adorno T.W. (1990). *Negative Dialectics*. Trans. E.B. Ashton. (London and New York: Routledge).

Adorno, T.W and Horkheimer, M. (1997). *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Trans. John Cumming (London: Verso).

Ainsworth, D. (2018). "David Ainsworth: Why The Daily Mail is wrong on street fundraising", *Civil Society*. Accessed online: <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/voices/david-ainsworth-why-the-daily-mail-is-wrong-on-street-fundraising.html>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.

Althusser, L. (1994). "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes Towards an Investigation" in S. Žižek (ed.) *Mapping Ideology*. (London: Verso).

Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. (1968). *Reading Capital* trans. Ben Brewster. Accessed online: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1968/reading-capital/index.htm>. Last accessed: 8/9/2021.

Amnesty International (2016). "Struggle for a better world are all threatened by the inequality crisis." *Amnesty International*. Accessed online: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2016/01/struggles-for-a-better-world-are-all-threatened-by-the-inequality-crisis/>. Last accessed: 16/9/2018.

Anderson, L. (2014). "What it's really like to be a street charity fundraiser." *Vice*. Accessed online: [https://www.vice.com/en\\_uk/article/dp9z8q/charity-fundraising-chuggers](https://www.vice.com/en_uk/article/dp9z8q/charity-fundraising-chuggers). Last accessed: 9/1/2020.

Anonymous (2015). "Dear Public: I'm a street fundraiser and I want respect." *The Guardian*. Accessed online: <https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2015/aug/30/chugger-street-fundraiser-respect>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.

Anonymous (2016a). "The secret life of a chugger: most of us are motivated by money, not charity." *The Guardian*. Accessed online: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/apr/04/secret-life-chugger-charity-fundraiser>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.

Anonymous (2016b). "I defended chuggers, until one turned up on my doorstep." *The Guardian*. Accessed online: <https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2016/mar/09/charity-fundraising-chugger-doorstep>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.

Arthur, C. (2004). *The New Dialectic and Marx's Capital*. (Leiden: Brill).

Badiou, A. (2009). *Theory of the Subject*, trans. B. Bosteels. (London: Continuum).

Badiou, A. (2012). *In Praise of Love*. (London: Serpent's Tail).

Badshah, N. (2019). 'White Saviour' row: David Lammy Denies Snubbing Comic Relief. Accessed online: <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2019/feb/28/david-lammy-stacey-dooley-comic-relief-white-saviour-row-uganda-red-nose-day-film>. Last accessed: 8/9/2021.

Bajde, D. (2009). "Rethinking the Social and Cultural Dimensions of Charitable Giving." *Consumption, Markets and Culture* 12(1): 65-84.

Bajde, D. (2012). "Mapping the Imaginary of Charitable Giving." *Consumption, Markets and Culture* 15(4): 1-16.

Baldwin, T. Brook, S. and Peek, L. (2003). "'Charity Muggers' Face Tough New Curbs." *The Times*. Accessed online: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/charity-muggers-face-tough-new-curbs-dr38j8h732d>. Last accessed: 17/04/2021.

Banks, N. & Hulme, D. (2012). "The Role of NGOs and Civil Society in Development and Poverty Reduction." *BWPI Working Paper 171*: 1-31.

Banks, N. Hulme, D. & Edwards, M. (2015). "NGOs, States and Donors Revisited: Still too Close for Comfort?" *World Development* 66: 707-718.

Barnett, M. (2011). *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*. (Cornell University Press).

Barnett, M. & Weiss, T. (eds.) (2008). *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*. (Cornell University Press).

Baughan, E. (2021). *Saving the Children: Humanitarianism, Internationalism, and Empire*. (Oakland: University of California Press).

Bebbington, A. Hickey, S. & Mitlin, D. (2008). "Introduction: Can NGOs Make a Difference: The Challenge of Development Alternatives" in A. Bebbington, S. Hickey & D. Mitlin (eds.) *Can NGOs Make a Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives*. (London and New York: Zed Books).

Bernal, V. and Grewal, I. (eds.) (2014). *Theorising NGOs: States, Feminisms and Neoliberalism*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press).

Bianchi, P. (2015). "From Representation to Class Struggle: A Response to Samo Tomšič." *Journal of the Jan van Eyck Circle for Lacanian Ideology Critique* 5: 114-126

Biblia (2019). "Genesis 3: 1-6", *Biblia Online Bible*. Accessed online: <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%203.1%E2%80%936>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.

Bickmore, T., & Cassell, J. (2000). "How about this weather? Social Dialogue with Embodied Conversational Agents." in AAAI Technical Report FS-00-04.

- Bickmore, T., and Cassell, J. (1999). "Small talk and conversational storytelling in embodied conversational interface agents." in AAAI Fall Symposium on Narrative Intelligence (CA: Menlo Park).
- Bieler, A. (2001). "Questioning Cognitivism and Constructivism in IR Theory: Reflections on the Material Structure of Ideas." *Politics* 21(2):93-100.
- Bieler, A. & Morton, A. (2003). "Globalisation, The State, and Class Struggle: A 'Critical Economy' Engagement with Open Marxism." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 5(4):467-499.
- Bieler, A. & Morton, A. (2018). *Global Capitalism, Global War, Global Crisis*. (Cambridge University Press).
- Bieler, A. Bonefeld, W. Burnham, P. and Morton, A. D. (eds.) (2006). *Global Restructuring, State, Capital and Labour: Contesting Neo-Gramscian Perspectives*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Bienefeld, Manfred (1992). *Rescuing the Dream of Development in the Nineties*. IDS Silver Jubilee Papers (Brighton: IDS).
- Black, M. (1992). *A Cause for our Times: Oxfam - The First 50 Years*. (London: Oxfam).
- Black, M. (1996). *Children First: The Story of UNICEF Past and Present*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Blaney, D. & Inayatullah, N. (1999). "Towards an Ethnological IPE: Karl Polanyi's Double Critique of Capitalism." *Millennium* 28(2): 311-340.
- Block, F. (2001). "Introduction" in K. Polanyi (ed.) (2001) [1944]. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. (Boston: Beacon).
- Block, F. & Somers, M. (2014). *The Power of Market Fundamentalism*. (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press).
- Boddy, J. (1998) "Afterword: Embodying Ethnography," in *Bodies and Persons: Comparative Perspectives from Africa and Melanesia*, M. Lambek and A. Strathern (eds.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Boltanski, L. and Chiapello, E. (2005). *The New Spirit of Capitalism*. (London: Verso)
- Bosteels, B. (2001). "Alain Badou's Theory of the Subject: Part 1. The Reccommencement of Dialectical Materialism?" *Pli* 12: 200-229.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of the Theory of Practice*. trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Bousfield, D. (2018). "Faith, Fantasy, and Crisis: Racialised Financial Discipline in Europe" in Kapoor, I. (eds.) *Psychoanalysis and the Global*. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press).
- Breeze, B. & Mohan, J. (2020). "Sceptical yet Supportive: Understanding Public Attitudes to Charities." Accessed online: <https://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/sceptical-yet-supportive-understanding-public-attitudes-to-charity>. Last accessed: 16/4/2021.
- Brenner, N. & Theodore, N. (2002). "Cities and the geographies of "actually existing neoliberalism"" in N. Brenner & N. Theodore (eds.) *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Budabin, A., & Hudson, N. (2021). "Sisterhood partnerships for conflict-related sexual violence." *World Development*, 140, 105255–.

