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Shopping for Change

The discourses of marketized nonprofit fundraising

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Abstract

This thesis examines the articulation of marketized philanthropy within the discourse of nonprofit fundraising. The objective is to find out how fundraising works as a discursive practice - how is the world constructed, who and whom are participants in this world, and why should the presumed donor get involved? It does so from a critical approach, connecting the business of fundraising to theories of subpolitics, individualization, consumer power, and the argument that market logics serves a depoliticizing function within this context. The research is done by analyzing the fundraising communication of six major nonprofit organizations in Sweden, working both with national as well as international efforts, through their respective official website. This is done through a discourse analytic approach, initially concentrating on the texts of the websites as communicative events and analyzing them from a predestined set of analytical questions. The analysis is then developed further, on the level of the order of discourse, in four separate but intertwining themes derived from the initial result.

The research shows that market logics and language is prominent in the organizational communication, both as discourse of efficiency and individual responsibility, as well as as technique for fundraising. Fundraising efforts and messages are mainly configured around international aid and recipients, as opposed to the national social services that some of the organizations provide. In this context, lack of resources is defined as the root of the problem, but this lack is often referred to in a circle-reasoning fashion where one lack is both the cause and the result of another.

The act of giving, or donating, is predominantly constructed as a form of transaction, where the donor buys a commodified version of the idea or efforts of the organization. In this way, the donation becomes a form of political consumerism that situates the donor in a role as a consumer rather than citizen. Freedom of choice and simplicity are traits that are highlighted and promoted in this context.

The thesis argues that this development, even though it entails positive re-thinking about agency and power of 'those in need', contains problematic aspects when it comes to the way political power relations are constructed. Where individualization serves as a detaching force between participants, and political participation is constructed in such a way that it takes the form of shopping for change, it is hard to find room for perspectives and voices that question the structural problems of capitalist society.

Key words: *fundraising, nonprofit, marketization, commodification, civil society, consumer power, political consumerism, individualization*

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Commercial fundraising and marketized philanthropy.....	2
1.1.1 Shifting discourses and changing societies.....	3
2. Research objective and questions.....	4
2.1 Defining the questions.....	4
2.1.1 Viral fundraising and the Internet as platform for change.....	5
3. Understanding marketized fundraising.....	7
3.1 Reflexive modernization and the empowered individual	7
3.1.1 Living in a risk society.....	8
3.1.2 Subpolitics – a new political culture.....	10
3.1.3 Political consumers and commercialized politics.....	12
3.1.4 Individualization as ideology.....	15
3.2 The change of civil society.....	16
3.2.1 Civil society debate.....	17
3.2.2 Marketized organizations.....	19
3.3 Critical voices of marketized fundraising	20
3.3.1 Philanthropy, fundraising, and the Market	20
3.3.2 The superstars of fundraising.....	23
3.3.3 Commodification in the world of fundraising.....	25
4. Research methods and design.....	28
4.1 Some thoughts on discourse theory.....	28
4.1.1 Critical discourse analysis - power and language.....	30
4.1.2 Communicative events and the order of discourse.....	31
4.2 Outlining the design.....	32
4.2.1 Choosing the organizations.....	32
4.2.2 The analytical process.....	34
4.2.3 Analytical questions.....	35
4.2.3 Thematic discussion.....	37
4.2.4 Validity and the question of quality.....	38
5. Tracing the discourses.....	39
5.1 Save the Children.....	39
5.1.1 Who are the participants?.....	39
5.1.2 How should aid be practiced?.....	42
5.1.3 Why should the reader contribute?.....	44
5.2 The Red Cross.....	45
5.2.1 Who are the participants?.....	45
5.2.2 How should aid be practiced?.....	47
5.2.3 Why should the reader contribute?.....	49
5.3 SOS Children’s Village.....	51
5.3.1 Who are the participants?.....	51
5.3.2 How should aid be practiced?.....	53
5.3.3 Why should the reader contribute?.....	55
5.4 Plan Sweden.....	57
5.4.1 Who are the participants?.....	57
5.4.2 How should aid be practiced?.....	59
5.4.3 Why should the reader contribute?.....	62

5.5 The Salvation Army.....	63
5.5.1 Who are the participants?.....	63
5.5.2 How should aid be practiced?.....	66
5.5.3 Why should the reader contribute?.....	68
5.6 The Church of Sweden.....	70
5.6.1 Who are the participants?.....	70
5.6.2 How should aid be practiced?.....	72
5.6.3 Why should the reader contribute?.....	75
6. Discursive struggle and hegemony.....	76
6.1 The self-helping subject	76
6.1.1 The new face of nonprofit development and social efforts.....	76
6.1.2 The self-helping subject as a subpolitical superstar.....	77
6.2 An economy of (dis)trust	79
6.2.1 Access and simplicity.....	80
6.2.2 Freedom of choice.....	81
6.3 Shopping for change.....	82
6.3.1 The branded fundraising commodity.....	82
6.3.2 The symbolical fundraising commodity.....	82
6.3.3 Consumer power and meaningful consumerism.....	83
6.4 Non-political politics	85
6.4.1 With the authority of God and human decency.....	85
7. Conclusions and discussion.....	87
7.1 Defining fundraising discourse.....	87
7.1.1 Local solutions to global problems.....	88
7.1.2 The consumer donor and commodified aid.....	88
7.1.3 Consumer culture and the future of fundraising.....	89
7.2 What is to be done?.....	90
8. References.....	92

1.Introduction

Characterizing for the last decades of nongovernmental and nonprofit organizations in Sweden, working within the realm of development aid, social work, political lobbying, charity, and other forms of voluntary efforts, is a notion of professionalization and medialization. Declining member figures and a reduction of active involvement within the traditional structure and methods, have made the popular social movements more inclined to glance at the large international actors, operating in a organizational mode more resembling the business world.

This, in combination with an highly opinionated debate regarding state financed aid and relief efforts, and increased needs where public welfare programs are being dismantled, might play a part in a discursive re-negotiating of the role that nonprofit organizations play in our society.

At the same time, these processes puts greater demands on both the actions and the communication of the organizations, to keep up with the constant competition for financial support. In our contemporary society, *fundraising* has grown to an gigantic industry, employing thousands of people all over the world - from academic scholars, communication experts, PR agencies, and creative designers, to telemarketing and face-to-face recruiters, as well as volunteers.

Statistics from The Swedish Fundraising Control¹ shows that the sum of funds collected from private donors has grown steadily during the last decade. They are the largest single contributor to the finances of the organizations connected to the nonprofit control association, and as such a very important part of the development of communication strategies. This involves questions regarding new technical improvements and solutions, as well as *what* the message is, and *how* it is communicated. In this mediated, competitive society that we live in today, communication strategies, marketing, and public relations are as important in the nonprofit sector as in the business world.

1 "Flerårsöversikt nyckeltal, 2001-2010" at <http://www.insamlingskontroll.se/sidor/statistik> 2012-06-01

1.1 Commercial fundraising and marketized philanthropy

A growing presence of commercial actors within the nonprofit arena also influences the process of change, and the way fundraising is organized, communicated, and understood by the public. An example of this is what Nickel & Eikenberry (2009) calls *marketized philanthropy*, i.e. consumption as a charitable act in combination with celebrity centered fundraising campaigns, for example by participating in benefit galas or advertisements.

This development contains a spectra of activities and strategies, from the marketing of charitable products and services, to the promotion of a cause or an issue through the involvement of a famous person or a popular brand. In a Swedish context, this growing tendency is present in several forms, for example the yearly fundraising campaign *Musikhjälpen* where one of the public service radio stations dedicates a whole week of programming to the benefit of a selected cause, involving celebrities as well as private donors.

The connection between charity and consumption is also present in the way many political issues are being constructed around a discourse of consumer power and influencing policy through consumption - shopping for change. The modern individual is not just a citizen, but an informed and active consumer. This includes making choices on the market, and through those choices statements, about who s/he is and how s/he wants society to function.

1.1.1 Shifting discourses and changing societies

It is with this current development in mind that this research turns its interest towards *the discourse of fundraising*, how the act of benevolent giving is configured in a political perspective, with special attention to tendencies of commodification and commercialization. The business of fundraising has a long history, connected to different forms of charity organizations and nonprofit institutions in all societies. The term itself describes in a very basic way what it is all about; raising funds. Because, while the tasks and goals of a nonprofit organization might not be for profit, it still needs economic support to keep on its feet. That includes the hands on help in the field, but also the over head costs of administration, organizational development and marketing.

While marketing has been a substantial part of business plans and corporate revenue for a long time, the inclusion of marketing strategies in the nonprofit sphere is a relatively new phase. “[I]t was only a few years ago that one would have been severely chastised in many nonprofit circles for even daring to mention the ‘M’ word in public” (Sargeant 2009). This renunciative attitude has during the last decades shifted towards a more positive, or perhaps pragmatic, point of view.

The fundraising expert and academic researcher Adrian Sargeant proposes in the preface to *Marketing Management for Nonprofit Organizations*(2009), that the focus of marketing has switched to the satisfaction of consumer wants and servicing the needs of a particular society. Thus, he argues, it has evolved into a philosophical approach to the management of an organization, rather than being associated with the relentless pursuit of profit. One concept of key strategic importance in this scenario is *the case for support* (ibid. 2009:254). This term includes the *why* and *how* of the organization, a formal expression of the cause and why it warrants support. The case for support should ideally articulate and communicate several factors to potential and recurrent donors:

- mission and values
- importance and urgency
- specific objectives
- history and credibility
- what would happen if the organization failed
- how the donor can help

This basic case can then be divided into several case statements, specified and tailored to meet the needs of different donor segments such as individuals, corporations and grant makers, as well as projects and milestones within the organizations activities.

In the study at hand, the case statements directed towards private donors will be the focus of the analysis. The presumed switch that Sargeant defines as apolitical and essentially just a form of expanding the world of nonprofit fundraising, is here approached from a critical perspective on the larger turn of events, connecting it to a political transformation. This transformation involves a fundamental shift in the way hegemonic understandings of politics are constructed, where ‘the Market’ is an ubiquitous force and changes in society are attained by individual consumer choices rather than political collectivism.

2. Research objective and questions

The research objective strives towards an understanding of *nonprofit fundraising as discursive practice*, with the aim to cast some light on its relation to more general social and cultural development processes. This entails a focus on if, and in that case how, consumer culture and a increased marketization of nonprofits influence the discursive order of fundraising texts and technique and in what way the act of giving is constructed as a form of political participation.

To do this, the official websites of six nonprofit organizations are studied and analyzed from a discursive perspective, with focus on how the organizations construct their worldview, who is assigned responsibility, and how the presumed donor can help. The nonprofits under scrutiny can be defined as Swedish chapters of international organizations, and represents three different organizational structures. They include the Red Cross, Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages, Plan Sweden, the Salvation Army, and finally the Church of Sweden.

2.1 Defining the questions

The ambition is to problematize how specific communicative events, in the form of the websites of these organizations, construct an understanding of *how* and *why* a presumed donor should contribute financially to the organizational efforts. This will be done with special attention to how 'the case for support' is articulated in the texts. The research questions to be answered through the analysis are as follows:

1. How is the worldview of the organizations constructed?

This dimension concerns how the problems, and solutions, that the organization deals with are represented and explained. It involves the presentation of the organization as such, as well as where the problems are situated, how they influence the lives of those affected and how they relate to the life of the presumed donor.

2. Who or whom are assigned responsibility?

Focus in this dimension lies on who or whom are assigned responsibility, as well as opportunity, when it comes to both the roots of current situation, and to change it. Special attention is put on aspects of agency and subjectivity within the fundraising discourse.

3. How is the presumed donor urged to contribute?

This question refers to both the communicative and the ideological dimensions of the texts, from the perspective of the donor. Important here is to look on how fundraising is constructed when it comes to addressing the donors, assigning them identity and agency, as well as how the act of donating is constructed.

2.1.1 Viral fundraising and the Internet as platform for change

Why then, is the empirical material used in this research gathered from the Internet? Mainly, it is because the official website of a nonprofit organization is more and more becoming its window to the world. The overall intertextuality of the Internet makes it possible to carry out lobbying, as well as fundraising campaigns, in a more diverse and immediate way, shaping public opinion and being present in an environment where many people in the West spend a lot of their time. It also carries with it a variety of opportunity, the nature of the media is such that you can include as much, or as little, information that you want on the site.

It has been argued that individuals visiting a nonprofit site is by definition already aware of the significance of the issue at hand, and the urgency of it, otherwise they would not choose to visit it (Sargeant 2009:264). This might be true in some cases, but the current development of online activity and presence, dominated by the concept of communities such as Facebook or Twitter, is very connected to acts of ‘sharing’, and ‘spreading the word’. That this has impact on the way nonprofits work, and on fundraising, might be exemplified by the viral spreading of the (now infamous) informational video *Kony 2012*, from the organization Invisible Children, during March 2012. People watching the film was afterwards encouraged to donate to the cause through the organization’s website, or buy an ‘action kit’ to contribute.

The video was first received with a positive reaction, being watched and shared by millions people all over the world in a couple of days (interestingly enough, its virality was increased by a lot of celebrity attention). After some time, a negative backlash was prompted, when critical voices was raised about the information provided, and the motives of the organization behind the video. Its popularity declined fast, but the organization behind it still exists. This shows that someone who would not be inclined to explore the website of a nonprofit by own accord, might be convinced to do so by following a link shared, or commented on, by a friend, coworker, or complete stranger.

In the context of fundraising, the Internet has a potential that is hard to match by other media - providing not only a platform for information on the significance of the cause, but also the technical solutions to make a donation or commitment promptly, without any intermediary steps. The way from thought to action can be very short, just a click away under the right circumstances. This is something that is very prominent in the contemporary marketing and lobbying of nonprofit organizations, as well as other actors on the political arena. While the quick and easy nature of the Internet might not always be positive when it comes to issues of fact checking and critical thinking, it is becoming a powerful tool for fundraising and shaping public opinion in today's society.

3. Understanding marketized fundraising

New technological solutions and business opportunities are some of the reasons to why the discourse surrounding fundraising, as well as the practice itself, is going through some drastic changes. But the market oriented fundraising of today is not only a product of technological innovations, it also reflects changes within how we think and act as citizens in modern society. The current topicality of this issue is, for example, visible in the new legislation (2012) concerning tax reduction for private donations to nonprofits in Sweden. The new rules do not only function as a way of encouraging unselfish behavior or charity - they also carries with them an implicit ideological message about how and why society should be organized. The smaller the financial contribution through taxes, the smaller will the public resources for social security, welfare, and international aid be. In a society where this form of re-distribution of financial resources seems to be ubiquitous, it is important to keep a critical eye on how the convergence of market and benevolence within fundraising influences questions of political agency, responsibility, and involvement.

The following chapter presents both a background and some theoretical perspectives that cover these questions, and that will form a frame for understanding the tendencies studied in this research. I will discuss this in three separate, but connected, parts; the first dealing with the concept of *subpolitics* and the individualized society, the second with the contemporary role and function of *the civil society*, and the third involves a growing *critique of market logics* in nonprofit fundraising.

3.1 Reflexive modernization and the empowered individual

Today's Western society is said to be signified by a feeling of unrest and uncertainty, based on the development from industrialization to a *reflexive modernization*. The influence and power of the nation state is decreasing, as problems and risks, but also their solutions, become more and more global and elusive. This is viewed as a turning point of the modern society, a development beyond the borders of industrialization. Ulrich Beck (1992:11) writes that the “traditional” modern society will not leave history with a bang (a revolution), but in the form of a slow, quiet, transformation.

What this development brings is a shift in the way politics work and how we participate in it, which in turn influences the role and methods of nonprofit organizations in society. In contrast to earlier modernity, where the struggle was concentrated around the logic of production of wealth, the reflexive modernity works around a *logic of production of risks* (ibid. 1992:12). These risks are in themselves products of modernization, latent side effects of industrialization and the technological-economic development of Western society. An example of this would be global warming and climate change, caused by the emissions and pollution of the industrialized world. In that way, “[m]odernization is becoming *reflexive*; it is becoming its own theme” (ibid. 1992:19, italics in original). The traditional legitimacy of modernization was based in the struggle against need and disadvantage – that struggle is in reflexive modernity replaced by the struggle against itself, the effects and abundance that modernity produces. For nonprofit fundraising, this means a critical balancing act of highlighting the connection between the lifestyle of the West and the needs and lack in other parts of the world, and trying to obscure this connection so that the potential donor is not discouraged.