- Burawoy, M. (2003) "For a Sociological Marxism: The Complementary Convergence of Antonio Gramsci and Karl Polanyi." *Politics and Society* 31(2): 193-261.
- Burnett, K. (1996). *Friends for Life: Relationship Fundraising in Practice*. (London: White Lion Press).
- Burnett, K. (2002). *Relationship Fundraising: A Donor-Based Approach to the Business of Raising Money*. (London: The White Lion Press).
- Burnett, K. (2011a). "Facing up to face-to-face fundraising: It's not what you do, you fundraisers, it's the way that you do it." Accessed online: <http://www.kenburnett.com/Blogfacetoface.html>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Burnett, K. (2011b). "Facing up to face-to-face: Where do you stand on defending street fundraising?" Accessed online: <http://www.kenburnett.com/Blogcomments9.html>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Burnett, K. (2013). "The Real Point About Face-to-Face Fundraising." Accessed online at <http://www.kenburnett.com/Blog37TheRealPoint.html>. Last accessed: 22/4/2020.
- Burnett, K. (2015). *Marketing was a mistake Why and how fundraising has to change. A personal view from Ken Burnett*. Accessed online: <http://www.kenburnett.com/Blog54Marketingwasamistake.html>. Last accessed: 8/9/2021.
- Burnett, K. (2016a). *Doing the Right Thing by Donors*. Accessed online: <http://www.kenburnett.com/Blog67doingtherightthing.html>. Last accessed: 22/4/2020.
- Burnett, K. (2016b). "Is the F2F Golden Goose now a dead duck?" Accessed online: <https://sofii.org/article/is-the-f2f-golden-goose-now-a-dead-duck>. Last accessed: 22/4/2020.
- Burawoy, M. (2003). "For a Sociological Marxism: The Complementary Convergence of Antonio Gramsci and Karl Polanyi." *Politics & Society*. 31(2):193-261.
- Butler, S. (2017). "The Richest Medium: How Conversations can Build Relationships." *Commission on the Donor Experience Project 11F: Face-to-face*. Accessed online: <https://sofii.org/article/cde-project-11f-face-to-face-section-1>. Last accessed: 22/4/2020.
- CAF (2019). *UK Giving: An Overview of Charitable Giving in the UK*. Accessed online: [https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/about-us-publications/caf-uk-giving-2019-report-an-overview-of-charitable-giving-in-the-uk.pdf?sfvrsn=c4a29a40\\_4](https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/about-us-publications/caf-uk-giving-2019-report-an-overview-of-charitable-giving-in-the-uk.pdf?sfvrsn=c4a29a40_4). Last accessed: 17/04/2021.
- Caille, A. (2008). *Anti-Utilitarianism, economics and the gift paradigm*. Accessed online: <https://www.revuedumauss.com.fr/media/ACstake.pdf>. Last accessed: 9/9/2021.
- Cammack, P. (2003). "The Governance of Global Capitalism: A New Materialist Perspective." *Historical Materialism* 11(2): 37-59.
- Cammack, P. (2017). "The UNDP, the World Bank and Human Development through the World Market." *Development Policy Review* 35(1): 3-21.

- Cammack, P. (2020). "Marx on Social Reproduction." *Historical Materialism* 28(2): 76-106.
- Campos, B. Dominik Schoebi, Gian C. Gonzaga, Shelly L. Gable, Dacher Keltner. (2015). "Attuned to the positive? Awareness and responsiveness to others' positive emotion experience and display." *Motivation and Emotion* 39(5): 780-794.
- CARE (2020). "How the money is spent." Accessed online: <https://www.careinternational.org.uk/who-we-are/how-money-spent>. Last accessed: 22/4/2020.
- Carey, D. (2003). "The Cosmopolitan Epoch: Configuring a Just World Order." Accessed online: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.981.8686&rep=rep1&type=pdf>. Last accessed: 8/9/2021.
- Carrier, J. (1990). "Gifts in a World of Commodities: The Ideology of the Perfect Gift in American Society". *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Anthropology* 29: 19-37.
- Ceserale, G. (2016). "Between Shelling and Marx: The Hegel of Slavoj Žižek." *Historical Materialism* 24(2): 205-227.
- Chang, H.-J., (2010). "Hamlet without the prince of Denmark: how development has disappeared from today's 'development' discourse." In S. Kahn and J. Christiansen, (eds.) *Towards new developmentalism: market as means rather than master*. (Abingdon: Routledge).
- Charity Commission (2017). *Guidance: Public Benefit: The Public Benefit Requirement*. Accessed online: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/588234/PB1\\_The\\_public\\_benefit\\_requirement.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/588234/PB1_The_public_benefit_requirement.pdf). Last accessed: 8/9/2021.
- Choudry, A. and Kapoor, D. (eds.) (2013). *NGOization: complicity, contradictions and prospects*. (London: Zed Books).
- CityCo (2020). 'About Manchester BID: Manchester Business Improvement District.' Accessed online: <https://cityco.com/manchester-bid/about-manchester-bid/>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.
- Civil Society (2017). *Key Lessons from the Commission on the Donor Experience*. Accessed online: <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/voices/key-lessons-from-the-commission-on-the-donor-experience.html>. Last accessed: 22/4/2020.
- Clover, J. (2014). "Review: The Actuality of Communism." Accessed online: [https://www.abdn.ac.uk/modernthought/content-images/Clover\\_Joshua\\_Review\\_The\\_Actuality\\_of\\_Communism\\_13-02-2012\\_.pdf](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/modernthought/content-images/Clover_Joshua_Review_The_Actuality_of_Communism_13-02-2012_.pdf). Last accessed: 8/9/2021.
- Coffey, J., Farrugia, D., Adkins, L., & Threadgold, S. (2018). "Gender, Sexuality, and Risk in the Practice of Affective Labour for Young Women in Bar Work". *Sociological Research Online*, 23(4), 728-743.
- Cole, A. (2014). *The Birth of Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Collier, P. (2007). *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Falling and What Can be Done About it?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Collier, P. (2018). *The Future of Capitalism: Facing the New Anxieties*. (Bristol: Allen Lane).



- Collignon, F. (2019). "The politics of a smile." *New Formations* 95: 87-102.
- Comay, R. & Ruda, F. (2018). *The Dash—The Other Side of Absolute Knowing*. (Massachusetts: MIT Press).
- Cooley, A., & Ron, J. (2002). "The NGO scramble: Organizational insecurity and the political economy of transnational action". *International Security*, 27(1), 5–39.
- Cooney, R. (2019). *Home Fundraising Goes into Administration*. Accessed online: <https://www.thirdsector.co.uk/home-fundraising-goes-administration/fundraising/article/1577583>. Last accessed: 9/9/2021.
- Cornia, G.A. Jolly, R. and Stewart, F. (1987). *Adjustment With A Human Face: Protecting the Vulnerable and Promoting Growth Volume One* (Oxford: Clarendon University Press).
- Cornwall, A. Gideon, J. and Wilson, K. (2008). "Introduction: Reclaiming Feminism: Gender and Neoliberalism". *IDS Bulletin* 39(6): 1-9.
- Cowen, M.P. & Shenton, R.W. (1996). *Doctrines of Development* (London and New York: Routledge).
- Cox, R. W. (1989). "Production, the state and change in world order", in E-O. Czempiel and J. N. Rosenau (eds.), *Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges: Approaches to World Politics for the 1990s* (Toronto: Lexington Books).
- Craig, D. and Porter, D. (2006). *Development beyond Neoliberalism? Governance, Poverty Reduction and Political Economy* (London: Routledge).
- Cutler, A. C. (2005). "Gramsci, Law, and the Culture of Global Capitalism". *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 8(4), 527–542.
- Dale, G. (2016). *Karl Polanyi: A Life on the Left*. (Columbia University Press).
- Dalingwater, L. (2018). "Neo-liberalism and Gender Inequality in the Workplace in Britain." *Revue Française de Civilisation Britannique*. Accessed online: <http://journals.openedition.org/rfcb/1802>. Last accessed: 10/09/2021.
- Daly, G. (2019). *Speculation: Politics, Ideology, Event*. (Northwestern University Press).
- Dar, S. and Cooke, B. (eds.). (2008). *The new development management*. (London: Zed Books).
- Daryl Upsall Consulting International (2020). *Daryl Upsall Consulting International | Helping you to change the world*. Accessed online: <https://www.darylupsall.com/>. Last accessed: 5/12/2020.
- Dauvergne, P., & LeBaron, G. (2014). *Protest Inc.: The corporatization of activism*. (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Davies, T. (2013). *NGOs: A New History of Transnational Civil Society*. (Oxford University Press).
- Davies, T. (2019). "Introducing NGOs and International Relations." in T. Davies (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of NGOs and International Relations*. (London: Routledge).
- Davis, M. (1990). *City of Quartz*. (London: Verso).
- Day, J.P. (1993). "Temptation." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 30(2): 175-181.

- De Vries, P. (2007). "Don't Compromise your Desire for Development! A Lacanian/Deleuzian Re-Thinking of the Anti-Politics Machine." *Third World Quarterly* 28(1): p. 25-43.
- Dean, J. (2007). "The Object Next Door." *Political Theory* 35(3): 371-378.
- Dean, J. (2020). *The Good Glow: Charity and the Symbolic Power of Doing Good*. (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Dean, J. and Wood, R. (2017). "'You can try and press different emotional buttons': The conflicts and strategies of eliciting emotion for fundraisers." *International Journal of Nonprofit Voluntary Sector Marketing* 22(e1603): 1-7.
- Derrida, J. (1992). *Given Time: Counterfeit Money*. trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Di Leonardo, M. (1981). "Political economy of street harassment," *Aegis*, Summer: 51-57.
- Dogra, N. (2012). *Representations of Global Poverty: Aid, Development and International NGOs*. (London and New York: I.B. Tauris).
- Dolar, M. (1993). "Beyond Interpellation." *Qui Parle* 6(2) pp. 75-96.
- Douglas, M. (1990). "No Free Gifts." Foreword in Mauss, M. (2002) *The Gift: Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. (London: Routledge).
- Douzinas, C. and Žižek, S. , (eds.). (2010). *The Idea of Communism*. (London:Verso).
- Duffin, C. & Mendick, R. (2012). "'Chugger' secrets exposed by undercover investigation." *The Telegraph*. Accessed online: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/9351593/Chugger-secrets-exposed-by-undercover-investigation.html>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Dunne, B. (2016). "Against neoliberalism as a concept" *Capital & Class*. 41(3): 435-454.
- Dyer, J. (2020). "Bio" in "Oxfam's Face-to-Face Fundraising Team." Accessed online: <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising/face-to-face-fundraising-team>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.
- Eagleton-Pierce, M. (2019). "The Rise of Managerialism in International NGOs." *Review of International Political Economy* 1-25.
- Edkins, J. (1999). *Poststructuralism and International Relations: Bringing the Political Back in*. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers).
- Edkins, J. (2000). *Whose Hunger?: Concepts of Famine, Practices of Aid* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press).
- Edkins, J. (2019). *Change and the Politics of Certainty*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press).
- Edwards, M (2010). *Small Change: Why Business Won't Save the World*. (Oakland: Berrett-Koehler Publishers).
- Edwards, M. (2018). "What's to be done with Oxfam? Part 2." Accessed online: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/what-s-to-be-done-with-oxfam-part-2/>. Last accessed: 8/9/2021.

- Edwards, M. and Hulme, D. (1992). *Making a difference: NGOs and development in a changing world*. (London: Routledge).
- Eikenberry, A. & Kluver, J. (2004). "The Marketisation of the Non-profit sector: Civil Society at Risk?" *Public Administration Review* 64(2): 132-140.
- Elsner, J. (2015). "Visual Culture and Ancient History: Issues of Empiricism and Ideology in the Samos Stele at Athens." *Classical Antiquity*, 34(1): 33-73.
- Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. (Princeton University Press).
- Escobar, A. (2007). "'Post-development' as concept and social practice", in A. Ziai (ed.) *Exploring Post-development: Theory and practice, problems and perspectives*. (London: Routledge).
- Escobar, A. (2020). *Pluriversal Politics: The Real and the Possible*. (Duke University Press).
- Fairbairn, C. (2016). "Chuggers": Face-to-face charity fundraising on the street." *House of Commons Briefing Paper Number 06027*. Accessed online: <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06027#fullreport>. Last accessed: 10/09/2021.
- Fassin, D. (2011). *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present*. (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- Ferguson, J. (2014). *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, depoliticisation and Bureaucratic power in Lesotho*. (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press).
- Ferguson, J. (2015). *Give a Man a Fish: Reflections on the New Politics of Distribution*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press).
- Fickling, (2009). "Britain's Much-Maligned 'Chuggers'." *The Financial Times*. Accessed online: <https://www.ft.com/content/856ddbc2-dee6-11de-adff-00144feab49a>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Fink, B. (1995). *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).
- Fletcher, R. (2018) "Beyond the End of the World: Breaking Attachment to a Dying Planet", in I. Kapoor, (ed.) *Psychoanalysis and the Global*. (London and Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press).
- Foucault, M. (1980). "Truth and Power." In C. Gordon (ed.) *Michael Foucault, Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. (Brighton: Harvester Press).
- Foucault, M (1986). 'Kant on Enlightenment and Revolution' trans. Colin Gordon. *Economy and Society* 15 (1), Feb., pp. 88-96.
- Foucault, M. (2008). *Introduction to Kant's Anthropology*. (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e)).
- Fowler, A. (2000). *The Virtuous Spiral: A Guide to Sustainability for NGOs in International Development*. (London: Earthscan).
- Freeden, M. (1996). *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

- Freeman, S. and Schuller, M. (2020). "Aid Projects: The Effects of Commodification and Exchange." *World Development* 126: 104731.
- Fridell, G. (2014). "Fair Trade Slippages and Vietnam Gaps: The Ideological Fantasies of Fair Trade Coffee." *Third World Quarterly* 35(7): 1179-1194.
- Fundraising Podcast (2012). *FUNDCAST #44: Daryl Upsall Explains Face-2-Face Fundraising*. Accessed online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1gbvhSjNZg>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Fundraising Regulator (2020). "Direct Debit Fundraising: Street and Private Site." Accessed online: <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/more-from-us/topics/direct-debit-fundraising-street-and-private-site>. Last accessed: 22/4/2020.
- Gervais, R. (2021). "Help Save Children - Netflix Afterlife Funny Moments." *YouTube*. Accessed online: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIJBTTkSpW8&ab\\_channel=AfterLife-Tony](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIJBTTkSpW8&ab_channel=AfterLife-Tony). Last accessed: 9/9/2021.
- Gill, S. (1993). "Epistemology, Ontology and the Italian School." in S. Gill (eds.) *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Gill, S. (1995). "Globalisation, Market Civilisation, and Disciplinary Neoliberalism." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 24(3): 399-423.
- Girei, E. (2016). "NGOs, Management and Development: Harnessing Counter-hegemonic Possibilities." *Organisation Studies* 37(2): 193-212.
- Godbout, J.A. and Caille, A. (1998). *The World of the Gift*. trans. David Winkler (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press).
- Godelier, M. (1996). *The Enigma of the Gift* trans. Nora Scott (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Google (2020). "Search: Face-to-face Fundraising." Accessed online: [https://www.google.com/search?q=face+to+face+fundraising&sxsrf=ACYBGNSeyvpAQ6\\_mKtNZwbj9E-pVDLia-g:1578744016749&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwis27ziv\\_vmAhXmTxUIHYhsBjwQ\\_AUoAXoECBIOAw&biw=1251&bih=635](https://www.google.com/search?q=face+to+face+fundraising&sxsrf=ACYBGNSeyvpAQ6_mKtNZwbj9E-pVDLia-g:1578744016749&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwis27ziv_vmAhXmTxUIHYhsBjwQ_AUoAXoECBIOAw&biw=1251&bih=635). Last accessed: 10/1/2020.
- Gore, C. (2000). "The Rise and Fall of the Washington Consensus as a Paradigm for Developing Countries." *World Development* 28(5): 789-804.
- GOV.UK (2013). *Guidance: What Makes a Charity a Charity*. Accessed online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-makes-a-charity-cc4/what-makes-a-charity-cc4>. Last accessed: 8/9/2021.
- GOV.UK (2019). "Gift Aid donation claims for charities and CASCs." Accessed online: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gift-aid-what-donations-charities-and-casc-can-claim-on#when-you-cannot-claim-gift-aid>. Last accessed: 7/6/2020.
- Graeber, D. (2001). *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value: The False Coin of our own Dreams*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan).
- Graeber, D. (2011). *Debt: The First 5000 Years*. (New York: Melville House Publishing).

- Gramsci A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Q. Hoare and G. Nowell-Smith (eds). (London: Lawrence and Wishart).
- Gregory, C. (1982). *Gifts and Commodities*. (London: Hau Books).
- Grossman, J. B. (2013). *Funerary Sculpture: The Athenian Agora*. (Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies at Athens).
- Guevara, E. (1965). *Socialism and Man in Cuba*. Accessed online: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/guevara/1965/03/man-socialism.htm>. Last accessed: 8/9/2021.
- Hamza, A. (2016). "Going to One's Ground: Žižek and Dialectical Materialism." in A. Hamza and F. Ruda (eds.) *Slavoj Žižek and Dialectical Materialism*. (London: Palgrave MacMillan).
- Hart, G. (2001). 'Development Critiques in the 1990s: Culs de sac and Promising Paths.' *Progress in Human Geography* 25(4): 649-658.
- Hart, K. Laville, J.L. & Cattani, A.D. (eds.) (2010) *The Human Economy*. (Cambridge: Polity).
- Harvey, D. (1989). "From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The transformation of urban governance in late capitalism." *Geografiska Annaler* 71(B): 3-17.
- Harvey, D. (2007). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Hattori, T. (2001). "Reconceptualising Foreign Aid." *Review of International Political Economy* 8(4): 633-660.
- Hattori, T. (2003). "Giving as a Mechanism of Consent: International Aid Organisations and the Ethical Hegemony of Capitalism." *International Relations* 17(2): 153-173.
- Hawkins, R. (2012). "Shopping to save lives: Gender and environment theories meet ethical consumption" *Geoforum* 43: 750-759.
- Hay, C. (1997). "State of the Art: Divided by a Common Language: Political Theory and the Concept of Power." *Politics* 17(1): 45-52.
- Hegel, G.W.F. (1807). *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. Accessed online: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/ph/phintro.htm>. Last accessed: 17/04/2021.
- Heinrich, M. (2012). *An Introduction to the Three Volumes of Karl Marx's Capital*. trans. Locascio, A. (New York: Monthly Review Press).
- Helliker, K. (2007). "Marx, Weber and NGOs" *South African Review of Sociology*, 38(2): 120-133.
- Henaff, M. (2010). *The Price of Truth: Gift, Money and Philosophy*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
- Herman, E. S. and Chomsky, N. (1988). *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. (New York: Pantheon Books).
- Hilhorst, D. (2003). *The Real World of NGOs: Discourse, Diversity and Development*. (London: Zed Books).