3.1.1 Living in a risk society

In his book *Risk Society: Towards a new Modernity* (1992), Beck claims that this contemporary development into a risk society changes the foundations of how we think about time and space, work and leisure, corporations and the nation state and so on. He offers up five theses that summarize these changes:

1. Risks that are created in and by late modernity are open for social processes of definition – they exist through causal interpretations, i.e. the knowledge of the risks defines them and makes them ‘real’. With this knowledge follows power to magnify, dramatize, or minimize the risks, making them “particularly *open to social definition and construction*” (ibid. 1992:23). This gives institutions like mass media and agenda setting professions a socio-political key position when it comes to defining risks, but also the nonprofits working with managing the effects and problems caused by them.

2. Even though some people become more affected than others, creating a hierarchy of *social risk positions*, these risks have a global impact. Sooner or later they will affect even those who produce and profits from them – *a boomerang effect* that transcends, or break up, patterns of class and national society. This leads to the creation of *new international inequalities*, undermining the order of national jurisdictions, and a necessity for internationalization and globalization. As the risks are not contained by state borders, they cannot be solved by singular nation-states alone.
3. The risks of modernization are *big business* – they, in themselves, cause a need for risk management and problem-solving that recreates itself in all eternity, a profitable want that cannot be satisfied and therefore is lucrative through its own destructive nature. “There are always losers but also winners in risk definitions” (ibid. 1992:23), and the space between these positions varies according to issue and power variables. From a critical perspective, it could be said that it is within this ‘risk business’ that marketized fundraising operates. It exists both as a counter actor to the profit seeking participants, and as one of the voices trying to set the agenda and define the risks according to its own goals and motives.
4. In the risk society, knowledge gains a new political significance. *Consciousness determines being* in the hierarchy of social risk positions. Therefore the political potential is found in peoples conception and understanding of the risks, as they can never possess them, only be afflicted by them.
5. Risk society turns what was earlier perceived as ‘unpolitical’ into politics, extending the rule of public and politics into areas that was before considered ‘private sphere’. The *social, economic, and political consequences* of the side effects the risks bring for nature and mankind are thus highlighted. What emerges in risk society is the *political potential of catastrophes*, and “[a]verting and managing these can include a *reorganization of power and authority*” (ibid. 1992:24). It is also through this development that consumer power and choice on the market becomes a significant way of political participation, connecting the risks to how we eat, dress, or engage in nonprofit organizing.

What Beck argues is that the risks created by modernity, such as environmental changes and nuclear disasters, works as an egalitarian force because of their global nature. They cross borders and become threats independent of class or nation (ibid. 1992:36). This in return creates a state of ungovernable uncertainty and distrust since the risks are closely connected to economical factors within the modern capitalist market, that the state have little or no control over.

3.1.2 Subpolitics - a new political culture

The consequence is a change in the political system, a shift in the notion, place and means of 'politics' (Beck 1992:183-184). From an understanding of politics as separate from the private sphere, we are moving toward a notion of *the private as politics*, a mixing of two formally separate worlds. Despite this, or maybe because of it, the political discourse of the last decades is signified by an anxiety about the lack of political participation, a perceived decline in the attention and interest of the public when it comes to politics.

Government's inadequacy in assessing and dealing with new problems is said to cause a crisis of state legitimacy, which according to risk-society theorists explains increasing high levels of political distrust and citizen flight from traditional politics.

(Micheletti 2003:9)

This contemporary view of a political stagnation is misleading, argues Beck, and occur "only because the political is limited to what is *labeled* political, to the activities of *the political system*" (Beck 1992:185).

The 'techno-economical development' of reflexive modernization opens up the boundaries of political participation and gives room for alternative organizational strategies in the form of a new political culture of action groups and global social movements. Beck (1992:190) defines this as *subpolitics*, in that "the preconditions for the separation of politics and non-politics are becoming fragile in the course of reflexive modernization". This does not, however, mean that subpolitics are neither political nor nonpolitical, but rather a modern form of 'structuring and changing living conditions', situated in between - but also connecting - 'the political' and the 'nonpolitical' spheres of society (Holzer & Sørensen 2003:81).

Subpolitics signifies politics emerging in places other than formal politics: the site of the conventional political science definition of politics and political participation. It is politics emerging from below.

(Micheletti 2003:29)

Two perspectives on this are crucial, both working towards “a profound *systematic transformation of the political*” (Beck 1992:190). The first perspective deals with a new political culture, where enforcement and utilization of civil rights result in a perceived loss of power by the centralized political system. The second with the changes of social structure connected to this transformation. These two perspectives together add up to an ‘unbinding of politics’, resulting in the dissolving of what Beck calls the “peculiar *bisection of democracy*” (ibid. 1992:193). By incorporating what is conceived as ‘political’ in the institutions of the parliamentary system, centralized democratization separates this sphere from a context of everyday life and social relations. The contemporary transformation of the political, though, closes the gap between these positions and empowers individuals through highlighting the political aspects of private life. It is the dissatisfaction with the ‘authoritarian character’ of centralized democracy that unbinds politics. Beck (ibid. 1992:195) argues that this ‘new political culture’ is a sign of the success of democracy, not its demise. The fault of the scientists and politicians that sounds the alarm is looking for politics in the usual places, within the normative system, using outdated definitions and concepts.

This development, where politics “appears to become a victim of its own success” can be understood as a new form of politics, but it might also be argued that subpolitical phenomena gets their significance precisely from their nonpolitical character, drawing on sources for societal influence that are largely independent and distinct from the political system, argues Holzer & Sørensen (2003:80). The discussion on subpolitics as essentially political, but in a new and improved form, reveals a common prejudice that associates ‘political’ with ‘important’ issues. The formal political process has never fully absorbed the sources of societal influence that underpin both subpolitics and formal politics, and therefore this prejudice needs to be challenged and problematized, striving to understand “why the discussed phenomena are *not* political - and yet still of societal and sociological relevance (ibid. 2003:95).

3.1.3 Political consumers and commercialized politics

One of the activities that can be described as a form of subpolitics is the way consumption is increasingly used as a strategy to effect social changes and political policy. Political consumption works directly, without going through the traditional forms of political participation channels, to force the ‘techno-economic’ sphere to take responsibility and legitimize its acts (Micheletti 2003:84). It does so by addressing both the way products are being produced, and the impact they have on nature or society.

Political consumerism concerns the politics of products, which in a nutshell can be defined as power relations among people and choices about how resources should be used and allocated globally.

(Micheletti 2003:x)

The development of the consumer-citizen and of *political consumerism* can be traced to “[...] changes in how we think about politics and economics and the relationship between our public and private lives” (Micheletti 2003:1). Globalization, free trade, postmodernization and individualization comes together and creates a political discourse of subpolitics, where the state is no longer the primary and dominating actor in the political field. When the nation-state loses control over certain parts of society, in the form of a globalized world of goods and money, new arenas for political participation and influence are opened up.

What this means is that the notion of *politicized products* comes from this modern convergence of the public and private sphere, where what you wear, eat and consume is not just a private concern. It is a part of the intricate web of relations that form the political landscape, a part that might change power relations and policies – but also, maybe more importantly, a part that helps form and express the self-image of the modern individual. Consumerism becomes political when people knowingly target specific products or brands to express an opinion and make changes by supporting or refusing it. The defining trait of a political consumer is *making choices* – choosing one product over another because of its origin, *the politics of products*, meaning that every product is embedded in a political context (ibid. 2003:12-14). Choosing the right product is constructed as not only to being part of a collective responsibility-taking effort, but also manifesting ones own political standpoint and persona in a very hands-on way. The product not

only does good, it also symbolizes the buyers intent and awareness of the political situation it derives from. In that way it contributes to the social (and cultural) capital of the citizen-consumer.

Negative and positive political consumerism

Historically, political consumerism has to do with a dimension of power - the *purchasing power* of the consumer used to effect ethical changes via the marketplace. This is most often carried out through a double strategy that implies actively choosing or refusing certain goods (Holzer & Sørensen 2003:84). These two strategies are both used within the realm of contemporary subpolitics, actively promoted by many nonprofit organizations as form of influencing, contributing, and enabling change.

The *boycott* entails using the consumer power in a negative way, refusing to buy a product or certain brand because of its origin or politics of production. This might be done in different ways, but the point is always to *withhold* money from the seller or producer, or at least threaten to do so (ibid. 2003:85). This is a relatively easy way for consumers to behave morally in the marketplace, as long as there are corresponding products within the same price range that they can choose instead of the boycotted one.

This, however, is not the case in the general aspect, simply because there is a reason to why commodities are produced in a non-ethical or non-sustainable way - it costs less. That means that the price of these products are also generally lower than the 'fair' ones. This is especially visible in the second, positive, strategy of political consumerism (ibid. 2003:86). The *buycott*, then, entails buying and supporting specific products or brands because of its origin, production conditions, or political connotations, even though the cost for them might be higher than others.

The 'positive' approach is has in recent years been more popular within nonprofit fundraising and shaping of public opinion than the 'negative', as a subpolitical strategy to effect societal change without the use of traditional political participation channels (ibid. 2003:87). Even though these products are not always bought for 'subpolitical reasons', it is easier to affect consumer behavior by promoting positive alternatives instead of refusing the negative ones.

I would argue that this is not just a question of political strategy when it comes to the way the activities are organized and channeled, it is also popular because it lacks the negative connotations of refusing consumption – it does not challenge the capitalist market but plays off it. The positive political consumer does not have to abstain from consumer culture, from participating in the branding of the individual. In today's capitalist society, it is easier to engage people in a subpolitical act that involves the *right to choose*, than to tell them that they have no choice but to refrain from consuming.

Public and private virtue tradition of politics

Choosing to buy or not buy certain products because of a political commitment can be defined as an expression of public virtue, an undisguised way for citizen-consumers to make a political statement in the marketplace (Micheletti 2003:19). Solidarity with others, self-restraint (in abstaining from certain goods) and self-sacrifice are traits closely connected to the public virtue tradition, with its roots in communitarian democratic theories. A prerequisite for this form of engagement is having the ability to choose, i.e. the social and economic means to consume according to ones believes.

Private virtues on the other hand, includes the realization of self-interest, expressing private concerns through boycotting or promoting selected goods or brands. Buying certain products to solve private problems becomes a starting point that ties consumer choices to public-interest, through networking with others interested in the same cause.

Micheletti (2003:20) argues that the connection to the private life makes the private virtue politics more urgent, the loyalty and voice for the cause more intense. I would like to add that this also has a connection to the branding and image shaping of personal identity, the identity-building effort of the modern, individualized, and market targeted political citizen-consumer, which in it self becomes a desirable effect.

3.1.4 Individualization as ideology

Personal identity works as an important factor in the reflexive modernity, contributing to the base of subpolitics as a political culture. This in turn might be said to be a part of the *individualization of society*, a political shift away from the collective, towards the individual, a process of “[...] transforming human ‘identity’ from a ‘given’ into a ‘task’ - and charging the actors with the responsibility for performing that task and for the consequences (also the side-effects) of their performance [...]” (Bauman 2001:144).

Political consumerism, as a task to be performed, is based on the personal consumer choices of an individual. Individual attributes such as economic strength and product knowledge plays a significant part in this, rather than a collective effort where every participant has the same power and rights independent of wealth or status. From this perspective, the contemporary development is not so much a political expropriation of former ‘nonpolitics’, more an instance of neoliberal ideological hegemony.

In a response to, and development of, Beck’s theories of a reflexive modernity, Zygmunt Bauman (2001) expresses a criticism of the leveling nature of subpolitics and the globalized risk society. Characterizing of this approach is that the risk society might be global in its nature when it comes to the *idea* of the risks, the knowledge of what changes they will bring in a distant future, or how they come to be. But the real day-to-day consequences are very different depending on both class and geography.

The economical risks of capitalist market-society, the environmental risks of pollution and climate change, and the political and deadly risks of nuclear war or disaster are in great length created in the West, while the consequences are mostly noticeable and dire in less powerful and influential parts of the world. Or as Bauman (2001:189) puts it, the technological and political annulment of temporal/spatial distances does not level up human living conditions, but rather polarizes them.

This does not mean that the risks have no influence over the industrialized world that in most cases created them - the volatility of contemporary market economy, together with a more

globalized and mobile population, causes the most dreadful disasters to strike at random, "[...] picking their victims with a bizarre logic or no logic at all, [...] so that there is no way to anticipate who will be doomed and who saved" (ibid. 2001:24). Bauman argues that this present day uncertainty works as a powerful individualizing force, dividing instead of uniting. In a society where fears, anxieties and grievances are made in such way to be suffered alone, and where the failure to live up to the standard of success becomes the effect of your own personal attitude and effort, solidarity loses its stand as a rational tactic, and a life strategy quite different from that of a 'common cause' is promoted.

The turn towards viewing the self as consumer instead of citizen is such a strategy, making sense of the uncertainty by engaging in "[...] things that matter less or perhaps not at all, but which you can do or believe you can; and by turning your attention and energy to such things, you may even make them matter [...]" (ibid. 2001:150). Compulsive shopping is one of these things, viewing society through the lens of the Market to make it less confusing and more secure, humane, and just. It is from this perspective that the rising influence of market logics in the discourse of nonprofit organizations makes sense, drawing its sources not only from the 'effective' and 'target-driven' nature of the market, but also from its prominent place as a scene for politics in reflexive modernity.

3.2 The change of civil society

Nonprofits, social movements, funds, charities and other philanthropic endeavors included in *the civil society* has gained attention and increased its presence in later years. This has a lot to do with a political shift in many Western countries where neo-liberal policies results in a decrease of state involvement and control, and privatization of former public services. This ideology contains the notion that profit based services on a free market will guarantee quality, as the citizens become consumers that choose the products (i.e. health care, education, or insurance) that live up to their expectations and requirements. This also includes a changing understanding of the nonprofit sector, connected to the concept of subpolitics discussed earlier.

From a Swedish perspective, this change has certain ideological connotations, since the traditional popular movements historically have been tightly linked to the social democratic

endeavor of building the welfare state. The SAP (the Social Democratic Worker's Party) was formed by, and came to power through, the organization of the worker's movement, and in many ways brought this specific form of organization with it into the creation of what is commonly referred to as *folkhemmet* (the "People's Home") as a midway between capitalism and socialism.

3.2.1 Civil society debate

As a concept, the 'civil society' was introduced in a Swedish context in the early 1990's, with implicit liberal connotations. It was in many ways a reaction and challenge against the intertwined relationship between the state and the popular movements, influenced by the state-critical democratization processes of the former communist systems of Eastern Europe, as well as a national debate about the privatization of the state monopoly on education and health care. Voices demanding that other actors besides the state and businesses should get more attention, and increased areas to operate in, were raised. The critique was predominantly pointed towards the tendency of *colonization* of the civil society by the welfare state, a perspective highlighted from representatives of both the left and right side of the debate (Amnå 2005, Wijkström & af Malmberg 2005).

Connecting to the contemporary theories of subpolitics and a new political order, the research and debate on civil society in this era also started to include social movements and organizations that were not traditionally associated to the parliamentary system, such as animal rights activism or environmental groups. With a clear influence from Beck and other theorists, the government financed *Democracy Study* of 2000 stated that activities such as civil disobedience was to be considered "a natural feature of a mature democracy" (quoted in Amnå 2005:17).

New organizations, new identities

This change in the understanding of what the civil society includes and how it function, as a 'nonprofit sector' situated outside, or in between, the public and the business sectors, is not only notable in this aspect. Malin Gawell (2005) writes about how the process of organization towards social change also brings with it a set of *new identities*, created out of this process. The identity related to the organization is thus shaped by the social processes that the creation of a new organization entails. One of these identities is the entrepreneur, and she looks upon the changes

of civil society through the perspective of an ‘entrepreneurial process’, seeing entrepreneurship as a ‘broader societal phenomena’. She argues that the collective identity of the classic popular movements might not be the way these modern organizational identities are headed. As group identity goes, the neo-liberal individual is not defined by something that you ‘are’, but something you ‘become’ - through networks, consumer choices, and flexibility.

This aspect is also highlighted by Hans Westlund (2005), connecting entrepreneurship to the concepts of creativity and innovation that are highly valued in today's society. The modern Western society is a society where the main source of income relies on the production and selling of *ideas*, rather than *material objects* (Bauman 2001:27). It is a society of knowledge rather than labor, of consumption rather than production. Thus, new and old ideas and interests are confronted with each other through a interplay of economic structure and the hegemonic norms, attitudes, and values of the civil society.

Referring to the reasoning of Richard Florida in *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), Westlund (2005:106) describes this development as a production landscape characterized by increased flexibility and decreased stability, where creativity and entrepreneurship are necessary ingredients. This takes the form of a process where innovation is initially opposed, but eventually accepted and incorporated into the civil society as it gradually gain recognition and value. It brings with it a change towards more individualism, diversified life styles and loose networks and movements, quickly integrating global influences. This influence of individual self-realization, as a contrast to collectivist values, can potentially make room for a civil society that includes many alternative norms within in the knowledge-economy. Important to note though, is that it might also cultivate a growing polarization between ‘the creative class’ and those in the low paid service sector who are not “in the know”.