- Hilton, M. (2015). "Ken Loach and the Save the Children Film: Humanitarianism, Imperialism, and the Changing Role of Charity in Postwar Britain." *The Journal of Modern History*, 87(2): 357–94.
- Hochschild, A.R. (2012). *The Managed Heart: Commercialisation of Human Feeling*. (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- Home Fundraising (2019). 'About' *LinkedIn*. Accessed online: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/home-fundraising-ltd/about/>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.
- Hook, D. (2013). "Tracking the Lacanian unconscious in language." *Psychodynamic Practice*, 19(1): 38-54.
- Hopewell, K. (2015). "Multilateral trade governance as social field: Global civil society and the WTO." *Review of International Political Economy*, 22(6), 1128–1158.
- Hulme, D. (2008). "Reflections on NGOs and development: The elephant, the dinosaur, several tigers but no owl." In A. J. Bebbington, S. Hickey, and Mitlin, D., (eds.) *Can NGOs make a difference? The challenge of development alternatives*. (London: Zed books).
- Hulme, D. and Edwards, M. (1992). *Making a Difference: NGOs and Development in a Changing World*. (London: Routledge).
- Hulme, D. and M. Edwards (eds.) (1997). *NGOs, States and Donors: Too Close for Comfort*. (London: MacMillan).
- Iltis, S. & Phillips, L. (2003). "Making food count: expert knowledge and global technologies of government." *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 40(4), pp. 441–462.
- Iltis, S. & Lacey, A. (2006). "Governing through empowerment: Oxfam's Global Reform and Trade Campaigns." *Globalisations* 3(2): 207-225.
- Iltis, S. & Lacey, A. (2011). *Governing the Poor: Exercises of Poverty Reduction, Practices of Global Aid*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press)
- IoF (2019). *Face-to-Face Fundraising*. Accessed online at: <https://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/guidance/fundraising-with-individuals/fundraising-in-a-public-place/face-to-face-fundraising/>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.
- IoF (2020a). *Benefits of a Site Management Agreement*. Accessed online: <https://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/guidance/fundraising-compliance/site-management-agreements/benefits-of-a-site-management-agreement/>. Last accessed: 10/1/2020.
- IoF (2020b). *Our Vision and Role*. Accessed online: <https://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/about-us/our-vision/>. Last accessed: 10/1/2020.
- Ismail, F. & Kamat, S. (2018). "NGOs, Social Movements and the Neoliberal State: Incorporation, Reinvention, Critique", *Critical Sociology* Vol. 44(4-5): 569 –577.
- Jakobson, R. (1960). "Linguistics and poetics". In T. Sebeok (eds.) *Style in Language*: 350- 377 (Cambridge: MIT Press).
- Jameson, F. (1979). "Reification and Utopian in Mass Culture." *Social Text* 1: 130-148.

- Jameson, F. (2002). *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. (London: Routledge).
- Jameson, F. (2009). *Valences of the Dialectic*. (London: Verso).
- Jameson, F. (2011). *Representing Capital: A Reading of Volume One*. (London: Verso).
- Jay, E. (2001). "The Rise - and fall? - face-to-face fundraising in the United Kingdom." *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising*, 33: 83-94.
- Jessop, B. & Sum, N-L, (2006). "Toward a Cultural International Political Economy: Post-Structuralism and the Italian School" in M. De Goede (ed.) *International Political Economy and Post-Structural Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave).
- Joachim, J., & Schneiker, A. (2018). "Humanitarian NGOs as businesses and managers: Theoretical reflection on an under-explored phenomenon." *International Studies Perspectives*, 19(2), 170–187.
- Johnston, A. (2005). *Time Driven: Metapsychology and the Splitting of the Drive*. (Evenston: Northwestern University Press).
- Johnston, A. (2008). *Žižek's Ontology: A Transcendental Materialist Theory of Subjectivity*. (Evenston: Northwestern University Press)
- Johnston, A. (2018). *A New German Idealism: Hegel, Žižek and Dialectical Materialism*. (New York: Columbia University Press).
- Jolly, R. (1991). "Adjustment with a Human Face: A UNICEF record and perspective on the 1980s." *World Development* 19(12): 1807-1821.
- Jolly, R. (2003). "Human development and neo-liberalism: paradigms compared." *Readings in human development*, 82-92
- Jolly, R. and Santos, R. (2016). "From the Development of the 'Other' to Global Governance for Universal and Sustainable Development" *IDS Bulletin* 47(2): 13-32.
- Kamat, S. (2004). "The privatization of public interest: Theorizing NGO discourse in a neoliberal era." *Review of International Political Economy* 11(1): 155–176.
- Kamat, S. (2013). "Preface." In: A. Choudry and D. Kapoor (eds.) *NGOization: complicity, contradictions and prospects*. (London: Zed Books).
- Kambhampati, U.S. (2004). *Development and the Developing World*. (London: Polity).
- Kane, M. (2013). "International NGOs and the Aid Industry: Constraints on International Solidarity." *Third World Quarterly* 34(8): 1505-1515.
- Kapoor, I. (2008). "Foreign aid as G(r)ift" in I. Kapoor (ed.) *The Postcolonial Politics of Development*. (New York: Routledge): 76-94.
- Kapoor, I. (2013). *Celebrity Humanitarianism: The Ideology of Global Charity*. (London & New York: Routledge).
- Kapoor, I. (2014). "Psychoanalysis and Development: Contributions, Examples, Limits." *Third World Quarterly* 35(7): 1120-1143.
- Kapoor, I. (2017). "Cold Critique, Faint Passion, Bleak Future: Post-Development's Surrender to Global Capitalism." *Third World Quarterly* 38(12): 2664-2683.
- Kapoor, I. (2018). *Psychoanalysis and the Global*. (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press).
- Kapoor, I. (2020). *Confronting Desire: Psychoanalysis and International Development*. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press).

- Kelly, J. (2011). "‘Chuggers’ or Face-to-face Fundraisers?" Accessed online: [www.BBC.co.uk/news/magazine-12525580](http://www.BBC.co.uk/news/magazine-12525580). Last accessed: 29/6/2021.
- Kennedy, (1979). "‘Ideology’ from Destutt De Tracy to Marx." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 40(3): 353-368.
- Keogh, G. & Kelly, T. (2018). "How the first YEAR of your charity donation ends up in the hands of the chuggers", *The Daily Mail* Accessed online: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5823469/Millions-pounds-given-charities-used-pay-street-fundraising-firms.html>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Khagram, S. Riker, J.V. and Sikkink, K. (2002). "From Santiago to Seattle: Transnational Advocacy Groups Restructuring World Politics" in S. Khagram J. V. Riker and K. Sikkink (eds.) *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Movements, Networks and Norms*. (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press).
- Kirk, M (2012). "Beyond Charity: Helping NGOs Lead a Transformative New Public Discourse on Global Poverty and Social Justice." *Ethics & International Affairs* Vol. 26, Special Issue 2, pp. 245–263.
- Kizildere, D. & Chiodelli, F. (2018). "Discrete emergence of neoliberal policies on public space: an informal Business Improvement District in Istanbul, Turkey." *Urban Geography*, 39(5): 783-802.
- Krause M (2014). *The Good Project: Humanitarian Relief NGOs and the Fragmentation of Reason*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Lacan, J. (1990). *Television: A Challenge to the Psychoanalytic Establishment*, ed. by Joan Copjec, trans. by Denis Hollier et al. (New York: Norton, 1990).
- Laclau, E. (1996). "The Death and Ressurrection of the Theory of Ideology." *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 1(3): 201-220.
- Laclau, E. (2000). "Structure, History and the Political" in J. Butler, E. Laclau, E. and S. Žižek. *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left* (London: Verso).
- Laclau, E. & Mouffe, C. (2014) [1985]. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. (London: Verso).
- Lal, D. (2006). *Reviving the Invisible Hand: The Case for Classical Liberalism in the Twenty-First Century*. (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press).
- Lambek, M. (2013). "The Value of (Performative) Acts." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3 (2): 141–60.
- Lange, E.L. (2016) "The Critique of Political Economy and the ‘New Dialectic’: Marx, Hegel and the Problem of Christopher J. Arthur’s Homology Thesis." *Crisis and Critique* 3(3): 235-272.
- Larrain, J. (1983). *Marxism and Ideology*. (London: MacMillan).
- Leander, A. & van Munster. (2007). "Private Security Contractors in the Debate about Darfur: Reflecting and Reinforcing Neo-Liberal Governmentality." *International Relations* 21: 201–16.
- Leary-Ohwin, M. (2016). *Exploring the production of urban space: Differential space in three post-industrial cities*. (Bristol: Policy Press).
- Lebaron, G. & Dauvergne, P. (2014). *Protest Inc.: The Corporatization of Activism*. (Cambridge: Polity Press).



- Lebowitz, M. (2002). "Karl Marx: The Needs of Capital vs The Needs of Human Beings" in D. Dowd (ed.) *Understanding Capitalism: Critical Analysis from Karl Marx to Amartya Sen*. (London: Pluto Press).
- Lebowitz, M. (2003). *Beyond Capital: Marx's Political Economy of the Working Class*. (London: Palsgrave Macmillan).
- Lebowitz, M. (2009). "The Path to Human Development: Capitalism or Socialism?" *Monthly Review* 60(9): 41-63.
- Lebowitz, M. (2010). *The socialist alternative: Real human development*. (New York: NYU Press).
- Leibowitz, M. (2012). *The Contradictions of "Real Socialism": The Conductor and the Conducted*. (New York: NYU Press).
- Lewis, D. (2005). "Individuals, organizations and public action: trajectories of the 'non-governmental' in development studies." In U. Kothari (eds.) *A Radical History of Development Studies: Individuals, Institutions and Ideologies* (London: Zed Books).
- Lewis, D. (2010). "NGOs" in K. Hart, J.L. Laville & A.D. Cattani (eds.) *The Human Economy*. (Cambridge: Polity).
- Lewis, D. & Schuller, M. (2017). "Engagements with a Productively Unstable Category: Anthropologists and Nongovernmental Organizations." *Current Anthropology* Vol. 58(5): 634-651.
- Lidchi, H. (1999) "Finding the right image: British Development NGOs and the regulation of imagery". In T. Skelton and T. Allen (eds.) *Culture and Global Change*. (London: Routledge)
- LiPuma, E. and Postone, M. (2020). "Gifts, Commodities, and the Encompassment of Others." *Critical Historical Studies* Spring 2020: 167-200.
- Lissner J. (1977). *The Politics of Altruism*. (Geneva: Lutheran World Foundation).
- Lissner, J. (1981). "Merchants of Misery." *New Internationalist* 100: 23-25.
- Lock, S. (2021). "'Chuggers or Chunts?' Sean Lock on Charity Muggers." *YouTube*. Accessed online: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLDo-MDLC3o&ab\\_channel=UniversalComedy](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLDo-MDLC3o&ab_channel=UniversalComedy). Last accessed: 9/9/2021.
- Lously, C. (2014). "'With Love from Band Aid': Sentimental exchange, affective economies, and popular globalism." *Emotion, Space and Society* 10: 7-17.
- Lyotard, J.F. (1993). *Libidinal Economy*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).
- Macartney, H. (2015). *Variegated Neoliberalism: EU Varieties of Capitalism and International Political Economy*. (New York: Taylor & Francis Ltd).
- MacDonald, E. (2018). "Integrative and Responsive Desires: Resources for an Alternative Political Economy" in I. Kapoor (ed.) *Psychoanalysis and the Global* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press).
- Madra, Yahya Mete (2017). "Antinomies of Globalization." *Markets, Globalization & Development Review*: Vol. 2: No. 3, Article 4.
- Malinowski, B. (1923). "The problem of meaning in primitive languages" Supplement to C. Ogden and I. Richards, *The meaning of meaning*: 146-152. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul).
- Mallard, G. (2018). "The Gift as Colonial Policy? Marcell Mauss and the Solidarist Colonial Policy in the Interwar Era" *Journal of International Political Theory* 1-20.

- Manji, F. O'Coill, C. (2002). "The Missionary Position." *International Affairs* 78: 567-83.
- Manzo, K. (2008). "Imaging humanitarianism: NGO identity and the iconography of childhood." *Antipode* 40(4): 632-657.
- Marx, K. (1845). *The German Ideology*. Accessed online: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/>. Last accessed: 17/04/2021.
- Marx, K. (2013). *Capital*. (Ware: Wordsworth Editions Limited).
- Mauss, M. (2002). *The Gift: Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. (London: Routledge).
- Maxwell, I. Seton, M. and Szabo, M. (2012). "The precarious lives of actors." *Australasian Drama Studies*, 72: 149-175.
- May, M. (2019). "Home Fundraising enters voluntary administration." Accessed online: <https://fundraising.co.uk/2019/03/01/home-fundraising-enters-voluntary-administration/>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- McGoey, L. (2015). *No Such Thing as a Free Gift: The Gates Foundation and the Price of Philanthropy*. (London: Verso).
- McLellan, D. (1995). *Ideology*. (Buckingham: Open University Press).
- McMichael, P. (2005). "Globalisation and Development Studies." in W.I. Robinson and R.P. Applebaum (eds.) *Critical Globalization Studies* (London: Routledge).
- McMichael, P. (2016). *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective*. (6th Edition). (London: Sage).
- McSweeney, J. (2014). "The absence of class: Critical development, NGOs and the misuse of Gramsci's concept of counter-hegemony." *Progress in Development Studies* 14(3): 275-285.
- Miller, J.A. (2008). "A Reading from Jacques Lacan's Seminar From an Other to the other IV", Trans.: B. P. *Fulks Lacanian Ink* 32: 6-59.
- Minsky, H. (1996). "Uncertainty and the Institutional Structure of Capitalist Economies: Remarks upon Receiving the Veblen-Commons Award." *Journal of Economic Issues*, 30(2): 357-368.
- Mitchell, D (1995). "The end of public space? People's Park, definitions of the public, and democracy." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 85: 108-133.
- Mitchell, K. (2016). "'Factivism': A New Configuration of Humanitarian Reason." *Geopolitics* 1-19.
- Mitchell, K. and Sparke, M. (2016). "The New Washington Consensus: Millennial Philanthropy and the Making of Global Market Subjects." *Antipode* 48(3): 724-749.
- Moder, G. (2017). *Hegel and Spinoza: Substance and Negativity*. (Evenston: Northwestern University Press).
- Moore, D. (1995). "Development Discourse as Hegemony: Towards an Ideological History 1945-1995." in D. Moore & G. Schmitz (eds) *Debating Development Discourse: Institutional and Popular Perspectives* (Palgrave Macmillan).