3.2.2 Marketized organizations

Another growing trend is the increasing connection and cooperation between the nonprofit sector and the business sector, increasingly adopting the language of business into the nonprofit world, including emphasizing efficiency, customer, and profit aspects. This includes both the neo-liberal view of the citizen as a consumer, a client in relation to society, and the notion that the success of new social movements depend on their disconnection to the collective activities that characterized the traditional movements. Parting with the physical form of unity and involvement might be a way of increasing the marketing value of their ideas (Eikenberry 2009, Göransson 2005).

It also brings with it a change in the way organizations think and act. As stated earlier, the Swedish tradition of popular movements have generally got its resources, as well as ideas, from a close relationship with state and government. In contrast to this, the contemporary debate on organizational expansion and success is increasingly influenced by both language and models derived from the market. They think and act as a new form of businesses (Wijkström & af Malmberg 2005). The relationship to local government and other organizations is often characterized by the use of business terms such as ‘contract’ and ‘supply agreement’, adjusting both language and ideas to the new way of thinking.

These changes are also manifested in the professionalization of the nonprofits in the form of employed staff instead of volunteers, the concentration on fundraising markets, registering of trademarks and brands, establishing marketing departments and employing Management Directors instead of the former Secretary-General. It also takes the form of *Corporate Social Responsibility* (CSR), mutual agreements to promote both organization and business partners through cooperation in marketing and activities. While this development might create new and improved methods for change, it can be very tricky to “[...] coax-pick, but not necessarily take away the whole ideological package” (ibid. 2005:93) from the relationship. The influence of a marketing agenda on nonprofit fundraising and organization during the last decade has not gone unnoticed. While there has been a lot of research done on fundraising from the view of the marketing professional, there is also a growing body of critical voices being raised.

3.3 Critical voices of marketized fundraising

The merging of the two worlds of nonprofit and business is in many ways problematic, raising questions about political agency, consumer-citizens, the organization of civil society and the division of responsibilities. These critical questions will be discussed and theorized below, based on three distinct trends; *marketization*, *celebrity involvement*, and *commodification*.

The contemporary neoliberal agenda to reduce the size of government includes both ideological as well as economical aspects of society, fueling the perception that philanthropic and non-governmental institutions (i.e. the civil society) are viable means to solve collective problems (Nickel & Eikenberry 2009). For a lot of nonprofit organizations working within the aid and development field (as well as others of different persuasions) this means that the amount of work has grown, at the same time as a greater part of the funding for projects and planning has to be raised from individual donors and/or corporations.

3.3.1 Philanthropy, fundraising, and the Market

While there are several examples of this development in contemporary fundraising, two distinct aspects are especially visible. The first is *consumption philanthropy*; donating through shopping or corporate involvement (CSR), and the second *celebrity philanthropy*; the raising of funds by involving and hyping celebrities as promoters and/or volunteers. Consumption and media celebration thus becomes part of a 'marketized philanthropy', compelled to submit to the laws of the market (ibid. 2009:975).

This submission could be said to change the core of nonprofit organizing and its potential as a problem-solving force in society, including the discourse surrounding fundraising and the concept of 'change'. Nickel & Eikenberry (2009:976) distinguish between two forms of discourse that might be drawn upon in fundraising - disciplinary discourses and transformative discourses. The disciplinary ones present reality as static, the current conditions as necessary (normative) and inevitable, while transformative discourses seek to highlight temporality and the possibility that the current condition might (or should) change.

The transformative potential of philanthropy, of doing good for humankind, is defined as “its ability to represent the need for social change - to compel or liberate behavior”. It should be understood as a channel for transformation, or change, that not only addresses the symptoms of the problem, but also its roots. This definition puts philanthropy in a context of radical political participation looking to overthrow the system that causes the very need for philanthropy, rather than consumer-citizens giving money (or time) to those less fortunate, as a respond to some sort of universal humanitarian calling.

We argue that emerging forms of marketized philanthropy depoliticize discourse by collapsing the distance between the market and the negative impacts it has on human well-being, thereby stripping philanthropy of its transformative potential.

(Nickel & Eikenberry 2009:975)

Their argument is that by collaborating with the market, nonprofit philanthropy risks stabilizing an unjust system and obscuring the connection between market-driven politics and inequality, disguising the fact that the “giving back” through consumption or celebrity philanthropy is based in taking away.

Juxtaposing this notion of a radical philanthropy to that of a marketized, the latter is defined as a ‘falsely transformative discourse’ not because of lack of benevolence or desire for social change, but because the boundary between market and discourse is being blurred; “[...] in its subordination of benevolence and discourse to the market, the current market-based discourse of philanthropy stabilizes the very system that results in the suffering that it claims to want to end” (ibid. 2009:976). In practice, this means that the notion of political or humanitarian action turns from policy making or or protesting, to buying or selling products and personalities.

The *discourse of philanthropy, thus*, is often a discourse of the need for more philanthropy - stabilizing and normalizing the nonprofits place in civil society, at the same time also establishing the roles and representations of ‘those in need’ within this discourse. The *practice of philanthropy as a discourse* in turn, is in its marketized form a discourse becoming social practice that embrace the inevitability of the market, more than a discourse about the possibility of change.

Consumer philanthropy and trade instead of aid

It is not hard to make the connection from this type of marketized philanthropy, stabilizing a story of consumption as good will and the purchasing of a product or service as a charitable and transformative act, to the neo-liberal ideology of 'trade not aid'. The difference between people in project and donor countries are accounted for within a narrative of progress, where the Western capitalist model of development is the inevitable successor of underdevelopment (Jefferess 2002).

The shift towards a consumption based form of aid or philanthropy fits well together with the hegemonic discourse of development through business and entrepreneurship, 'helping others to help themselves' by investing rather than donating. This not only turns the wheel of global capitalism, but also works as a branding tool, reconfiguring negative associations of exploitation into positive values of the benevolence of the market. Using consumption and personal branding as a tool for aid might be compared to the contemporary environmental movement trying to halt climate change by making informed, positive, and active individual choices of 'climate smart' products in the super market.

Consumption philanthropy is not a discourse about transformation but rather a discourse about continued, even increased, consumption.

(Nickel & Eikenberry 2009:980)

The marketization process is not restricted to advertising or organizational structure, but also influence *the way funds are being raised*. Corporate social responsibility, branding and endorsement of charitable of philanthropic products are becoming a major part of marketized fundraising discourse. An example of this development is the Product (RED) campaign created by Irish singer Bono, a modern fundraising project converging consuming and charitable giving by teaming up with iconic brands. This offer consumers a possibility to help hiv/aids patients in Africa simply by shopping, as a percentage of the profits goes to The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Richey & Ponte 2008:711).

While these philanthropic products claim to make a difference for humanity, conditions such as labor politics, environmental impact and the real or threatened mobility of production facilities

are seldom exposed or problematized in the process. In a form of ‘commodity fetishism’, they mask the social, environmental and political relations of trade and production that underpin poverty, inequality and disease.

They do so not only by putting a positive spin on consumerism itself, but also by referring to a constant state of emergency, a notion of that the situation is so dire that all bets are off, no ‘normal’ restrictions in the name of equality or justice are needed. This pragmatic view helps to obscure the fact that it is just business as usual, the normality of market-driven capitalism is not being questioned (ibid. 2008:721-722). The focus on an ethical, humanitarian rather than political, obligation to ‘help’ does not inform consumers about how and why poverty and inequality is created, the way Western privilege is a part of that process, and how it could be effectively challenged (Jefferess 2002:4).

3.3.2 The superstars of fundraising

The turning to philanthropy to solve problems of social welfare and creating social capital is also coupled with a contemporary enchantment and enthusiasm for the rich and famous and their potential as superstars of social responsibility. In a world where the gap between rich and poor is still widening, despite the fact that development is improving in many areas, the spectacle of large donations and celebrity philanthropy's very visible modes of giving creates an understanding of charity as the way to tackle problems of need and inequality.

Richey & Ponte (2008) discusses this development from the aspect of ‘aid celebrities’ as critical functionaries, performing a totemic work of mediating between consumers and their beneficiaries in a mutual coexistence of proximity and distance, or empathy and separation, between the shopper/helpers and the producer/sufferers.

In this context, aid celebrities act as ‘emotional sovereigns’, transforming the letters and numbers of nonprofits organization’s reports and development plans to a concept that is not only salable, but also understandable, to the public. They also possess a identity-building quality, not only branding the cause that the product in question endorses, but also the person(alities) behind it. In the example of celebrity charities such as Product RED, this quality is closely connected to

notions of being ‘hip’ and ‘sexy’ as a contrast to traditional aid, thus shaping a ‘rock man’s burden’ through “[...] reclaiming masculinity, and restoring social hierarchy where cool, rich, white men save poor, voiceless African women and children” (ibid. 2008:721).

The charitable identity

The positive re-branding of consumption and charity also carries with it an important connection to contemporary advertising of your individuality and political interests as identity forming traits. Nickel & Eikenberry (2009:979) connects it to Baudrillard’s notion of ‘sign-value’; the value of the product lies not only in the act of purchasing as a donation but also in the individual display of both economic and moral abundance. Wearing a t-shirt supporting the cause of a philanthropic project not only tells the world that you have an excess of money that you *can* give to those less fortunate, but that you also *will* do just that. It also puts the wearer/consumer in a cultural context, connecting the sign to others. Reading these signs, and also making the connection between a certain brand and a cause, can be a form of (sub-)cultural capital that make up the group affiliations forming identity politics.

The usage of group identities as policy making potential might be viewed as a part of ‘stakeholder capitalism’ where consumer rights, and the demand for social or environmental change, are exercised through consumer organizations. This results not only in a triangulation of organizations, state and corporations, engaging citizens via the nonprofits but also “[...] individual acts of ‘conscious consumption’ - backed up by systems of certification, labeling and codes of conduct” (Richey & Ponte 2008:722). When your opinions are called upon to be expressed through products, speaking your mind becomes a case of what you can and will pay for. The focus on individual choice and impact stands in clear contrast to earlier forms of political engagement and advocacy, suggesting that the new form of activism is after your money more than your voice.

Product RED, a lean network solution to aid financing, takes funds from consumption - not taxation. It is an individual effort, the result of consumer power - not of collective public will.

(Richey & Ponte 2008:724)

Mixing the discourse of market with that of philanthropy or politics moves toward a designifying

practice, where the signs of benevolence or political action in time lose their meaning beyond the identity building function. The marketized philanthropy “[...] fails to signify anything other than consumption and celebrity while giving us the illusion that social problems are adequately being addressed” (Nickel & Eikenberry 2009:984). In its inability to stand apart from the market, philanthropy loses its critical potential, subjecting to a hegemonic depoliticization where political agency and critical thought is being commodified and redistributed through the culture an entertainment industry.

3.3.3 Commodification in the world of fundraising

The marketized tactics of contemporary fundraising serves to support and promote the organizational goals of ending suffering and helping those in need, but they might create at certain tension between the calculating rationality of the fundraiser and the giver’s supposed empathy for others. Per-Anders Forstorp (2007) describes the way this tension between the rationality of the giver on the one hand, and the rationality of the business on the other, are combined in the ethics of ethical business. The methods and technologies of giving are operationalized in a way that might be viewed as a form of *commodification*.

Soliciting the goodwill and financial generosity of the individual giver is obviously claimed as the most legitimate concern in any kind of fundraising transaction. This activity, however, takes place with the help of the continuous development of business models where the altruism, empathy and the human ability to establish relations are operationalized in more concrete transactional terms.

(Forstorp 2007:286)

The other and the Other

By analyzing a set of aid advertisements in Swedish news papers following the tsunami in South-East Asia in December 2004, Forstorp raises questions about commodification in the business of fundraising. The research shows how ‘the other’ is represented and addressed in two different forms, the other as ‘you’, the reader of the ad that is urged to provide economic donations so that the ‘we’ (the organizations) can provide the hands-on help, and the Other as the ‘stricken’, those in need of that help. The category of ‘us’/‘we’ works as a mediating party between the helpers and the helped. In difference to the stricken Other who are constructed as an anonymous mass, the ‘you’ is an individual other, invited to joint forces with those already helping and providing

an opportunity of sharing in the process. “The request for responsible action is then not just made in general but is directed at an individual person in his/her condition as having a surplus and being asked for help” (Forstorp 2007:296). The Others thus work as opposite ends of a continuum, defining them as either safe or unsafe and providing a dramatic rhetorical effect.

Another interesting finding is the notion of ‘help’ in the fundraising ads, presented firstly as the kind of monetary help that the reader can provide to the organization, and secondly the actual help that the organization then can provide to those who suffer. Direct help becomes then a form of directing help via the organization. What is stressed here is the way the organizational marketing transforms the monetary donations to actual (physical) help, in the form of medicine, tents and providing electricity or clean water.

The activity of mediation and transformation of money into concrete help is thus an important part of the logic of giving aid, and it emphasizes the importance of the organization coming through as a serious and experienced actor in its role of transforming money into concrete help.

(Forstorp 2007:296)

This transformation of money into action, of benevolence into products, has a complex and multifaceted function. It deals not only with the discourse of effective and action-oriented aid, “ensuring that the funds raised go to where they are needed the most” (Richey & Ponte 2008), but also with the commodification of the experience of giving, and especially of those in need of help.

Sponsorship as a symbolical transaction

When it comes to the often used fundraising technique of sponsoring a child in a Third World country, the symbolical value of exchange could be experienced within the same framework of thought as the abstract qualities of a car or technical gadget of a certain brand - they carries with them not just a function but also emotional gratification and power.

The sponsored child is reduced to his/her exchange value; they are little more than an object through which the sponsor’s dreams may be fulfilled.

(Jefferess 2002:17)

These relations of power can be understood in the light of Hannah Arendt's concept of 'Politics of Pity', as referred to by Naylor (2011), (re)constituting subjects in an unequal hierarchical relation to one another, and thus being unable to fully address or challenge the underlying structural inequalities that are the root of poverty and need. Instead of compassion, the international aid discourse is said to play off a form of pity, a "[...] depersonalized response to the suffering of depersonalized, abstracted others" (ibid. 2011:184).

Two prerequisites are involved in this process; firstly the distinguishing of those who suffer from those who do not, and secondly; the distance - temporal, geographical, and/or social - between the pitied object(s) and s/he who donates makes 'the spectacle of suffering' necessary for pity to be evoked as a means to justify action and donate to the cause.

Just as Richey & Ponte also pointed out, in the context of fundraising the inter-human relations are not thought of as a default condition, but instead created in a time of crisis in the wake of a natural disaster, mobilized in a state of emergency. The suffering of those needing help is then related to the comforts of the 'you', or helper, who is momentarily invited to share this suffering by being reminded of what 'you' have and others do not. The request for help links the 'you' with 'the stricken' in a way that cannot be responded directly, but only indirectly through the mediation of the aid organization (Forstorp 2007).

In the context of sponsorship, it might be argued that the 'compassionate' sponsor is created in relation to the 'needy' African, Central American or Asian child, defining the identities only in relation to the other (Jefferess 2002), but also as a way to turn the impersonal relationship into a personalized one. At the same time the child is in a way commodified, turned into a generic product with the function to illuminate the compassion of the sponsor. S/he should live up to the expectation of success and gratitude, but also be the 'face of poverty' in an otherwise faceless mass.

4. Research methods and design

To answer the research questions set up in the introduction, discourse analysis will be used. This approach is chosen because it deals with questions of *how* texts construct reality in a certain way, as well as how they relate to each other. The following chapter contains an account of the design set up for the analysis, the analytical tools that will be used, and how they are able to extract an useful result within this specific context.

First, though, I will begin with a short introduction to discourse theory, since the approach includes fundamental understandings of both epistemological as well as methodological nature. These are not possible to separate distinctively from another, the analytical tools will not work unless they are related to the basic theoretical principles of how the worlds is constructed and what kind of knowledge is possible to attain.

4.1 Some thoughts on discourse theory

When it comes to discourse analysis there is not just one single method that can be used to interpret and analyze a text, but several. Even though not all of his methodological tools will be used, the main inspiration for the analysis in this study is drawn from the work of Norman Fairclough, and his *critical discourse analysis* (CDA). Fairclough (1995:18) notes the wide “and sometimes confusing” use of the term *discourse* within academic disciplines, himself defining discourse as a social construction of reality - a set of knowledge that takes the form of a specific way of talking about a certain phenomena.

This distinction can be viewed as a fundamental trait that form the theoretical and methodological framework of critical discourse analysis. The notion that all discourse is both *constitutional* and *constitutive* (ibid. 1995:55), i. e. it both shapes and is shaped by society, means that discourse not only works as a way of understanding the world but also forming it, in a ongoing process of negotiating meaning and relations. This process is concerned with *representations, identities, and relations*; the basis for analyzing and understanding language found by illuminating a set of questions asked to a text:

1. How is the world represented?
2. What identities are set up within this world?
3. What relations are set up between those involved?

What is the difference then, between a traditional linguistic approach to text and a discursive one? Predominantly it is the notion that discourse analysis is concerned with *practices* as well as *text*, both discourse practices and sociocultural practices. It is not just a way to unveil or describe these practices, but an ongoing research to understand how they work together in forming reality and society.

I find it helpful to distinguish the ‘situational’, ‘institutional’ and ‘societal’ levels - the specific social goings-on that the discourse is part of, the institutional framework(s) that that discourse occurs within, and the wider societal matrix of the discourse. Discourse analysis can be understood as an attempt to show systematic links between texts, discourse practices, and sociocultural practices.

(Fairclough 1995:16-17)

Or as Naylor (2011:181) puts it, meanings are constructed not in a lone individual’s mind, but discourse is a negotiated and necessarily intersubjective social act that actively defines and constitutes a subject or object. This focus on practices, or actions, is especially interesting in the context of fundraising discourse, since the texts are not only formed by discursive practices but also calls for action, the active effort of donating.

While Fairclough’s own work is concentrated on media text and language, it might be fruitful to attempt an adaptation to other spheres. The changing nature of media discourse that he describes, with its turn towards individualism, ‘detraditionalization’ and ‘informalization’, is present also in the area subject to scrutiny here. The influence of entertainment and advertisement results in a convergence where “audiences are increasingly being constructed as consumers [...] rather than as, say, citizens” (ibid. 1995:51), which is one of the concerns addressed in this study.

4.1.1 Critical discourse analysis - power and language

What, then, is the ‘critical’ aspect of critical discourse analysis? First of all, Fairclough refers to a sense of practically usable methods, making the traditions of textual analysis ‘operational’ in analysis of specific cases. But most of all, referring to Bourdieu, he claims that the critical approach comes from connecting the use of language to that of cause and effect of power relations - “[s]pecifically, connections between the use of language and the exercise of power are often not clear to people, yet appear on closer examination to be vitally important to the workings of power” (ibid. 1995:54).

This means that the way language constructs and recreates “reality” is always in relation to power and common-sense assumptions about rights, relationships, knowledge and identities. These assumptions are manifested in everyday practices and cultural traditions, as well as political or ideological hegemony. The practices are shaped accordingly to prevailing relations of power between groups of people, sustained in themselves by the invisibility of their ideological aspects and fogged by ‘normality’. Re-connecting to the dialectical relationship of the both constitutional and constitutive nature of discourse mentioned above, critical discourse analysis seek to explore the tensions between these ends of the spectra, and to understand the way language is both socially shaped and socially shaping.

Furthermore, this constitutional nature of text and language works in either conventional ways, that is reassuring and reproducing existing assumptions and practices concerning social identities, relationships and knowledge (power) systems, or in creative ways where these assumptions are challenged and transformed. The complexity of the texts is also reinforced by the usage of different discourse types within the discursive practices of a community - a form of network that Fairclough calls ‘orders of discourse’ (ibid. 1995:55). The point made being that these sets, made up of multiple types, can either be paralleled within rigid boundaries that are actively upheld between them, or easily mixed together in particular texts, in that way creating new sets and new orders of discourse.

4.1.2 Communicative events and the order of discourse

Communicative events are the particular texts being analyzed and interpreted within CDA, in this case the websites in question. The critical approach to discourse analysis is concerned with three dimensions when it comes to communicative events - *text*, *discourse practice*, and *sociocultural practice*. These dimensions are explained as ‘text’ being the written or oral account of an event (they might also include visual representations), while ‘discourse practice’ is the process of text production and consumption. The third dimension, ‘sociocultural practice’, contains the “social and cultural goings-on which the communicative event is a part of” (Fairclough 1995:57). The concern in this part of the analysis is continuity and change, how the texts draw upon presupposed knowledge, and familiar types or formats. In what way do they adhere to these presuppositions, or challenge them in a creative way? For example, when it comes to fundraising communication this might evolve around the way the donor is addressed and how the case for support is presented. The specific analytical questions concerning this part of the analysis will be presented below.

The order of discourse includes the overall structure of the texts combined, the way they relate to, and evolve within, the context of social and cultural changes. Focus here lies on an *intertextual analysis*, the shifting relationships between genres and discourses that make up the order of discourse. This includes external relations, how an order of discourse chooses to reject, accept or appropriate the available adjacent discourses. The point here being that fundraising discourse changes depending on influences from other areas such as international politics, business partners, or public opinion regarding the cause it promotes. These external relations, as well as the internal relations between genres and discourses within the order, all include *choice* and *chain* relations, but as Fairclough points out, these are not rational choices made from the free will of individuals but rather socially conditioned selections. Two questions are important to keep in mind - the first being how unitary, or how variable, are the discursive practices that make up an order, and secondly; how stable, or how changeable, are they?

4.2 Outlining the design

This section presents the design of the study, first concentrating on how the material was selected and gathered, then the nature of the two-step approach of the analysis. Drawing from the work of both Fairclough (1995) and Doty (1993), the analysis at hand will be divided into two parts. The first is an initial phase where the empirical material is analyzed according to a predetermined set of analytical questions. In the second phase the result is discussed in a thematic form derived from the initial results, but also incorporating the theoretical perspectives presented earlier. In the world of critical discourse analysis, this corresponds to the concepts of *the communicative event* and *the order of discourse*.

4.2.1 Choosing the organizations

The choice of organizations to be part of the research is based on three basic criteria, first; the sum of funds raised from private donors, second; the nature of the issues and causes that the organizations work with, and thirdly; the way that they are organized. The first selection criteria is initially based on statistics provided by The Swedish Fundraising Control, available on their website². This shows that the ten nonprofits receiving the largest amount of donations from private donors during 2010 were as follows (figures shown in sek):

1. Swedish Cancer Society	340 000 000
2. UNICEF	287 000 000
3. Save the Children	286 000 000
4. The Red Cross	265 000 000
5. Doctors Without Borders	259 000 000
6. The Salvation Army	210 000 000
7. The Church of Sweden	193 000 000
8. SOS Children's Villages	185 000 000
9. Plan Sweden	172 000 000
10. Swedish Heart-Lung Foundation	157 000 000

To get a more comparable selection, the decision was made to concentrate on nonprofits working within the area of social issues and humanitarian aid. The Swedish Cancer Society, together with the Swedish Heart-Lung Foundation, was therefore excluded from the selection because the organizations deal with causes concerning health issues.

2 "Ekonomisk sammanställning över 2010" at <http://www.insamlingskontroll.se/sidor/statistik> 2012-06-01

After these initial choices, the selection was further specified by excluding UNICEF due to its close affiliation with the United Nations, and Doctors Without Borders because of the main efforts of the organization being concentrated on disaster relief, in contrast to development aid. The official Swedish websites of the remaining six organizations make up the objects of this study. They represent three different organizational structures, but they are all professional nonprofits with employed staff as well as volunteers working for them.

Two organizations, the Red Cross³ and Save the Children⁴, are member organizations that function in a mode connected to the traditional people's movement in Sweden, where member democracy and influence plays a role in its efforts and development. The following two are organizations whose main efforts are focused on children, and operate through a structure of individual sponsorship connected to its development projects, but where the donors have little or no power over the organizations as such. This category includes SOS Children's Village⁵ and Plan Sweden⁶. The third category contains two religious organizations; the Salvation Army⁷ and the Church of Sweden⁸, both prominent actors within national social work and international development aid. While all these organizations operate within a common context, their specific backgrounds and structures might have some affect on how the public is approached from the perspective of fundraising. Within the websites, the initial approach was to look exclusively on the specific fundraising pages ('Support us' or 'Donate'), but it was soon clear that this limitation did not serve the purpose of the research. To get a better understanding of the material, and to answer the research questions, special attention has also been given to the sub pages covering the form and identity of the organization (often called 'About us'), and the presentation of its motives and methods (usually 'Our operation' or 'How we operate'). This does not, however, exclude the possibility that information or quotes might have been found on other parts of the site. A lot of the characterization of a subject or a practice is done through implicit information, and sometimes it is hard to find the meaning of a text just by reading a small portion of it.

3 The Red Cross / Röda Korset at <http://redcross.se> 2012-02-01 to 2012-06-01

4 Save the Children / Rädda Barnen at <http://rb.se> 2012-06-01 to 2012-06-01

5 SOS Children's Villages / SOS Barnbyar at <http://www.sos-barnbyar.se/> 2012-02-01 to 2012-06-01

6 Plan Sweden / Plan Sverige at <http://plansverige.org/> 2012-02-01 to 2012-06-01

7 The Salvation Army / Frälsningsarmén at <http://fralsningsarmen.se/> 2012-02-01 to 2012-06-01

8 Church of Sweden / Svenska Kyrkan at <http://www.svenskakyrkan.se/> 2012-02-01 to 2012-06-01

4.2.2 The analytical process

The websites have been researched and analyzed during a period of several months during the spring of 2012, but with a more intense approach in May, focusing on the individual sites during a couple of days each. Of course the changing nature of the Internet is an issue here - information that was available today might be gone, or changed, tomorrow - but the research is done with this in mind, trying to identify more stable and lasting traits of the texts as a whole.

In an initial phase the results were collected as notes and quotations under the corresponding analytical question for each organization. These questions, that will be further presented below, includes 1) who are the participants, 2) how should aid be practiced, and 3) why should the reader contribute? After this, the notes were compiled in a more coherent fashion and the first phase of the analysis is based on this material.

The analysis is done with focus on three distinct participant groups - the subject in need, the organization, and the donors. In relation to the second question, special attention has been given to two subcategories - the organization and the donors. The second of the categories includes how the implied reader can (and should) contribute to the work of the organization. This question is mostly addressed on the fundraising pages ('Support us'), where a collection of diverse support options are presented. The multiple nature of these options is one of the main features, stretching from the single gift, to monthly recurring transfers, to donating equity returns or shopping in nonprofit webstores.

The result of this analytical process is what follows next, on the level of the order of discourse, in the form of a thematic discussion. The themes were not predestined, but based on the analytical concepts derived from the findings in the initial result. The aim here is to find the signs of discursive struggle or hegemony within the fundraising texts, further developing a deeper understanding that links the material to the theoretical perspectives. This will also be more discussed in a section below.

4.2.3 Analytical questions

In the first phase, the communicative event will be analyzed through a set of questions, related to the issues of representations, identities, and relations introduced earlier. These questions are formulated as such:

1. Who are the participants?

This question deals with how the identities of the participants in the texts are constructed. Basically, it is an attempt to find out who are the ones in need in the particular texts, and who are the ones helping? Based on the previous work of Forstorp (2007), the analysis will focus upon three categories of participants, or subjects: The receivers of aid, the organization, and the donors. These initial groups might then be divided into subcategories, through closer examination.

The linking of certain attributes, properties, and qualities to a particular subject, called *predication*, is important for *constructing identities* for subjects. This tells us not only who they are, but also what they can do (Doty 1993:306). Important in this context are the attributes that the texts provides for the different participants, thus giving them both identity and agency. For example, are the recipients of aid described as helpless or powerful? Are they individuals or a mass? And who are the ones donating - are they just anyone, or a special kind of person?

Construction of identities is always intertwined with the construction of relations in a text. It includes the sorts of social and personal identities that are set up, forming institutional and personal roles for the participants. These two dimensions, the construction of identities and relations, are basically inseparable; how a participant's identity is constructed is in part a question of how s/he is positioned in relation to others (Fairclough 1995:126).

Fairclough (1995:127) also notes that contemporary, relatively stable, constructions of social and personal identity have become naturalized as facets of familiar genres and formats, and convey ideologically significant implicit messages about people and relationships. This does not mean that identities are always fixed and unchangeable, but one participant might also be negotiating different, complex and potentially contradictory, constructions of identity at once.

2. How should aid be practiced?

The issue here is the *construction of relations* between participant categories; who is present and who is absent? Which are most salient, which are similarly or contrastively constructed, and which are well-defined as categories (Fairclough 1995:126)? Specific interest will be paid to how these relations are formed when it comes to who's responsibility it is to change the current situation, and how the fundraising efforts of the organizations are presented. The focus here is on how the organizations present their methods of action, and the reasons behind them, as well as how the different options for donating are designed both technically and ideologically.

This function might be viewed as *subject positioning*. Texts work to construct reality by linking particular subjects and objects to one another. What defines a particular subject is, in large part, the relationships that a subject has with other kinds of subjects. Rhetorical operations that provide meaning to texts can also be important. Doty (1993:306) refers to Barthes' notion of *cultural codes* when it comes to aligning a cluster of attributes to a certain term that is oppositional to another. For example, the traditional Western notion of the categories 'male' and 'female' are assigned certain traits, where male is rational and strong, while female is irrational and weak.

3. Why should the reader contribute?

The focus here will be on how organizations represent their worldview, the reasons for why aid is necessary and why people should contribute to the efforts by donating. For example, a fundraising text might base its appeal for donations on notions of compassion, guilt or pity, of justice and equality, or maybe one of religious faith. This perspective includes presupposed notions of how the world is constituted, and the ideological standpoints that is the basis of the organizations existence.

A basic understanding here is that texts do not 'mirror reality' as much as they constitute constructed versions of it. The aspect of *presupposition*, the assumptions that are part of the implicit meaning of texts, help establish represented realities as convincing, combining the

explicit meaning - what is actually said in the text - with the implicit one, i.e. what is left unsaid, 'knowledge' taken for granted. This can also be viewed as part of intertextuality, assuming that there are other texts (real or imagined) that this particular one references back to, where preconstructed elements of the text have been explicitly present (Fairclough 1995:108-109).

This function that draws upon known concepts and pre-understanding, both with the producer and the audience. "*Presupposition*, therefore, is an important textual mechanism that creates background knowledge and in doing so constructs a particular kind of world in which certain things are recognized as true" (Doty 1993:306). This helps to situate a statement within a particular image of the world, of how society functions. It implies certain conditions when it comes to the existence of subjects, objects, and their relation to one another. It also works as part of defining the 'preferred reading' of a text, addressing a sort of 'ideal interpreter' and working towards a predisposed understanding of the implicit meaning.

4.2.3 Thematic discussion

In the second phase of the analysis, I will approach the order of discourse in a thematic form. The aim here is to identify some of the areas where the texts are coherent with each other, and some where they are not. The themes are therefore not derived from theoretical assumptions, but instead from the findings in the initial analytical phase. How are certain issues represented in the organizational communication and how do the websites draw upon, and reconfigure, particular discourses and genres? For the sake of this study for example, it might be useful to look upon the way fundraising connects to other discourse practices, such as business and consumption, combining them into a type within the discursive order.

This includes a focus upon the 'discourse process' - the ways that genres and discourses are combined or influential within an order of discourse. This is visible in both the production and consumption of texts, working as a bridge between the 'text' and 'discourse practice' dimensions of critical discourse analysis. The discourse process might be viewed as "a complex and infinitely expanding web of possible meanings" (Doty 1993: 302), where workings of power makes what is essentially variable appear to be fixed and decidable.

It is also in this phase of the analysis that I will reconnect to the theoretical frame of the study, looking at the initial result through the perspectives of individualization, consumerism, and power. The relations of power trickling down from the sociocultural practices that the discourse practices are embedded within works as constraining factors when it comes to the seemingly unlimited variability of choices, chains and reconfiguration of genres and discourses. Because of this, it is important to combine theory of discourse practices with theory of power. Special attention is then given to “the relationships - of complementary, opposition, resistance etc. - between discourse types within and across orders of discourse” (Fairclough 1995:78).

4.2.4 Validity and the question of quality

Drawing on the critical discourse analysis’ focus upon the relationship and link between language and power, Fairclough (1995:77) defines intertextual analysis as an “interpretative art”, depending on the analyst’s judgment and experience. At the same time he stresses that it is always rooted in the evidence of language, although the intertextual categories used might be of different levels of specificity. Therefore, in the analysis part of this study, single quotations are used to distinguish words and phrases collected from the texts under scrutiny, and double quotation marks direct quotes that consist of whole sentences. Italics are used to indicate analytical concepts that are derived from these words and phrases combined. The notion of interpretation is an important one in discourse analysis, specifically focused on questions of *how* instead of *why*.