- Moore, G. (2011). *The Politics of the Gift: Exchanges in Poststructuralism*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press).
- Morgan, A. (2017). "A Preponderance of Objects: Critical Theory and the Turn to the Object." *Adorno Studies* 1(1), 14-30.
- Morton, A. D. (2005). "A Double Reading of Gramsci: Beyond the Logic of Contingency." *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 8(4), 439-453.
- Morton, A. D. (2006). "The grimly comic riddle of hegemony in IPE: Where is class struggle?" *Politics*, 26(1), 62-72.
- Munck, R. (2010). Globalisation, labour and development: a view from the South. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, 72/73(January 2010), 205-224.
- Napier, A. (2002). "Confessions of a Street Fundraiser." BBC. Accessed online: <http://news.BBC.co.uk/1/hi/uk/2090680.stm>. Last accessed: 09/1/2020.
- Ngai, S. (2015). 'Visceral Abstraction.' *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 21:1.
- Nikel, P. and A. Eikenberry (2009). 'A Critique of the Discourse of Marketized Philanthropy.' *American Behavioural Scientist* 52:7 974-989.
- Nilson, A.G. (2021). "Give James Ferguson a Fish." *Development and Change* 52(1): 3-25.
- Noys, B. (2010). *Persistence of the Negative: A Critique of Contemporary Continental Theory*. (Edinburgh University Press).
- Noys, B. (2015). "Žižek's Reading Machine." in A. Hamza (ed.) *Repeating Žižek* (London: Duke University Press).
- Olwig, M. (2021). "Introduction: Commodifying Humanitarian Sentiments? The Black Box of the For-profit and Non-profit Partnership." *World Development*, 125.
- One Sixty (2019). *Home Page*. Accessed online: <https://onesixtyfundraising.com/>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Orleon, A. (2017). *Keynes 2030*. Accessed online: <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3097-keynes-2030>. Last accessed: 17/04/2021.
- Oxfam (2017). "An economy for the 99%: It's time to build a human economy that benefits everyone, not just the privileged few." Accessed online: <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/economy-99>. Last accessed: 9/9/2021.
- Oxfam (2019a). "Public Good or Private Wealth?" *Oxfam Briefing Report* January.
- Oxfam (2019b). "Face-to-Face and Telephone Fundraising." *Oxfam*. Accessed online: <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/faqs/face-to-face-and-telephone-fundraising>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Oxfam (2020a). "Oxfam's Face-to-Face Fundraising Team." *Oxfam*. Accessed online: <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising/face-to-face-fundraising-team>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.
- Oxfam (2020b). "Join Our Face-to-face Engagement Team." *Oxfam*. Accessed online: <https://www.oxfamapps.org.uk/facetoface/>. Last accessed: 10/1/2020.

- Özselçuk, C. and Madra, Y. (2010). "Enjoyment as an Economic Factor: Reading Marx with Lacan." *Subjectivity* 3(3): 323-347.
- Padelford, N. (1967). United Nations Headquarters: Alternatives for Expansion. *International Organization*, 21(4), 768-785.
- Pancoust, O. (2020). "Bio" in Oxfam *Oxfam's Face-to-Face Fundraising Team*. Accessed online: <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising/face-to-face-fundraising-team>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.
- Parry, J. (1986). "The Gift, the Indian Gift and the 'Indian Gift'". *Man*. 21 (3): 466–69.
- Pearce, J. (2000). *Development, NGOs and Civil Society: Selected Essays From Development in Practice*. (London: Oxfam).
- Peterson, M. (2006). "Patrolling The Plaza: Privatized Public Space And The Neoliberal State In Downtown Los Angeles." *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development* 35(4): 355-386.
- Peterson, V.S. (2005). "How (the meaning of) Gender Matters in Political Economy." *New Political Economy* 10(4): 499-521.
- Peyroux, Elisabeth, Pütz, Robert, & Glasze, Georg. (2012). "Business Improvement Districts (BIDs): The internationalization and contextualization of a 'travelling concept'" *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 19(2), 111–120.
- Pfaller, R. (2015). "Althusser's Best Tricks." *Crisis and Critique*, 2(2): 25-45.
- PFFA (2021). *Home*. Accessed online: <https://www.pffaus.org/>. Last accessed: 16/4/2021.
- Polanyi, K. (1947). "Our Obscene Market Mentality: Civilisation Must Find a New Thought Pattern." *Commentary* 3: 109-117.
- Polanyi, K. (1957). "Aristotle discovers the economy". In Polanyi, Arensberg & Pearson (eds.) *Trade and market in the early empires: economies in history and theory*. (Glencoe: The Free Press).
- Polanyi, K. (2001) [1944]. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. (Boston: Beacon).
- Power, N. (2009). *One Dimensional Woman*. (Winchester: Zero Books).
- Proudfoot, J. (2010). "Interviewing Enjoyment, or the Limits of Discourse." *The Professional Geographer* 62(4): 507-518.
- Proudfoot, J. (2015). "Anxiety and Phantasy in the Field: The Position of the Unconscious in Ethnographic Research." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 33(6): 1135-1152.
- Ramos, L. (2006). "Civil society in an age of globalization: A neo-Gramscian perspective." *Journal of Civil Society*, 2(2), 143–163.
- Read, J. (2016). "Radicalizing the Root: The Return of Philosophical Anthropology to the Critique of Political Economy." *Crisis & Critique* 3(3): 311-332.
- Rehmann (2013). *Theories of Ideology: The Powers of Alienation and Subjection*. (Chicago: Haymarket Books).
- Richey L.A. (2019). "Eclipsed by the halo: 'Helping' brands through dissociation." *Dialogues in Human Geography*. 9(1):78-82.

- Richey, L.A. & Ponte, S. (2011). *Brand Aid: Shopping Well to Save the World*. (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press).
- Richey, L.A. and Ponte, S. (2012). "Debate /ROAPE Forum: Brand Africa: Multiple Transitions in Global Capitalism." *Review of African Political Economy* 39(131): 135-150.
- Richey, L.A. Hawkins, R. and Goodman, M. (2021). "Why are Humanitarian Sentiments Profitable and What Does this Mean for Global Development?" *World Development*, 125.
- Robinson, W. I. (2005a). "Global Capitalism: The New Transnationalism and the Folly of Conventional Thinking". *Science & Society*, 69(3), 316–328.
- Robinson, W. I. (2005b). "Gramsci and Globalisation: From Nation-State to Transnational Hegemony". *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 8(4), 559–574.
- Robinson, W. I. (2013). "Global Capitalism and its Anti-'Human Face': Organic Intellectuals and Interpretations of the Crisis." *Globalisations* 10(5): 659-671.
- Rose-Ackerman, S. (1982). "Charitable Giving and Excessive Fundraising." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 97(2): 193-212.
- Ruda, F. (2012). "Remembering, Repeating, Working Through Marx: Badiou, Žižek and the Actualisations of Marxism." *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 261: 293-319.
- Ruda, F. (2016). "Dialectical Materialism and the Dangers of Aristotelianism", in A. Hamza, and F. Ruda (eds.) *Slavoj Žižek and Dialectical Materialism*. (London: Palgrave MacMillan).
- Ruggie, J. (1982). "International regimes, transactions, and change: Embedded liberalism in the postwar economic order". *International Organization*, 36(2): 379-415.
- Rupert, M. (2000). *Ideologies of Globalisation*. (New York: Routledge).
- Rupert, M. (2003). "Globalising Common Sense: A Marxian/Gramscian (Re-)vision of the Politics of Governance/Resistance", *Review of International Studies* 29: 181-198.
- Sachs, J. (2017). "Economics and the Cultivation of Virtue." *LSE*. Accessed online: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/Events/2017/02/20170213t1830vOT/Economics-and-the-Cultivation-of-Virtue>. Last accessed: 9/9/2021.
- Sachs, W. (2010). "Introduction" in W. Sachs (ed.) *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (New York: Zed Books).
- Saunders, C. (2009). "International Aid and Development: British Humanitarian, Aid and Development NGOs, 1949-present" in, N. Crowson M. Hilton & J. McKay (eds.) *NGOs in Contemporary Britain*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan).
- Save the Children (2013). *Breaking the Mould: Transforming the Economic Development Paradigm*. (London: Save the Children).
- Save the Children (2019). *Face-to-Face Fundraising: Meeting Supporters on the Street*. Accessed online: <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/about-us/accountability-and-transparency/face-to-face-fundraising>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Sbriglia, R. and Žižek, S. (2020). "Introduction: Subject Matters" in *Subject Lessons: Hegel, Lacan and the Future of Materialism*. (Evenston: Northwestern University Press).