[...] I am not providing an interpretation of the consciously motivated, self-serving images constructed by the participants. Rather, I am providing an interpretation of what the discursive practices *do*, which does not necessarily coincide with individual motivations, perceptions, and intention.

(Doty 1993:305)

This is important to keep in mind when it comes to the validity of discourse analysis. Because it does not deal with quantitative aspects or general assumptions, it might be regarded as a less useful method for describing 'the world as it is'. I would argue, though, that this is exactly the point – that the world is changeable and complex, and depending on the perspective it is viewed from there can be many truths to be learned from a particular text. As long as the subjectivity of the researcher is clearly counted for, and the conclusions drawn from the analysis are backed up by the theoretical framework, there is no gap between quality and interpretation.

5. Tracing the discourses

This chapter presents the initial phase of the analysis, concentrated on the texts as communicative events. Every section starts with a brief presentation of the organization in question, then follows the analysis of the communicative event where the texts have been approached from three perspectives, or analytical questions; who are the participants, how should aid be practiced, and why should the reader contribute?

5.1 Save the Children

The organization was founded in 1919 in England, the Swedish chapter six months later the same year. It is a membership organization with 86 000 members nationally, lead by a board and chairperson that are elected by member delegates every other year. The main goal is to improve conditions for children with most difficulties getting their rights respected and acknowledged, both nationally and globally. The organizational efforts and policies are based on the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and they operate both nationally in Sweden and internationally around the world.

5.1.1 Who are the participants?

This category's basic assumption is that those in need of help are children, and that all children have rights that should be protected. These rights include a safe environment and a good education. Some children, though, are in more need of protection than others, especially those who 'have the most difficulty getting their rights acknowledged'. The characterization of 'the child', thus, is that of a vulnerable and fragile subject, not able to fend for itself, that is both in need of and entitled to protection.

'The child in need' consist of two subgroups; children in Sweden and children in other parts of the world. These two distinctions are characterized in slightly different ways, depending on the localization.

In Sweden, the precarious state of the child is predominantly situated outside the normative society - as 'child poverty' affecting mostly children with 'foreign background', living in the suburbs of the big cities, sometimes with single or divorced parents. Terms as 'alienation' and 'exclusion' are connected to this environment, placing the problem in a certain social as well as physical area of periphery.

Other children defined as in need of help are children in mourning who lost a parent or other relative, children that are being sexually or physically abused, and children with disabilities. Child refugees seeking asylum in Sweden, especially those who arrive alone without parents or other guardians, are also in focus, characterized as especially vulnerable, in need of stability and a safe environment. It is also this group that is the only one in the subcategory represented with names and faces in the texts, through the personal stories of four youths. This might be due to the fact that the particular problem that they represent is not as filled with issues of shame and stigmatization, as in the case of some of the other groups. It can also be read as a way to humanize the problem, speaking to the supposed Swedish reader through the personal experiences of children. This makes them less foreign, individuals with a personal history instead of a collective mass of 'others'.

In the subcategory of national efforts there is also a special focus on parents, as subjects in need of support and help. One of the perspectives dealt with is the growing acceptance of child abuse amongst Swedish parents. These parents are assigned the predications of 'tired' and 'stressed', attributes then connected to the societal pressures of work and career. Interestingly, they are also defined as 'well educated', placing child abuse not so much in the context of social periphery and lack of economic means, but as part of a growing problem of the modern middle class.

The identity of the child in the international efforts of Save the Children is linked to a cluster of predications such as 'extremely poor', 'sick', 'malnourished', 'orphan', 'starving', 'struggling', 'victim', and 'abused' (both physically and psychically). An important feature is also the locality of the child; the projects and efforts described are predominantly situated in sub-Saharan Africa, some examples from Afghanistan being the exception.

Within this group of children some are defined as more exposed than others; girls, ethnic minorities, and children with physical or psychological disabilities, children living on the streets or growing up in ‘conflict areas’. A defining trait might be summed up in the term *lack* - lack of safety, food, education, welfare, and respect being a common feature.

Despite these obstacles, the children portrayed in a number of articles are described as pretty happy and engaged in their community. They are ‘lucky’ to have understanding parents and the opportunity to be part of Save the Children’s projects, but at the same time driven and positive, thinking about their own future, as well as others. This way of portraying the children speaks both to the individualizing and humanizing effect discussed earlier, and to a way of connecting to a discourse of efficiency that the organizations operates within. The resources are not only making a difference, but are also being managed by recipients that are grateful and responsible enough to handle them.

The organization

The representations of Save the Children throughout the website highlights the organization as an authority figure, with a diverse set of activities, and impact at different levels of society. It is assigned descriptions such as ‘international’, ‘effective’, ‘high credibility’, working with ‘leading experts’ and having a ‘unique position’ as a ‘leading actor for child rights’. Important for the image is the independent position as a ‘popular movement’, politically and religiously unaffiliated. The use of these terms ensures an understanding of Save the Children as essentially selfless, without any ‘hidden agenda’ except that of the protection of children. It also draws on a specific Swedish discourse, connected to the tradition of organizing in popular member organizations to influence society and policy.

Trust and *efficiency* are two other keywords, particularly when it comes to the communication aimed at business and prospective collaboration partners from the commercial sector. The ‘strong brand’ of Save the Children is highlighted, as well as its ‘business oriented’ nature, credibility and effective staff ‘used to work in a business environment’. This particular set of predications positions the organization as a worthy business partner, engaged in the same kind of goal driven efforts as a commercial enterprise.

The donors

The cluster of predications and practices associated to the donors addressed in the texts are mainly to do with *power* and *choice* - they are given the titles of ‘fighters’ and ‘heroes’, inscribing a sense of justice and pride in the role. Being a donor and contributing to Save the Children is described as ‘having the power to change the lives of millions of children’, drawing on a sense of both power and responsibility.

The individual addressed is one ‘living in abundance’, but with the conscious and in the position to make decisions that not only gain the self, but also others. An important part of this appeal is the notion of ‘making a difference’, that your individual effort is important and plays a role in the bigger picture.

5.1.2 How should aid be practiced?

When it comes to the organizational perspective, particular emphasis is given to the lasting and sustainable nature of the actions and efforts of Save the Children. *Sustainability* is reached not only through immediate actions and projects, but also by putting pressure on states and rulers when it comes to policy decisions, affecting and changing whole societies.

Other key phrases are *cooperation* - to involve the local organizations as well as other international organs in the efforts and projects - and *participation*, striving for the organizations methods and goals to be based on the wishes and influence of children. This forms a relationship that positions Save the Children as mediating between the state and the citizen, as well as between those in need and the donors, rooted in the will and need of those it speaks for.

The donors

Structurally, the fundraising pages are divided into three columns - a list of donor options (links) to the left, the middle one dedicated to the information (changing depending on what links you click on), and a column to the right that provides information about the financial control that the organization is under, and also about the new Swedish law on tax reduction for gifts to charity organizations.

The first of these two features in the right column draws on a discourse of both safety and efficiency, providing the reader with proof that the donated money will not go to waste, but be spent wisely under controllable conditions. The second feature works not only as information, but might be read as a form of consumer guide - a way for the organization to further highlight the personal gains of donating money.

The hierarchy of donor options to the left is dominated by different ways of contributing money, with the recurring monthly commitment as top choice, and the one-time gift as second option. Becoming a member is listed as third, and this option is not highlighted in any particular way.

What is highlighted though, is the *freedom of choice*, together with *simplicity* - you can freely choose between different options and levels of commitment, and easily both start and end your support. Defining for the fundraising pages is that the information and texts are kept short and simple, concentrating on a summary of what you as a donor contribute to and what you yourself get in return. A number of the organization's efforts and goals are presented, but if you want more information you have to click on provided links and leave the page. The presentations here are concentrated on the international efforts, explicitly mentioning children in crisis or conflict areas as recipients of the help the donor is contributing to. Through this simple and easy to understand list, the metaphysics of a monetary donation is transformed into action and take physical form through the work of Save the Children.

Several of the 'how to donate' options include a combination of consumerism and charity - the main example being the Design shop, where the donor-consumer can buy a variety of different commodities sold in favor of Save the Children. This way of contributing is defined as 'a good (trans)action for children', drawing on a discourse of critique of consumer culture but at the same time not questioning the foundation of consumerism as a way to change society. The *usefulness* of the commodity purchased is highlighted also when it comes to the Save the Children calendar and multiple kinds of gift certificates available on the site. This notion of usefulness works on two levels - both addressing the nature of the commodity as such, and the thought behind it.

5.1.3 Why should the reader contribute?

The worldview represented by Save the Children is based in the assumption that all people are equally entitled to basic human rights, and that children have special rights. The responsibility of ensuring these rights lies on both individuals and families, but states have a special obligation to assume responsibility. The role of the civil society, where Save the Children is positioned, is to *monitor and ensure* that this obligation is fulfilled but in a fashion that is ‘politically and religiously independent’.

These predications and practices forms a subject that is victimized by its place inside a chaotic and unjust reality - poverty, desperation and lack being the nature of society, not an divergence from it. ‘Poverty’ is defined as one of the fundamental problems affecting children, but it is mainly in the Swedish context that this gets a political context, especially focusing on the national economical policies of the last decades.

Interestingly enough, the efforts and role as a *lobby organization*, changing and creating public opinion as well as putting pressure on states and policy makers, is highlighted when it comes to the description of the organization. But as stated earlier, looking at the fundraising pages these issues are not as explicit, giving room instead to the international relief efforts or ‘traditional’ aid. The problematization visible here is part of an intertextual discourse, drawing on the multiple texts on the site concerned with the organization’s efforts to provide food, health care and protection for children in conflict or disaster areas, living in ‘a chaotic existence’. The local, politically charged, topics of child poverty and social welfare are not in the spotlight for fundraising efforts.

5.2 The Red Cross

The Red Cross is one of the largest humanitarian networks in the world, with activities in 187 countries. It was founded in 1863 in Geneva, Switzerland, and the national societies are coordinated through the Red Cross and Red Crescent federations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The Swedish national society has been active since 1865 with around 200 000 members today, and the members appoint a central board to lead the organization every fourth year. The goal is to prevent human suffering, whomever it affects and however it is caused, and these principles are closely connected to the development of the Geneva conventions on human rights. The Swedish national society conducts activities and social work efforts nationally, as well as cooperating with the organizations international development and disaster relief programs.

5.2.1 Who are the participants?

Characteristic for the identity of the subject in need of the Red Cross website is that it addresses everybody and thus possess an *including function*- anyone can be in need of help at sometime in their life. Symptomatic of this is that one of the fundamental parts of the website's structure is the page headlined "Support that we provide" with the subtitle "Do you need our help?".

The initial information provided thus speaks to the reader as a potential person in need, situating her/him in a Swedish context by providing a video portraying some of the Red Cross national projects, titled "Red Cross at home".

On the subpage concerning the Red Cross initiatives in Sweden, this way of addressing the reader as a recipient of help, rather than provider, continues. Predications attributed to those in need are 'sick', 'in mourning', 'subjects of discrimination' and 'in need of work training', 'elderly' or stressed, finding themselves in a 'tight situation'. The information provided is directed against adults as subjects in need, as well as children.

Refugees and immigrants are addressed specifically, those 'hidden', 'without papers' and 'victims of war and torture' positioned as especially vulnerable. They are characterized as exposed, not getting their human rights observed by the public system.

Internationally, the subject in need is initially defined in very vague terms as 'struck by war and disaster' living in countries with 'lack of resources'. This general identification is contextualized with a photo depicting Red Cross personnel at work amongst a group of black people, no other information than the name of the photographer included. Here the identification of the subject in need as someone reading the text ends, instead information is provided on how to start to contribute as a donor.

To get a more detailed picture, the reader has to find her way to the theme section of the site, where an abundance of articles covering the Red Cross relief and development efforts internationally are available. The cluster of predications identifying those in need here includes 'threatened', 'poor', 'worried', 'having nothing', 'malnourished', 'starving' and 'victims of violence'. Some of the groups that are especially defined are children, victims of torture and people living with hiv and aids.

The organization

The construction of the Red Cross identity can be said to correlate with its seven fundamental principles, characterizing the organization with attributes such as 'humanitarian', 'impartial', 'neutral' 'independent', 'voluntariness', 'unity' and 'universality'. Its international nature and global reach is highlighted, as well as its pioneer role when it comes to social and welfare issues, historically taking initiative to services that then have been transferred into public service.

The defining practices are formulated as 'upholding human rights' and 'prevent suffering', 'never choosing a side' in conflict, but always 'taking a stand for those affected'. This gives the organization a 'unique mandate', connected to international humanitarian law, and the role of 'sometimes being the only organization allowed to work within a conflict area'.

These practices and predications form a identity built around tradition, expertise, efficiency, unity and uniqueness. It also connects to notions of the organization as *protector of the weak*, explicitly stating that the Red Cross provides help and social services in situations and areas where the state or public welfare system is insufficient or fails.

The donors

The 'you' addressed in the fundraising pages of the site is identified as someone who 'changes and saves lives', being very general at the same times as giving the donor a position of *power* as well as *agency*. Special attention is given to the donors that sign up for a monthly recurring gift, defining them as 'pillars of the organization' providing *stability* and continuity.

The tone of the text is very personal, speaking directly to the potential donor as someone the organization is 'searching for', needing your support. It forms an *individualized context*, where the statement that 'your support makes in possible' can be read as a way of highlighting the importance of every donor.

The membership part of the site in contrast, puts more emphasis on the collective and unitary nature of the organization. *Involvement*, donating time instead of money, is highlighted and becoming a member is attributed as a way to contribute to the organizations future, as well as its ability to provide aid and support, urging the reader to be part of something outside herself - 'together we can make a difference'.

5.2.2 How should aid be practiced?

How, then, should the aid and support provided by the Red Cross be distributed? The fundamental answer to this, from the organizational perspective, is formulated as 'cooperation that shows respect for those in need' and 'understanding the situation that causes the problem'.

The local efforts in a Swedish context are defined through *voluntary action*, as well as time and economic donations. Providing venues for people to meet, social activities and support for people in vulnerable situations are some of the ways that help is constructed. There is also a political discourse present, explicitly addressing the need for policy changes, in the context of the organizations efforts to provide health care for immigrants and refugees 'without papers', i.e. residence permits.

In the international context, being the 'first to arrive and the last to leave' is one of the main characteristics of how the Red Cross operates. Great emphasis is put on its global nature as a

humanitarian network that is 'already in place when disaster strikes'. Quick response and effective aid are promoted, through the cooperation between national chapters within the international structure - the best aid is given through local volunteers that know the language and the area, but economic resources and expertise can be provided from elsewhere.

Efficiency is addressed not only through this local connection, but also through an operation rooted in reality - 'needs are analyzed and activities coordinated' to provide the best help. In the talk of how local organization supports local businesses, as well as taking environmental issues into account, it is possible to see how discourses of 'trade not aid' and 'sustainable ecology' are drawn upon.

The issue of *economic control and trust* is also addressed, stating that no money disappears on the count of negligence or corruption. Administration costs for fundraising, transportation and quality control are listed as necessary, but 'fundraising should give results without costing too much'. What this implies is an awareness of a discourse of ineffective and costly aid, where donations are spent on 'unnecessary administration' or unimportant issues.

The donors

Donors are presented with a wide variety of possibilities when it comes to contributing economically. Some common features of the multiple choices of donating are that they are *simple* and *effective*. The promise that 'when the need is greatest your help might be the closest' positions the Red Cross as a mediator, bridging the divide between donor and recipients. The monthly recurring donations are presented as giving 'a stability that galas and temporary collections can not provide'. What can be hinted here, implicit in the statement, is a critique of celebrity fundraising and quick fixes, promoting involvement and continuity instead.

Freedom of choice is present in the fundraising, not only when it comes to the question of how to give money, but also to what. The potential donor can choose to earmark the donation for a certain project or issue - the ones available including only international relief efforts. The *flexibility* of your commitment is also highlighted through providing information on how easy it is both to start and stop your donations, as well as changing the sum you are contributing.

The website also draws on a discourse of commodification, by including a visualization of what the donated money will pay for. This is done through a changeable graphic that transforms the sum into commodities, like mosquito nets or water cans, as well as services such as satellite telephone calls or the search for lost family members.

Another notable feature is the ‘Start your own fundraising’ campaign, where an individual can create her own fundraiser to benefit of the Red Cross. The individual then ‘becomes an aid worker’ by inviting friends and family through social networks on the Internet to participate by donating a preset sum. It is then possible to follow and monitor the fundraiser and see how much money is being donated in your name. This feature might be understood as a way of *using charitable causes as identity building and individual branding* - not only do you get to see exactly how your individual effort is contributing, you also get to share and show off your commitment publicly.