- Scalzo, G. (2017). "A Genealogy of the Gift" In J. Rendtorff (ed.) *Perspectives on Philosophy of Management and Business Ethics. Ethical Economy (Studies in Economic Ethics and Philosophy)*, vol 51. Springer, Cham.
- Schroeder, J. Risen, J. Gino, F. Norton, M. (2014). "Handshaking Promotes Cooperative Dealmaking." *Harvard Business School Working Paper* 14-117.
- Seery, E. & Caistor Arendar, A. (2014). *Even it up: Time to end extreme inequality*. (London: Oxfam International).
- Selwyn, B. (2009). "A Historical Materialist Appraisal of Friedrich List - historical materialist appraisal of List and his Modern Day Followers." *New Political Economy* 14(2): 157-180.
- Selwyn, B. (2014). *The Global Development Crisis*. (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Selwyn, B. (2016). "Elite Development Theory: A Labour-Centred Critique." *Third World Quarterly* 37(5): 781-799.
- Selwyn, B. (2017). *The Struggle for Development*. (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Shani, G. (2012). "Empowering the Disposable? Biopolitics, Race and Human Development." *Development Dialogue* 58: 99-113.
- Sherwood, H. (2019). "Led not into temptation: pope approves change to Lord's Prayer." *The Guardian*. Accessed online: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/06/led-not-into-temptation-pope-approves-change-to-lords-prayer>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Shivji, I. (2007). *Silences in NGO discourse: The role and future of NGOs in Africa*. (Oxford: Fahamu Books).
- Siegle, L. (2015). *Are Chuggers Ethical?* Accessed online: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/feb/08/are-chuggers-ethical-face-to-face-fundraisers-for-charity>. Last accessed 9/9/2021.
- Singer, H. (1989). "The 1980s: A Lost Decade - Development in Reverse" in H. Singer and S. Sharma (eds.) *Growth and External Debt Management* (New York: St. Martins Press).
- Sinnerbrink, R. (2008). "The Hegelian 'Night of the World': Žižek on Subjectivity, Negativity and Universality." *International Journal of Žižek Studies* 2(2).
- Sioh, M. (2014). "Manicheism Delirium: Desire and disavowal in the libidinal economy of an Emerging Economy." *Third World Quarterly* 35(7):1162-1178.
- SMILE (2019). *What We Do*. Accessed online: <http://www.smilefundraising.com/index.php?page=home&sub=smile#values>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.
- Smith, A. (1776). *The Wealth of Nations*. Accessed online: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/smith-adam/works/wealth-of-nations/book01/ch02.htm>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- SOFII (2009). "Greenpeace International: The reinvention of Face-to-Face Fundraising." *Greenpeace*. Accessed online: <https://sofii.org/case-study/greenpeace-international-the-reinvention-of-face-to-face-fundraising>. Last accessed: 29/6/21.
- Sorkin, M. (1992). *Variations on a theme park: The new American city and the end of public space*. (New York: Hill and Wang).

- Stewart, F. (2007). "Do we need a Great Transformation? Is one likely?" in G. Mavrotas & A. Shorrocks (eds.) *Advancing Development: Core Themes in Global Economics* (London: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Stiglitz, J. (2002). *Globalisation and its Discontents*. (London: Penguin).
- Stiglitz, J. (2009). "Moving Beyond Market Fundamentalism to a More Balanced Economy." *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics* 80(3) pp. 345–360.
- Stirrat, R.L. & Henkel, H. (1997). "The Development Gift: The Problem of Reciprocity in the NGO World." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 554, 66–80.
- Sykes, K. (2005), *Arguing with Anthropology: An Introduction to Critical Theories of the Gift*. (Routledge: London).
- Telleria, J. (2020). *Deconstructing Human Development: From the Washington Consensus to the 2030 Agenda*. (London: Routledge).
- Therien, J.P. (2012). "The United Nations and Human Development: From Ideology to Global Policies." *Global Policy* 3(1): 1-12.
- Thoburn, N. (2013). "Do Not Be afraid, Join us, Come Back? On the "Idea of Communism" in Our Time." *Cultural Critique* 84(84): 1-34.
- Thornton, M. (2002). "Confessions of a Face-to-Face Charity Fundraiser." *The Guardian*. Accessed online: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2002/jun/21/fundraising>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.
- Timofeeva, O. (2016). "The Non-Human as Such: On Men, Animals, and Barbers." *Culture: The Open Journal for the Study of Culture* 2. Accessed online: <https://www.on-culture.org/journal/issue-2/timofeeva-non-human/>. Last accessed: 10/10/2020.
- Tomšič, S. (2015a). *The Capitalist Unconscious*. (London: Verso).
- Tomšič, S. (2015b). "Laughter and Capitalism." *Journal of the Jan van Eyck Circle for Lacanian Ideology Critique* 8 (2015): 22-38.
- Tomšič, S. (2015c). "Materialism between Critique and Speculation", in in A. Hamza (ed.) *Repeating Žižek* (London: Duke University Press).
- Tomšič, S. (2016). "On Freedom of Thought." *Continental Thought and Theory: A Journal of Intellectual Freedom* 1(1): 64-66.
- Tomšič, S. (2019a). *The Labour of Enjoyment: Towards a Critique of Libidinal Economy*. (Verlag: Lacanian Explorations IV).
- Tomšič, S. (2019b). "Towards a Materialist Ontology." *Continental Thought and Theory: A Journal of Intellectual Freedom*, 2(2): 82-117.
- Toscano, A. (2008). "The Open Secret of Real Abstraction", *Rethinking Marxism* 20(2): 273-287.
- Toscano, A. (2019). "Last Philosophy: The Metaphysics of Capital from Sohn-Rethel to Žižek", *Historical Materialism* 27(2): 289-306.
- Townsend, G., and A.R. Townsend (2004). "Accountability, Motivation and Practice: NGOs North and South." *Social and Cultural Geography* 5(2): 271-284.

- Traves, J. (2005). *Walk on by, avert your eyes*. Accessed online: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/walk-on-by-avert-your-eyes/article983593/>. Last accessed: 9/9/2021.
- Tricker, B. and Tricker, G. (2014). *Business Ethics: A Stakeholder, Governance and Risk Approach*. (London and New York: Routledge).
- Truman, H. (1949). "Truman's Inaugural Speech." Accessed online: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13282>. Last accessed 2/11/2017.
- Tupinambá, G. (2015). "'Vers un Signifiant Nouveau': Our Task After Lacan." In A. Hamza (ed.) *Repeating Žižek* (London: Duke University Press).
- Tupinamba, G. (2017). "The unemployable and the generic: rethinking the commons in the communist hypothesis". *Palgrave Communications* 3(1): 1-17.
- UN (2019). "Funds, Programmes, Specialized Agencies and Others." Accessed online: <https://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/funds-programmes-specialized-agencies-and-others/>. Last accessed 29/05/2019.
- UN. (1945). *United Nations Charter*. (Geneva: United Nations).
- UNDP (1990). *Human Development Report 1990*. (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- UNDP (1999). *Human Development Report 1999*. (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Upsall, D. (2009). "Greenpeace International: Reinvention of Face-to-Face Fundraising." *SOFII*. Accessed online: <http://sofii.org/case-study/greenpeace-international-the-reinvention-of-face-to-face-fundraising>. Last accessed: 30/05/2019.
- Urban Leaf (2019). *About Us*. Accessed online: <https://urbanleaf.co.uk/about-urban-leaf>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Vaughn, L. (2004). "When Capitalism works for good." *The New Statesman*. Accessed online: <https://www.newstatesman.com/node/160695>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Veltmeyer, H. & Rushton, M. (2012). *The Cuban Revolution as Socialist Human Development* (Leiden: Brill).
- Veltmeyer, H. & Wise, R.D. (2018). *Critical Development Studies: An Introduction*. (Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing).
- Vighi, F & Feldner, H. (2007). "Ideology Critique or Discourse Analysis? Žižek Against Foucault." *European Journal of Political Theory* 6(2): 141-159.
- Waldner, C. J., Willems, J., Ehmann, J., & Gies, F. (2020). "The impact of face-to-face street fundraising on organizational reputation." *International Journal of Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Marketing* 25(4): e1672.
- Walker, G. (2015). "Žižek with Marx: Outside in the Critique of Political Economy." in A. Hamza (ed.) *Repeating Žižek* (London: Duke University Press).
- Ward, K. (2003). "Entrepreneurial urbanism, state restructuring and civilizing 'New' East Manchester." *Area*. 35(2): 116-127.