Other options for donors include buying gift certificates for different occasions, as well as buying ‘something meaningful’ in the form of a commodity. Both these options are defined as ‘gifts that provide joy to others than just the person receiving it’, drawing on a discourse where consumerism is justified through the connection to charity - not only by supporting the organization but also by the act of giving as such.

Commercial enterprises and efforts are also present through the cooperation with several businesses, where contributions are made through rounding up (to a higher sum when making a purchase in a certain store), recycling to benefit the Red Cross or buying bottled water from a company that supports the organization. Shopping at, or donating to, the Red Cross second hand store Kupan is also mentioned as a way to get involved and contribute.

5.2.3 Why should the reader contribute?

Ideologically the Red Cross is positioned within the *humanitarian* realm, where respect for human dignity and easing the suffering of those most in need are upheld as ideals. These ideals exist in *a context of non-politics*, remaining ‘neutral to preserve peoples trust’ and at the same

time promoting ‘mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples’. What this implies is that there are basic human rights that exist outside of ‘politics’, fundamental values that everyone are in agreement of.

This also references to the discursive practices of humanitarian law, drawing on both a *power discourse* invoking the authority of the United Nations, and a *discourse of rationality* - that it is possible to create a rational way of dealing with the irrationality of conflict and disaster.

It is interesting to note that this discourse of non-politics and humanitarian convention sometimes cracks, and have to be renegotiated by the influence of other discourses. An example of this is the discussion on the red cross and red crescent as symbols, or logos, for the organization. The origin of the red cross is said to be totally non-religious (i.e. non-political), still there seem to be an implicit understanding of the reasons behind Muslim countries’ alternative usage of the red crescent as symbol. The ‘misconception’ of the religious connotations of the cross and the crescent have forced the organization to create a third, presumably neutral, symbol in the form of a red crystal - ‘free from political, religious, or cultural associations’.

5.3 SOS Children's Village

The first SOS Children's Village was built in Austria 1949, the same year as the organization was founded. It now has 500 villages and programs around the world, where orphan children live in groups together with new siblings and a village mom. The organization's vision is that every child should get the opportunity to grow up in a safe environment with support from family and society. It is a membership organization lead by a yearly appointed board, but membership is not promoted in the organizational communication and it does not offer any information on how to become a member on its website.

5.3.1 Who are the participants?

The main subject for help in the context of SOS Children's Village is an orphaned child, defined as 'abandoned', 'homeless', and 'alone'. S/he is described as living in an exposed or vulnerable situation, having no biological family, or one living in poverty. The basic characterization, thus, is one of a very fragile, 'sad', 'confused', and 'wounded' child in need of a new family to replace a missing or dysfunctional one.

There are slightly different characterizations of the precarious state of the biological families, depending on which part of the world is being addressed. For the African, Asian, and South American context, 'lack of necessary resources', money for school, food and medicine as well as not enough strength, health and belief in the future are attributes connected to the children's background. Poverty and hiv/aids are also contributing forces for the need of these families, and especially the children.

In the case of the European situation, the issue of hiv/aids is also mentioned as a factor, but mainly traits as 'drug abuse', 'mental illness' and 'unemployment' are used to explain why the children are 'socially vulnerable' and living in misery.

The gravity of the situation is implied by stating that only children that are 'unable to survive under current conditions' are eligible for finding a new home in the Children's village. These predications construct a subject defined by vulnerability and lack, with very little agency of their

own (until it is provided by the organization). This very grave picture painted in the text is then contrasted with the actual pictures on the website. Almost every photo portrays children laughing, playing or going to school, presumably happy in their new home.

A secondary subject in need is also present in this narrative, this being families, children and mothers outside of the village environment. Vulnerable families within the community, also defined as a group both in need and entitled to help through the social centers that the organization runs.

The organization

The identity of SOS Children's Village is constructed around a cluster of positive predictions, as an international organization working to 'prevent poverty' and 'help those who need it the most' by always 'being on the side of the child'. They 'provide a home and a family' for abandoned children, by being 'pioneers', 'showing courage and challenging traditions' when it comes to child care.

In relation to the children, being 'dedicated' and keeping promises are attributes that are assigned the organization, as well as invoking 'respect' and 'confidence'. In relation to the donors and businesses, SOS is identified as 'a trustworthy partner' working in an 'effective', 'responsible', and 'transparent' way.

The signification of this cluster of attributes is one of *near paternalism*, or 'parentalism' in lack of a better (real) word. The subject SOS Children's Villages acts as guardian for the children, taking the role of a parent that provides safety as well as demands respect.

The donors

The identity of the donor is not as explicit in the fundraising texts, but connects to the parental role of the organization, as a benefactor. The only distinct predications available are addressing the potential donor as someone who want to 'provide a safe upbringing' for children who need it the most. The contribution made to the organization might be viewed as taking a part in 'the family', as a *distant mirror image of a parent*.

In some other features, the donor identity is more distinguishable and highlighted. One of these is an article covering the reasons to why a Swedish family decided to sponsor children through SOS. These ‘ideal sponsors’ are portrayed as a stable and happy family, who likes to travel and have ‘seen the world’. This also includes being aware of the injustice and need in other countries, attributing them as educated and informed. They are also active in their sponsorship, being involved and communicating with the children, even visiting them on two occasions.

An important aspect of this is the way the sponsor identifies with the children, stating that ‘it could have been me, or my child’ in the same situation. This positions the roles and identities of ‘child in need’ and ‘sponsor’ as *interchangeable*, as if the lack and possibilities dividing them is just a matter of coincidence, not power and politics.

5.3.2 How should aid be practiced?’

The question of how SOS works can be answered by the statement that the organization ‘provides a home and a family’ for the children in need. This family is defined as something other than a traditional orphanage, being based on a *family structure* with ‘village mothers’ that take care of the children. Every child has an individual development plan, and is prepared to take care of themselves when they eventually leave the village. ‘Integration in the local community’ and taking the ‘cultural roots’ into account are highlighted as important issues.

The mission is to communicate *a sense of belonging and community*, a safe and home-like environment characterized by continuity, eventually leading to independence. This is done through working with special attention to education, where girls are defined as especially high priority, and child rights, where SOS works as a lobby organization to ‘get lasting results by influencing governments and authorities’. Fundamental for these efforts is the Convention of the Rights of the Child, but the organizations involvement with business partners and corporation social responsibility is also mentioned as a part of these opinion changing efforts.

The connection to the surrounding community is addressed both through the reports on how only local material and construction style is being used, as well as employing only local people for the construction and management of the villages. This is not just ‘practical and cost effective’, but

also serves to boost the local businesses and economy.

The second connection is made through the social centers that the organizations run, dealing with family support through cooperation with local government and organizations. This is defined as a way to help vulnerable families to help themselves, through different tools such as vocational training, or micro credits. These centers are presented as a part of the organizations preventive efforts, but a look at the economic reports shows that only around 3% of the costs are spent on this. The highlighting of these social centers, despite of their relatively small role in the organizational structure, might be a way to manage expectations from donors and business partners.

The donors

As stated earlier, the role of the donor within the SOS *mimics the parent-child relationship* of the organization and those in need. The potential donor is urged to ‘take a stand for lonely and vulnerable children’ by becoming a sponsor, either for a specific child or for a whole village.

An interesting thing about this arrangement is that whatever you choose, the money donated goes to the village as a project, not to the needs or wants of the individual being sponsored. The *individualized sponsorship* seems to serve an important function of connection, making the potential donor more inclined to feel responsibility towards the commitment. It might also be said to have a *commodifying function*, where the child serves as a proof of the reality and effective nature of the transaction being made.

This commodification of the organization and its ideals is also present when it comes to the ‘meaningful shopping’, a term used for selling either products that are being presented in cooperation with different businesses and brands (such as t-shirts or bracelets), or the transformation of the aid provided into care packages, ‘essential gifts’, for example clothes, food, or toys. Instead of a donor the buyer becomes a consumer, not just being able to choose exactly how the contribution should be spent, but also receiving an acknowledgment of this consumer power through the gift certificate s/he gets in return.

There are also options of other, more traditional, kinds of gift certificates on the site, together with options of donating directly through credit card or Internet bank transfers, as well as using cell phones to donate by text messages. The commonalities between these options are descriptions such as ‘quick’ and ‘easy’, and a way of ‘doing good’ that lasts longer than just for the moment.

SOS also offers the opportunity to start your own collection/fundraiser, a ‘fun challenge’ that at the same time is a ‘good deed’. The feature includes not only your own fundraising page where you can monitor the donations and comments, but also a rating chart of fundraisers, listing them accordingly to popularity and goal fulfillment. This particular fundraising technique gives the donor a way of both sharing and showing benevolence, as well as exercising agency and power through the individualization and personalization of the contribution.

5.3.3 Why should the reader contribute?

Fundamental for the ideological reasoning behind the organization is the role of *the family*, exemplified in the statement that ‘all children have the right to a safe upbringing with loving adults’, and that ‘a loving family is the most important thing in a child’s life’. Stability, security, and care are the basic building blocks for achieving this ideal.

Family, instead of government run orphanages, is what SOS offers, drawing on the understanding that social welfare programs are by nature lacking in individual care and interests. An interesting aspect of this is that family in the SOS sense seems to consist of *exclusively mother and child*. Looking at the texts and information available it is easy to assume that no men/fathers are involved in the day to day care of the children in the villages. When men are mentioned in this context, it is explicitly as village directors, painting a picture of the family as a essentially patriarchal society with the man in charge, providing economic stability and structure, and his many wives/mothers/employees under him, providing love and care.

The sponsorship of a child is a way to include the donors in this family, making the commitment *individualized through personal contact*. Also in this context there is another ideological aspect

present, working as a *humanizing* force through giving the child in need a name, a face, and also a voice. In this way, the problem of poverty and orphanage is not just something abstract and unmanageable, but a problem that can be solved through individual efforts.

The focus on ‘breaking the spiral of poverty’ through education, health care, and personalized development plans adheres to an understanding of the roots to the problems as structural, in the sense that these fundamental rights are lacking in the community. But, at the same time, individual effort and abilities are promoted as a way out of this negative circle, and the ideal children within the programs, ‘growing up with respect and dignity’, are portrayed as grateful, happy, and striving to take control and responsibility for their own future.

5.4 Plan Sweden

Plan was founded in England 1937 and is now active in 68 countries around the world. The Swedish chapter, Plan Sweden, started in 1997 and is an independent part of the international organization. Its efforts in Sweden is concentrated around fundraising to support the development programs in other countries, designed as sponsorship for individual children in need. The national organization is lead by a board, where the sponsors have an opportunity to nominate one board member. The vision of the organization is to strive for a democratic world where child rights are being acknowledged, respected, and observed and its efforts are based on the principles of the Convention of the Right of the Child.

5.4.1 Who are the participants?

The characteristics of those in need are not very specific when it comes to Plan, only identifying them as ‘exposed children all over the world’. Looking closely though, the recipients of aid given by the organization are situated in ‘the poorest countries’ of Africa, Asia and Latin America, thus providing some context to the general description. Special attention is given to girls and minorities, the latter described as ‘forgotten children’, giving the subject in need a gender and place in society as well.

The agency inscribed for the children changes depending on the issue a hand, examples being the context of education where children are victims of violence, juxtaposed the context of climate change, where they are referred to as ‘climate smart’, possessing a natural knowledge and responsiveness to changes in the local environment.

Predominantly though, who these exposed children are is mostly communicated through visual imagery of photos and videos on the site, showing children in school, playing, or engaging in activities together with Plan employees. Some of these photos also include adults, as families and ‘the local population’ are also being included in the group of needing.

The organization

The pattern of vagueness continues when looking at the subject of the organization itself, generally described as ‘one of the largest international children’s development organizations’. Furthermore, it is ‘independent’, with no political or religious affiliations. Other predications assigned to the organization are ‘effective’, ‘trustworthy’, and ‘cost-conscious’.

The approach of Plan includes respecting children, listening to their opinions, and defending their rights. Help to self-help and independence is promoted and this is said to be the defining traits of the organization, distinguishing it from similar actors by focusing on its role as a guide and support partner, more than a benefactor.

This, together with the cluster of characteristics above, forms an identity based on knowledge, experience and independence, free from restraints of political or governmental pressure, and positioning the organization as an authoritative figure within its own context.

The donors

The main role of the donor is that of sponsor, this option being promoted and highlighted throughout the whole website. The characteristics of the ideal sponsor includes being involved and curious, interested in other cultures and seeking contact with the sponsored child on a personal level. The organization's special focus on environment and gender also indicates a certain slant towards seeking donors that are aware and interested in these particular issues.

The potential donor/sponsor is urged to ‘create opportunities for children’ and ‘change lives’, at the same time increasing the understanding between cultures. These practices might be said to be reflected in the visual imagery related to sponsorship, predominantly showing a child and an adult holding hand, or a child reaching out to the viewer, an action that might be interpreted as reaching for physical and emotional contact.

5.4.2 How should aid be practiced?

Plan is present in 20 donor countries, where the organization works with fundraising and lobbying, as well as in 50 program countries, where the efforts include development projects within the areas of education, health care and child rights. The goal is to increase the status of children, working together with children, families and the community to ensure their rights and ‘break the spiral of poverty’, also helping children to ‘realize their potential’.

Emphasis is put on the political lobbying function of the organization, based on the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The lobbying is mostly concentrated on the donor countries, to ‘increase the understanding for global issues and child rights’.

In the program countries, all development is on the initiative of the local population, sustainable and lasting plans are jointly developed between Plan and those living in the community. The projects are then managed by the local people, but with support and financing from Plan. Characterizing for this is the emphasis on *involvement* and *agency*, stating that ‘it is important that the people feel that it is their project and that they are responsible for it’. Cooperation with local organizations, government and authorities are also being highlighted, as well as taking local tradition and culture into account.

This approach draws on both post-colonial discourse, in the way local self-government and agency is promoted, as well as a discourse of traditional aid not taking this into account but on the contrary, imposing external views and methods without regard for diversity and local conditions. Another example of this can be found in the description of managing donor money, defined as being ‘a question of trust’, using the money ‘effective’ and ‘purposeful’ to achieve as much change as possible. This demands ongoing efforts to improve monitoring and control structures, as well as working against ‘corruption and irregularities’. Real results, it is said, is not measured in ‘a number of school buildings or needles’ but in long-term sustainability.

These influences also reflect in the description on the environmental programs, dealing with the risks and threats of climate change in developing countries. The approach here is that there is nothing natural about disasters - they are simply natural events that become disasters due to

social and economical reasons, mainly poverty. This attempt to change the reader's presupposed view of certain parts of the world as naturally disastrous is supported by the involvement of local children in the preventive efforts, using their 'knowledge and ability to spot changes in the local environment' as a way to early detect and prevent disasters from happening. This focus on empowering those worst affected by climate change goes very well with the mix of help to self-help and post-colonial approach, but at the same time leaves out any mention of what role the presumed Swedish reader/donor plays in this global environmental crisis, or what s/he can do in her life to make changes (except support Plan).

Another feature is the focus on girls, and the double discrimination of both age and gender. Within this context, the issues of child marriage and 'harmful practices' in the form of female gender mutilation get special attention. To achieve change Plan works both locally, involving children, adults, teachers, social workers, religious leaders and other groups, as well as on governmental level, lobbying for legal changes together with the authorities. The issue is highlighted not only through special fundraising efforts, but also with a yearly report covering the situation of girls globally. While this focus strives to highlight the issues surrounding gender inequality, it does so by targeting practices that are situated in a cultural context detached from the presumed Swedish reader and the national gender equality debate. This makes it easy to take a stand against discrimination, at the same time remaining a bit distant to the issues on a more personal level.

The donors

The how to-question when it comes to the donors of Plan is mainly concentrated around four different features; becoming a sponsor, donating money as a single gift, getting involved as a voluntary, and other ways of showing support.

Sponsorship is the feature most promoted, being not only a way of supporting, but also how the organization essentially is structured. The sponsorship is in itself divided into categories free to choose between for the donor/sponsor, either as general child sponsor, school sponsor, girl sponsor, disaster sponsor, or minority sponsor. The *freedom of choice* is also expanded by the opportunity to actively request both age and locality of the child being sponsored.

Visually the sponsorship is promoted by a photo of a child turned towards the camera with an outreached hand, together with a caption that reads “Meet the world. Become a Plan sponsor. From 200 sek/month”. Sponsorship is described as a way to achieve ‘greater understanding between cultures’ through the personal contact of correspondence between sponsor and child. This gives insight to a life and reality that is ‘in many ways different from your life here in Sweden’.

Sponsorship is thus constructed not only as a benevolent gift supporting people in need, but also as an *individual exchange* that favors the sponsors by enriching their life, providing greater insights and experiences of the world. The emphasis on personal contact is further strengthened by the fact that Plan offers opportunities for the sponsors to visit ‘their child’, through group tours conducted by the organization or individual visits where the contact is mediated by Plan.

An interesting perspective of this personalized and individualized construction of sponsorship is that it stands in direct contrast to how the organization really works. The money donated goes into the local projects benefiting the whole community, not just the specific child being sponsored. This is described as a way of avoiding ‘jealousy and injustice’, and by supporting the whole community in ‘taking ownership of the area’s development’, a greater and lasting impact is possible.

Apart from the variety of sponsorships, several other possibilities for donating money are available on the site, predominantly giving through credit cards, text message, testament, gift certificates, nonprofit mutual funds and dividends. A special feature on the site is the Gift Shop, where the efforts of Plan projects are turned into commodities to be bought by the donors. This includes real products like birth certificates and school benches, together with more metaphysical commodities such as training a midwife or preventing a child marriage. In exchange the donor/consumer gets a certificate as proof of the contribution, but these gifts are not really promoted through any joint promotional text appealing to their philanthropic nature.

5.4.3 Why should the reader contribute?

The vision of Plan i described as “[a] world where all children on equal terms can realize their full potential and live in a democratic society where human rights and dignity are respected”. The ideals of the organization are founded in the basic principles of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and the goal is to ‘give the children of the world a better future’.

Over all, there is a notion of a self-explanatory nature concerning these ideals in the texts, the reasoning behind terms as ‘democracy’ and ‘human rights’ not being needed any in depth description or interpretation. The reasons, relations, and conditions behind the poverty, lack of resources, agency, and opportunities that the organization strives to improve are not explicitly addressed in a global context. More so in relations to each other - for example the lack of education as leading to poverty, at the same time as poverty serves as an explanation to why many children are deprived of the right to an education.

Underlying the descriptions of the organization and its methods is a notion of critique directed against aid in the form of ‘experts from outside, building schools and vaccinating children’, a way of conducting help that leads to ‘dependence and pacification’ of those in need of support. An ideology of personal agency, help to self-help and entrepreneurship is visible in the texts, as well as an awareness of questions of power. These issues of power, though, are not constructed as a hierarchical relationship between organization and those in need, or between the sponsors and the children, but rather as between different actors in the world of aid and development.

5.5 The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is a Christian church founded in 1865 in London, England, and the first meeting in Sweden was held in Stockholm in 1882. It is organized through several unions, parishes that offer various social services nationally. It is an evangelistic Christian community with a message rooted in the Bible, preaching the gospel of Jesus and meeting human needs. It is based on membership and works internationally, being active in more than 120 countries and involving more than a million ‘salvation soldiers’. In Sweden, the church works both nationally with social efforts and support, as well as fundraising for the international development programs.

5.5.1 Who are the participants?

Because of the organization's broad approach to social work, being present both nationally and internationally, it is possible to distinguish between the subject in need in Sweden, and the one in other countries.

Characterizing for the Swedish context is the *including approach* in the text - there exists a ‘we’ that welcomes the reader into the community as someone that might be needing help and support, ‘we are there for you’. At the same time, it is possible to separate between two slightly different subjects in need. One is *the ordinary person*, a ‘single parent’ with ‘tangled finances’, or maybe a ‘lonely senior citizen’, who is in need of human kindness, community and someone to talk to. It can also be children and youths from ‘underprivileged families, living in ‘harsh social environments’.

The other subject in need is the one attributed with predications such as ‘homeless’ and ‘unemployed’, often combined with ‘mental health problems’ and ‘drug abuse’. These characterizations form a much more *problematic identity*, but also a more static one compared to the “ordinariness” of the former subcategory.

Internationally the subject in need is formed according to *difference* and *lack* instead of similarity. The differences between the reader and the people in need are highlighted, they are

identified as ‘poor and marginalized people’ living in Africa, Asia or South America. Looking at the visual information and imagery, ‘people’ seem to consist of predominantly women and children.

These women and children are further *defined by what they do not have*, being ‘deprived of their rights’ and lacking health care, education, livelihood, and clean water. Young women are ‘victims of trafficking’, forced into marriage, slave labor and prostitution, as well as affected by hiv/aids. Children are ‘worst affected’ by the abuse, violence, and crime that is the result of poverty in ‘societies with high unemployment’. They are ‘badly treated’, ‘beaten’, and ‘abandoned’.

In contrast to all the hardship and problematic predications assigned to the subjects in need in an international context, they are also attributed ‘a surprisingly strong will and effort to change their own situation’, *not being victimized* by their situation. This attitude is also present in some of the articles from project countries, for example describing the recipients of development efforts as ‘hard working’ and ‘grateful’.

The organization

Fundamental for the representation of the church is the statement that it is pretty similar to other churches within Christianity, particularly Protestant denominations. The sentence proclaiming that ‘in fact, we share the belief in the fundamental Christian truths with all Christians’ positions the organization/church within a *normative continuum*, downplaying its deviant nature in contrast to the established church. This might be an instance of trying to brand the church in a normative and positive way, as opposed to an extremist or “other” in the context of Christianity in Sweden.

The identity of the Salvation Army, thus, is predominantly established through its merits as a social actor, described as ‘a Christian church known for its great social commitment’ where ‘care for the whole person’ is a central part of the ideals. Community, joy, and of course faith, are highlighted as characteristics, as well as its ubiquitous nature as an ‘international movement’, present in over 120 countries and working ‘on a very broad front’.

The identity as a care giver and social support network is tributed to ‘a message rooted in the Bible’, the characteristics of the church being ‘a service with its source in the love of God’. There is also a strong *identification with those in need*, predominantly expressed through the inclusion of them in the community in the Swedish context, as well as stating that ‘we are the poor’ in an international context.

The donors

Just as the subject in need can be almost anybody, at least in the Swedish context, the subject of the donor is constructed as *an ordinary person*, with an extraordinary sense of justice and compassion. You do not have to share the Salvation Army’s views to take action and contribute. In fact, you do not even have to be a Christian. The caption ‘You do not have to be a believer. You can still be an angel’ characterizes the donor in relations to her actions, not belief.

The use of the word ‘angel’ can be read as a connection to the religious nature of the commitment and efforts, but also as a watcher that protects others. Predications and practices assigned to this subject include ‘being a little special’, having *an inherent ability* to see and acknowledge ‘the man who lives under the bridge’, ‘the child who is afraid to sleep at night’ and the mother being evicted. But seeing is not enough, an ‘everyday angel’ takes action to change the situation by becoming a monthly donor to the Salvation Army.

In the international context, the donor is not as defined and characterized. The promoted option here is to become a sponsor, someone who ‘makes a real difference’ by contributing to the stability of the development efforts. In this way, the sponsorship is more identified as *a technical mode of support* for the organization/church, than an intrinsic property that defines the donor as a person.

5.5.2 How should aid be practiced?

Also when it comes to the the question of how, there is a certain separation noticeable between the national and the international context. The efforts on a national level are described as ‘taking care for the whole person’, where four main areas of interest are distinguished; physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs.

Providing social support ‘where the public welfare system is insufficient’ is a way to be ‘a complement and alternative for he individual, but still *positioning the church within society*. A certain flexibility is also noted, as the Salvation Army is ‘prepared to take care of new problem areas where help is needed’, tending to different needs depending on the locality and problem. The way to go about this is ‘sharing the life’ of those in need’, *identifying and empathizing* with people in a ‘troublesome situation’ to change and improve their living conditions. The Christian element is ‘always present and included in the activities’, sometimes in the form of ‘offers of devotions and worship services’.

This is done through open social activities, economic support, counseling and home visits, as well as support for socially vulnerable families, youths, and children. Highlighted as a way of dealing with problems is *providing a social community*, a ‘feeling of belonging and being loved’. When it comes to the issues of homelessness and drug abuse, the urgent help in form of shelter, food, and clean clothes is emphasized, but also treatment, supported housing, aftercare and job training is being exemplified and accounted for. What is not as explicitly presented are the presumed preventive efforts - they are mentioned, but there are no examples in this area.

Internationally, the church relates to a general and prevalent development discourse by ‘organizing actions for a sustainable and long-term development’, to ‘fight poverty and injustice’. The focus here lays on *entrepreneurship* and *agency* ‘help to self-help’, through development projects ‘created by the poor for the poor’ so that they can ‘enjoy the freedom to make their own decisions about their lives’. The relation promoted here is one of involvement and cooperation, as well as respect for indigenous culture and knowledge.

Interestingly enough, this version of development as a form of reclaiming rights and human

dignity through political and social agency is then pushed aside in favor of a much more *practical approach*; providing health care, education, jobs, and clean water through day centers and orphanages, together with special projects concerning water supply or livestock. This goes very much in line with the specialized care for homeless and addicted people in the national context, where a lot of energy is put on urgent support but not as much on the preventive actions. The Christian faith and mission is not explicitly mentioned in this international context.

The donors

The relationship formed between the donor and the organization/church is based on the donor as monetary contributor, highlighting the act of giving as a concrete way of *showing compassion*. ‘It does not cost much to give faith in life back to someone’ indicates that all economic contributions are welcome, regardless the sum. The use of the word ‘faith’ also connects to the concept of being an ‘Everyday Angel’ positioning the donor as a spiritual guardian and supporter in relation to those in need.

In the national context special emphasis is put on the fact that you do not have to be a Christian to support the social welfare programs of the Salvation Army. A number of different options are available to donors here, interestingly enough it is memorial and celebratory gift certificates that are being promoted, together with the donation of dividends. *Freedom of choice* is practiced through the opportunity to earmark your gift for a certain cause or project when donating. Another distinguishing feature for the donation options are the possibility to donate your church tax to the Salvation Army instead of the state church.

Shopping also has a specific role to play, through the second hand shop Myrorna, one of the most well known charity brands in Sweden. *Raising funds through commerce* is also the goal of Sally Ann, the Salvation Army’s fair trade shop, and Handels where profile products are being sold. The site does not offer any direct transactions of opportunities to consume in regard to this, but provides links to the websites in question.

In the international context, the options for donating are limited to child sponsorship and specific themes or projects (the ‘Animal bank’ and ‘Water fund’). Though it is possible to choose which

specific orphanage or day center you want to sponsor, the child sponsorship is not an individual one but defined in the terms of ‘group sponsor’. Personal contact with the children is not promoted, but every orphanage or day center has its own informational text describing the particular circumstances there. This gives the sponsorship a more distant nature, distinguishing the Salvation Army from other organizations with similar donor options.

Another defining trait of the donor-organization relationship in the international context is that the site lacks technical solutions to facilitate donating, such as direct transfers from credit cards or via Internet bank. Instead the site refers the potential donor to postal and bank giro services, only providing the account number for donations.

5.5.3 Why should the reader contribute?

The worldview represented in the text is one *based in Christian belief and value systems*, ‘the Bible clearly says that we humans are responsible for each other’. This notion of a religious duty, an assignment or mission from God, includes not only taking care of the body, but also the mind of those in need - ‘the whole person’. What is implicit here is a notion of needs that are not rooted in the physical form, but instead spiritual - needs that only faith and devotion can fulfill.

Also, the experience of meeting and acknowledging those in need makes it impossible not to help. ‘Listening to peoples experiences creates a need to try and change and improve their living conditions’. The goal to provide support where the public systems fails plays on an *awareness of the political dimensions*, that there exists inequality and injustice that are depending on political policy not only in distant developing countries but also at home, nationally.

This social pathos is also present in the ideological aspects of the international efforts, explicitly stating that no one can claim ignorance as reason for not contributing to changing the relations between different parts of the world. “It can not have escaped anyone that the earth’s resources are unequally distributed. Just today, several thousand people will die from causes related to poverty. This situation is completely unacceptable.”⁹

9 The Salvation Army International Efforts at <http://fralsningsarmen.se/internationalutveckling/>

These distinct features function as *a discursive bridge between religion and libertarian humanitarian values*, drawing on an understanding of basic human rights and equality - 'every human being has an equal value' and we are also created with our own 'innate resources' to address our life situation.

This is specifically addressed in the church's 'ethical positions' where the Salvation Army 'works against discrimination and oppression' when it comes to issues of ethnicity. This liberal and inclusive standpoint is not present when it comes to issues of sexuality and family, though. Here other ideological aspects are visible, like a crack in the democratic surface, condemning all other sexuality than the one practiced in a heterosexual marriage, according to 'Christian accepted norms'. Abortion and women's right to their own body is also questioned, in the terms of wanting to 'protect life' and 'avoid its interruption through active actions'.

5.6 The Church of Sweden

Up until the year 2000 the Church of Sweden upheld the position of state church, and it is still the largest Christian church in Sweden with up to 7 million members. It is a national organization consisting of parishes and dioceses, working within social services in Sweden as well as organizing its efforts abroad, and the international development programs and disaster relief coordinated through the Christian alliance ACT. It describes itself as a 'bridgechurch' valuing both its protestant and Catholic roots through its Evangelical Lutheran identity and strives for a world free of hunger, poverty and oppression.

5.6.1 Who are the participants?

A defining feature of the fundraising by the Church of Sweden is that it is exclusively concerned with the international relief and development efforts that the church is involved in. The church is an active and prominent actor when it comes to social work and support in Sweden, but despite this no funds are being raised from the public to finance the national efforts.

An easy answer to why this is, might be that the church still receives funds through taxes from a large part of the Swedish population. Its not very far off to assume that these taxes go at least partially to the national social and welfare work of the church, in that way potentially benefiting those who contributed.

Fundraising from private donors is instead concentrated around the Church of Sweden abroad, and the international relief and development projects of the church. In the first case, potential receivers of help are characterized as 'tourists', 'seamen', and 'Swedes living abroad' that might be in need of a familiar place to gather, or practical and psychological help in case of disaster or crisis. The main subjects characterized as receivers of aid though, are found in the context of international aid.

These subjects are localized in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and also Europe, but the projects and people portrayed on the site is predominantly from different parts of the

African continent. Three main subcategories might be found here, the first one being children, attributed with predication such as ‘sick’, ‘malnourished’, deprived of both education, health care and human rights. The second subcategory is women, experiencing ‘abuse and violence’, but also poverty and malnutrition that leads to a lack of power.

Most detailed characterization is found surrounding the subject ‘refugees’, in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya. They are ‘long-suffering’ and ‘vulnerable’, living ‘without hope and assets’ in camps where lack of water and sanitation is standard. These refugees are often farmers, ‘the poorest’ people living with ‘small marginals’ and afflicted by consequences of both drought and war. Despite this cluster of negative predications and practices, efforts are made to keep people ‘independent’ and ‘free’ throughout the hardships.

The organization

The identity of the Church of Sweden as an organization, is completely separated from the information about faith and spirituality on the website. The Church is presented not in religious terms, but as ‘one of the largest social movements in Sweden’, connecting it to a national history and tradition of social work and political struggle. The church is presented as a social community, providing services such as choir, activities for youths and children, study circles and sewing circles as well as baptism, confirmation, weddings, and funerals. It is ‘communion and support in joy and sorrow, in everyday life as well as festivity’. It is also an organization for change, where ‘tens of thousands of people’ are involved, ‘shaping public opinion’ and raising funds for ‘a better and more equal distribution of the world’s resources’.

This characterization of the church as an opinionated actor demanding change, is very present on the sub pages of the website covering the international efforts. It is a church ‘fighting for a just world without hunger, poverty, and oppression’ providing not just shelter and food, but also hope. It is an identity filled with social pathos, ‘a tool in the mission of God’, a mission that is said to form ‘a part of the fundamental identity’ of the church, being ‘courageous’ in both words and action. The four main missions, to ‘defend the human’, ‘work for peace’, ‘care for creation’, and ‘be worldwide’ forms an ubiquitous actor with the traits of healer, savior and fighter in one.

The donors

In the characterization of the donors, this mission from God is not as present. In fact, there is no mention of faith or Christianity in the texts covering donations and fundraising. They appeal to the reader in a more secularized way, as someone interested in the world and international development, having opinions about how donations should be spent and the way the organizations work (that the money is put to use 'where it is needed the most' and that help to self-help is a main method). You do not have to be particularly involved though, it is enough to read a folder and then decide to become a monthly donor.

But there is an implicit understanding connected to faith in this context, attributing the donor with the power to 'make dreams come true' and also by giving every monthly donor a special gift; a pin in the form of a small silver angel.

This can be read as a way of identifying the donor as a vicar of God, a guardian angel. It also gives the opportunity to feel chosen, a member of a special group of people awarded this honorary distinction - and publicly manifest a commitment that works in an identity shaping way.