- Ward, K. & Cook, I.R. (2017). "Business improvement districts in the United Kingdom: Territorialising a 'global' model?" In I. Deas & S. Hincks (eds.), *Territorial policy and governance: Alternative paths* (pp. 127–146). (Abingdon: Routledge).
- Warwick, H. (2017). "Confessions of a Charity Chugger." *Medium*. Accessed online: <https://medium.com/@hydiewarwick/confessions-of-a-charity-chugger-246086c050>. Last accessed: 9/1/2020.
- Weakley, K. (2018). "Daily Mail Criticises Charities over Street Fundraising." *Daily Mail*. Accessed online: <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/daily-mail-criticises-charities-over-street-fundraising.html>. Last accessed: 8/9/2021.
- Weakley, K. (2018). "Daily Mail criticises charities over street fundraising." *Civil Society*. Accessed online: <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/daily-mail-criticises-charities-over-street-fundraising.html>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Wiggins, K. (2010). "What the sacked chugger told me." *Third Sector Blog*. Accessed online: <http://thirdsector.thirdsector.co.uk/2010/05/11/what-the-sacked-chugger-told-me/>. Last accessed: 29/10/2019.
- Williams, S. (2020). *Coronavirus: Is there a future for street fundraising?* Accessed online: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-54471121>. Last accessed: 8/9/2021.
- Wilson J, Bayón M. (2017). "Fantastical materializations: Interoceanic infrastructures in the Ecuadorian Amazon." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 35(5): 836-854.
- Wilson, J. (2014a). "Fantasy Machine: Philanthrocapitalism as an Ideological Formation." *Third World Quarterly* 35(7): 1144-1161.
- Wilson, J. (2014b). "The Jouissance of Philanthrocapitalism: Enjoyment as a Post-Political Factor." in J. Wilson and E. Swyngedouw (eds.) *The Post-Political and its Discontents: Spaces of Depoliticisation, Spectres of Radical Politics* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press).
- Wilson, J. (2014c). "The Shock of the Real: Neoliberal Neurosis in the Life and Times of Jeffrey Sachs." *Antipode* 46(1): 301-321.
- Wilson, J. (2015a). "The Joy of Inequality: The Libidinal Economy of Compassionate Consumerism." *International Journal of Žižek Studies* 9(2).
- Wilson, J. (2015b). "The Village that Turned to Gold: A Parable of Philanthrocapitalism." *Development and Change* 47(1): 3-28.
- Wilson, J. (2018). "Anamorphosis of Capital: Black Holes, Gothic Monsters and the Will of God." in I. Kapoor (ed.) *Psychoanalysis and the Global* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press).
- Wright, C. (2016). "Discourse and the Master's Lining: A Lacanian Critique of Globalizing Biopolitics." in A. Zevnik and S. Tomšič (eds.) *Jacques Lacan: Between Psychoanalysis and Politics*. (London: Routledge).
- Yanacopulos, H. (2015). *International NGO Engagement, Advocacy and Activism: The Faces and Spaces of Change*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan).

Yanacopoulos, H. & Baillie Smith, M. (2007). "The Ambivalent Cosmopolitanism of International NGOs' in A. Bebbington S. Hickey & D. Mitlin (eds.) *Can NGOs Make a Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives*. (London and New York: Zed Books).

Yates, E. (2018). *Capital Accumulation and Young Workers: a Local Labour Market Study of Greater Manchester*. (unpublished thesis).

Ziai, A. (2004). "The Ambivalence of Post-Development: Between Reactionary Populism and Radical Democracy." *Third World Quarterly* 25(6): 1045-1060.

Ziai, A. (2015). *Development Discourse and Global History: From Colonialism to the Sustainable Development Goals*. (London: Routledge).

Žižek, S. (1993). *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel and the Critique of Ideology*. (Durham: Duke University Press).

Žižek, S. (1994). "The Spectre of Ideology." in S. Žižek, (ed.) *Mapping Ideology*. (London: Verso).

Žižek, S. (1998). "A Leftist Plea For 'Eurocentrism'." *Critical Inquiry* 24(2): 988-1009.

Žižek, S. (1999). "The Seven Veils of Fantasy." in *Key Concepts of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*. D. Nobus (ed) (New York: Other Press).

Žižek, S. (2002). *On Belief*. (London: Routledge).

Žižek, S. (2006a). "The Most Sublime of Hysterics: Hegel with Lacan." in R. Butler and S. Stephens (eds.) *Interrogating the Real* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group).

Žižek, S. (2006b). *The Parallax View*. (Cambridge M.A: MIT Press).

Žižek, S. (2007). *The Market Mechanism for the Race of Devils*. Accessed online: <https://www.lacan.com/zizliberal2>. Last accessed: 7/6/2020

Žižek, S. (2008a) [1989]. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. (London: Verso).

Žižek, S. (2008b) [1997]. *The Plague of Fantasies*. (London: Verso).

Žižek, S. (2008c) [2000]. *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology*. (London: Verso).

Žižek, S. (2008d). 'Preface: Enjoy your Symptom - or Your Fetish'? *Enjoy Your Symptom: Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out*, (London: Routledge) [Routledge Classics Edition], ix-xvi.

Žižek, S. (2008e). *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections*. (London: Profile Books).

Žižek, S. (2009). *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce*. (London: Verso).

Žižek, S. (2011). "The Politics of Negativity." preface to F. Ruda *Hegel's Rabble: An Investigation into Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (York: Continuum International Publishing Group).

Žižek, S. (2012). *Less Than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism*. (London: Verso).

Žižek, S. (2014). *Absolute Recoil: Towards a New Foundation of Dialectical Materialism*. (London/New York: Verso).

Žižek, S. (2016). *Disparities*. (Bloomsbury Publishing).

- Žižek, S. (2017). *The Incontinent of the Void: Economico-Philosophical Spandrels*. (Massachusetts, London: MIT Press).
- Žižek, S. (2018). "Marx read object-oriented ontology" in *Reading Marx*. Žižek, S. Ruda, F. and Hamza, A. (eds.). (New York: Polity).
- Žižek, S. and Glyn Daly. (2004). *Conversations with Žižek*. (Cambridge: Polity).
- Zuckerman, M. (2003). "Authority in Early America: The Decay of Deference on the Provincial Periphery." in *Early American Studies*, 1(2): 1-29.
- Zupančič, A. (2006). "When Surplus-enjoyment Meets Surplus-value." in J. Clemens and R. Grigg (eds.) *Jacques Lacan and the Other Side of Psychoanalysis: Reflections on Seminar XVII* (Durham and London: Duke University Press).
- Zupančič, A. (2016). "Biopolitics, Sexuality and the Unconscious." *Paragraph* 39(1): 49-64.
- Zupančič, A. (2017) .*What IS Sex?* (London: MIT Press).

# Appendix 1: Participant Consent Form and Information Sheet

## *Global Capitalism 'with a Human Face': Ideology and Face-to-Face Fundraising*

### CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

Please initial box

1.	I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above project and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.	
2.	I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to myself.	
3.	I understand I may be photographed on-site with my permission. I understand that although they will be published in the dissertation, I will delete my copies within five years.	
4.	I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded	
5.	I agree to the use of anonymised quotes	

6. I understand that all data will be anonymised	
7. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers for the purposes of research only	

I agree to take part in the above project

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____

*Global Capitalism 'with a Human Face': Ideology and Face-to-Face Fundraising*

**CONSENT FORM**

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

Please initial box

<p>1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above project and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.</p>	
<p>2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to myself.</p>	
<p>3. I understand I may be photographed on-site with my permission. I understand that although they will be published in the dissertation, I will delete my copies within five years.</p>	
<p>4. I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded</p>	
<p>5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes</p>	

6. I understand that all data will be anonymised	
7. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers for the purposes of research only	

I agree to take part in the above project

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____

## Appendix 2: Interview List

### Formal Interviews

Participant 1, Fundraising Expert, interview, 15 March 2019, telephone

Participant 2, ex-fundraiser, fundraising team leader and fundraising company owner, 13 March 2019, Manchester

Participant 3, ex-fundraiser, fundraising team leader, fundraising business management and fundraising regulator, 13 March 2019, telephone

Participant 4, ex-fundraiser, 6 June 2019, telephone

Participant 5, charity management expert and practitioner, 13 February 2019, telephone

Participant 6, ex-fundraiser, 20 March 2019, Manchester

Participant 7, Manchester City Council employee, 8 March 2019, Manchester

Participant 8, Manchester City Centre regulator, 25 February 2019, Manchester

Participant 9, ex-fundraiser, 7 March 2019, Manchester

Participant 10, ex-fundraiser, 4 April 2019, Manchester



Participant 11, Manchester City Centre regulator, 10 July 2019, telephone

Participant 12, ex-fundraiser, 30 January 2020, Manchester

Participant 13, NGO management expert and practitioner, 18 February 2019,  
telephone

### Field Interviews

Participant 14, Member of Public, interview, 15/7/2019, Manchester

Participant 15, CARE International fundraiser, interview, 15/7/2019, Manchester

Participant 16, CARE International fundraiser, interview, 26/7/2019, Manchester

Participant 17, Member of Public, interview, 12/7/2019, Manchester

Participant 18, Oxfam fundraiser, interview, 3/6/2019, Manchester

Participant 19, Marie Curie fundraiser, interview, 25/2/2019, Manchester