5.6.2 How should aid be practiced?

The Church of Sweden works within eight main areas; climate change and environmental issues, global cooperation with other churches, the right to food and water, lobbying and public opinion, micro credits and financing, breaking the silence on hiv/aids, peace, justice and human rights, and finally, disaster relief. A defining trait of the way the church represents its efforts is the statement that 'aid is important, but it does not solve all problems', emphasizing that 'injustice that prevent people from living in dignity' is as big a part of the problem as lack of resources, and 'must be erased'.

Quick relief response, long-term development, struggle for justice, and more than hundred years of cooperation with churches in Africa and Asia, are also highlighted as a crucial parts of the church's methods. The global Christian aid alliance ACT is presented as 'a new way of taking action', for lasting change through international cooperation. The alliance is characterized as

both ‘a powerful tool’ and a form of quality control, making the efforts, and organizations behind them, larger and more pervasive. Its strength is said to come from the global nature of the Christian church, local partners and personnel that know the language, history, and culture are often already in place when disaster strikes. The statement ‘we stay even after the media have moved on to the next disaster’ positions the church as a trustworthy actor, providing security and genuine care for those affected. This makes ACT ‘superior in comparison to other aid alliances’.

Within the eight focus areas of the church, there are some that stand out as particularly interesting in the light of how the different actors relate to each other. An example of this is how environmental issues and climate change is defined as ‘a global question of justice’. Pollution and emission leads to real and significant consequences such as food shortage in developing countries, they ‘do not stop at national borders’ but ‘what happens in one part of the world affects other parts’. What is interesting here, is that it is explicitly stated that the poor are the worst affected, though they contribute the least to the pollutions, and that ‘the rich countries of the world must take greater responsibility for the costs regarding climate change’. Positive change can be influenced ‘by individual choices in some ways’ but it is crucial to acknowledge that ‘the dominant Western lifestyle is not sustainable, either environmentally, socially or economically’. It is therefore up to everyone in the West to ‘dare to examine how our behavior, our lifestyle, affect the world’s future’. What this reasoning does is effectively putting the root of the problem, and the responsibility to fix it, within the life and reality of the reader, not those affected.

The same can be said about the issue of food and water for all, the lack of resources in some parts of the world being not just a result of climate changes but also ‘unjust trade agreements’. Too low prices for crops grown in developing countries, together with ‘unfair competition from subsidized agriculture in Europe’ makes it ‘hard to be a farmer in Africa’. Another example is the way debt relief for developing countries is highlighted as an important issue, defining the debts owed to the industrialized world as ‘illegitimate’, and addressing the responsibility of those that once granted the loans ‘knowing that they would not benefit the people’.

Again, this places the problem in the hands of the reader, showing how political decisions and

policy in the West have an impact on others. It also deals with the image of certain parts of the world as “naturally poor”, addressing the political issues and conditions behind the problems.

The donors

As a donor, you are invited to contribute in the way that suites you the best by actively learning more and decide what project or theme you want to support, or letting the church decide ‘where the money is best needed’. The projects highlighted for donations are the disaster relief efforts. The main page also contains links to a variety of options and technical solutions for donating, information about tax reduction on donations, and illustrations portraying how the money is put to use.

The ways of contributing that are especially interesting in this context are becoming a *monthly donor*, promoted as an ‘easy way of giving’, for a ‘low cost’ but still enabling ‘long-term efforts’. For this you get the silver angel pin mentioned earlier, as a proof of your commitment. The second promoted option is *buying a grocery bag* - not for yourself, but for someone else as ‘a gift that wipes out hunger’. This is a fundraising technique based on the popularity of the prepaid grocery bag delivered on a weekly or monthly basis to your home, that have grown significantly in Sweden during the last years. This bag, though, is not delivered to your door, but functions as a symbol for providing someone with ‘ingredients for a better life’, for example fruit plants, seed, livestock, disaster relief, education, and so on.

In a way, the grocery bag carries the same function as the sponsor child in other organizations, *commodifying* the church’s aid efforts into a concept that is easy to understand and relate to for the presumed donor. It also plays on a notion of abundance, and maybe guilt, suggesting that the grocery bag that simplify the donors everyday life is not really a necessity, but something over the top, an extravagant symbol of the Western lifestyle.

It is also possible to donate through buying other ‘symbolic gifts with deeper meaning’, through the church’s own web shop. Clean water, fishing equipment, education, and soccer schools, are some of the products that the donor can choose between, to ‘give people the opportunity to change their life’ through an act of symbolic consumption.

5.6.3 Why should the reader contribute?

The driving force behind the actions of the Church of Sweden is *the Christian faith*, stating that it is a mission from God to ‘strive for a dignified life and a better world for all’. Humans have a special responsibility to care for nature and its creatures, for the earth and each other ‘as parts of God’s creation’. It is the authority of God that is invoked in the texts, not the United Nations or international law, and the mission is also ‘a duty to contribute to the reconciliation between people, between man and God, and between man and nature’.

Defending human dignity is a main focus, since ‘a violation of human rights is a violation of God’, connecting the faith to *a discourse of rights* where respect for every persons ability, as well as responsibility, is crucial. The issue of peoples ability, or *agency*, is addressed through stating that the receivers of aid should not be ‘objects in need of charity’ in the eyes of the world, but subjects in their own right.

Development and aid should rest on a willingness to ‘analyze power structures, fight against oppression and contribute to the freedom of humanity’, counteracting that people become ‘dependent on charity’ and striving towards a equal distribution of the world’s resources. Respecting diversity and the local knowledge is highlighted as a part of this, as well as respecting ‘life choices’ and ‘questions of faith’ - opening up for a church with a liberal an including attitude towards issues such as homosexuality or religious difference.

6. Discursive struggle and hegemony

In this second part of the analysis, focus will be turned to the discursive processes within the order of fundraising discourse. I have selected four themes to be further studied, based on the result of the initial analysis. These themes are not always clearly separate, but some perspectives might be part of several discussions and discursive processes.

Naturally, the themes presented here are not the only ones that would be interesting for research, given the material. There are several sites of discursive struggle, as well as hegemony, in the texts being analyzed. However, the selection is done with some thought to the theoretical perspectives introduced earlier, with the hope that these will be able to contribute to a better understanding of the tendencies that the research questions focus on.

6.1 The self-helping subject

Individualization is one of the discursive processes visible in how the texts handle and characterize the subjects within them, especially in reference to the donor and those who are receivers of aid. In the first case, the donor is a ‘fighter’ and/or ‘angel’, taking personal responsibility for the well being of others and watching over them, through monetary contributions. In the latter case, independence is a common trait assigned the recipients in spite of their dire situation, sometimes explicitly stating that they are not ‘objects for charity’ but *self-helping subjects* in their own right. Agency and the power to change one’s own life situation are the methods highlighted within this discourse, and there seems to be a consensus concerning its effective and liberating nature.

6.1.1 The new face of nonprofit development and social efforts

What is visible here is a powerful and important re-configuration of the discourse surrounding these nonprofit organizations, turning from the ‘traditional’ charity towards ‘modern’ development aid and social work. In the international context, it is a discourse of ‘trade not aid’ where development is a result of redistributing resources through market forces and relations. Where the first one is implicitly inscribed with character traits as inefficiency and dependency,

the latter is configured around a critical perspective, combined with a faith in personal strength and entrepreneurship.

While this *discourse of help to self-help* is in many ways positive, challenging the notion of charity as a benevolent project where the donors set the agenda, and addressing questions such as local organization, power relations between donor and recipients, and sustainable change, it also operates on a parallel ideological level. This level connects to a neoliberal discourse embracing the assumption that political and economic life is a matter of individual freedom and initiative (Eikenberry 2009), rewarding those who take responsibility for their own life and strive towards a personal improvement. From this perspective, it might be said that you got to earn your right to change - either through being a totally innocent and helpless object of charity, or by playing the role of the positive and innovative subject of development aid.

In a way, it also works toward disengaging the subject 'in need' and the subject of the donor by configuring the discourse so that change is something that comes from the independent acts of others. You can provide the economic means for this change, but the process itself is not connected to your actions, or your way of life. As Bauman (2001:72) puts it, "[d]ependence has become a dirty word: it refers to something that decent people should be ashamed of". But, the well-being of others depend on what you do or refrain from doing, both as an individual and as part of a group. From this perspective, dependence is a part of interpersonal and international relations, and there is a risk that the structural roots of inequality become obscured by the tactics of not recognizing this in a broader context.

6.1.2 The self-helping subject as a subpolitical superstar

In the world of nonprofit fundraising, it is not only celebrities that serves the function of superstars, but also causes, issues, places, and subjects. There is often a predetermined set of assumptions and ideas, depending on cultural experiences and concepts as well as personal positions, connected to the discursive practices within this world (Jefferess 2002). Richey & Ponte (2008) describes how aids as a cause, and Africa as a continent, have been treated as superstars of aid, their 'place' in the global hierarchy of development being well established. The

same can be said about women and children as subjects, and female vulnerability as an issue (Naylor 2011).

From this perspective, the self-helping subject might be viewed as a subpolitical superstar, ready to take action and responsibility through non-traditional channels of participation. Even though the organizations in many way act as mediators between donor and recipient, as Forstorp (2007) argues, the self-helping subject also functions as a personal stand-in for the donors - the monetary contribution enables a form of involvement and action that the uncertainty and precarious nature of reflexive modernity otherwise does not give much space for. The contribution is managed by the organization, but results in an immediate and direct effort in the form of micro credits, or other help to self-help concepts, that operate outside the normative political structure and mode of participation.

Female vulnerability and the gender aware Swede

It is also worth noticing that as causes for fundraising, the social work and lobbying that some of the organizations are engaged in within a national context, does not seem to be issues that produce a lot of revenue. They are mostly invisible in the specific fundraising texts, or clearly separated (as in the case of the Salvation Army), giving the international efforts a role of superstars as such. This distinction helps obscure the connection between the two, and might also contribute to the Otherness of those in need, as they are situated (both physically and politically) outside and at a distance from the reality of the presumed donor. This is also visible in the way some causes are contextualized and characterized, for example gender and women's rights.

Gender issues, or equality, is one of the prominent features in the organizational efforts - a superstar of aid, as mentioned above. Both women and girls are often characterized as 'specially vulnerable' groups, even if this distinction is more or less visible between the different nonprofits. It does connect to the two prerequisites for the Politics of Pity that Naylor (2011:184) describes - distinguishing those who suffer, and involving the suffering as spectacle. Within this *discourse of female vulnerability*, two issues are often highlighted - violence against women and girls, including female genital mutilation, and the deprivation of education when it comes to girls and young women in developing countries. While these are very important issues, and in much

need of political and social action and change, they are also issues that are predominantly distanced from the national gender debate in Sweden. Not that violence against women is not an issue in the national context, but situating the problem in these “extreme” forms plays on a discourse where the problems are always worse somewhere else. It becomes a convenient way of speaking out against inequality in “underdeveloped countries”, juxtaposing it to the “developed” situation in Sweden. When it comes to defining the Other, we can not live in 'the most equal country in the world' if there are no unequal countries to compare it to. This makes it, in a way, easy for the reader/donor to adopt the identity of a gender aware Swede, without really having to challenge the issue in a more personal context since there are always more dire or 'real' problems to solve outside Sweden.

6.2 An economy of (dis)trust

One of the prominent sites of discursive processes within the texts is the use of *market logics and language* when it comes to the description of how the organizations work, and how change is best effected. In the statements that position the organizations as ‘effective’, ‘business oriented’ and ‘target-driven’, the appropriation of market values is clearly visible as a form of normative ideology surrounding these activities (Eikenberry 2009, Wijkström & af Malmborg 2005). This market management approach, where goal-setting, cost-effectiveness, and formulating measurable milestones are seen as the way to conduct ‘business’, not only draws on a discourse of marketization, but also one of aid critique and the distrust of economic management of nonprofit organizations.

It is a way of managing and responding to the view of development aid as ‘throwing money down a rathole’ where nothing ever changes (Richey & Ponte 2008). It answers not only to the questions from the public about where the money goes, but also to the harsher conditions and stricter policies of a contemporary neo-liberal hegemony where ‘aid’ is looked upon with a suspicious eye. That this is a major issue for these organizations shows in the prominent highlighting of the affiliation to the Swedish Fundraising Control association, the logo being clearly visible on the fundraising subpage of every website.

The focus on market relations and effectiveness can be characterized as a *question of (dis)trust*, an assurance that the donor's money will be properly cared for and put to good use. It also speaks to potential partners from the business world, ensuring that an investment in a CSR project will be profitable - if not in money, then in social credibility. This is an interesting feature, since it puts nonprofit organizations in the double seat of being expected to handle an increasing amount of societal problems, at the same time as they are being subjected to increasingly critical scrutiny. In a way, this discourse contains an aspect of a 'damned if you do, damned if you do not' scenario, where the demand for stricter control and measurable methods might get in the way of the effectiveness it is supposed to ensure.

6.2.1 Access and simplicity

Even though there is a multitude of ways that a person (the 'you' that is being addressed in the texts) can contribute and donate to the good cause, there is a clear trend towards highlighting a few preferred options, ranging from just one to five or six. Looking at the fundraising pages of the organizations, there is a striking similarity between the majority of them. Structurally they are presented in a very homogenic form, where the preferred options for donating are located in the middle of the page, often accompanied by a photo, a video, or some sort of graphic presentation that draws attention and invites the viewer to click on them. These options tend to always include monthly donations by automatic transfers, either as a general gift or as sponsor for a certain child and/or project, but also spontaneous individual gifts, buying products or gift certificates, becoming a corporate sponsor, or organizing your own fundraising drive on behalf of the chosen organization. The main options are generally connected to a short text, describing the need for help, what the donated money is used for and some of the technical facts of your commitment and what you can get from it (in terms of newsletters, sponsor updates and so on).

This is of course a product of established fundraising techniques (see for example Sargeant 2009), but what is more important is the notion that the act of giving, closely associated to contributing and making a difference, is only a click away. From the first page there are only a few simple steps that the donor has to go through in order to complete the transaction and the commitment.

Simplicity is a favored term, used by a majority of the organizations. This is of course a way to secure the financial donations, making it technically easy to give by signing up as a sponsor or contributing with a gift directly via text message from your cell phone or via payment with a Visa or Master card. But it can also be looked upon as a way of handling the huge gap between the donors and those in need (Forstorp 2007, Jefferess 2002, Richey & Ponte 2008). At times the the problems and obstacles described by the nonprofit organizations can be perceived as overwhelming, making the potential donor more likely to feel powerless and not inclined to engage, since it is hard to grasp the reality of how you as a single person can make a difference.

To offer easy payment solutions and a preferred object for your concern is one of the many ways to bridge that gap. But, the easy and quick solution does not always encourage a deeper understanding of why the gap is there in the first place, or how it might be challenged from another angle than monetary donations. In that way, this form of fundraising becomes a discursive practice within the ‘discourse about the need for more philanthropy’ (Nickel & Eikenberry 2009), functioning as a stabilizing factor even though it connects to transformative notions of change and making an impact.

6.2.2 Freedom of choice

In addition to the main options for the donor, most organizations also provide a variety of other ways to donate or contribute. Standard options include anniversary gift certificates, memorial donations (in the name of a deceased person), dividend donations, bequests, electronic postcards, buying symbolical or branded products in the web shop, buying lottery tickets, choosing specific enterprises as you electrical supplier or maybe saving in special nonprofit funds that are being handled by banks in collaboration with the organization in question.

This *freedom of choice* when it comes to the fundraising discourse adheres to the individualization of modern society, where traits such as flexibility and personal choice are important factors (Bauman 2001). It corresponds to an increasingly volatile society, where action and reaction must be accessible at once and in the precise format preferred by the specific individual, or the moment is lost and together with it the possible donation.

6.3 Shopping for change

This theme deals with the way a *discourse of commodification* is visible in the analyzed texts, in how many of the options for donating are constructed as a form of transaction. Aside from the more conventional paths of fundraising, such as a single gift or recurring monthly donation, the most prominent technique for the organizations is the marketing of gifts or commodities in different forms. These can be divided into two categories; the *branded* and the *symbolical* commodities.

6.3.1 The branded fundraising commodity

The first category of branded products can in it self be divided into two separate subcategories, consisting of those that are produced by the organization itself, and the products endorsed by it. At some occasions the products does mirror the essence of the organization, by converting its goal or methods into a commodity, others includes different types of collaborations with businesses and corporations - products that sport the brand of the organization, without having any apparent connection to the idea behind it.

These gifts or commodities can consists of merchandise such as t-shirts, tote bags, jewelry, plastic water bottles and other kinds of branded products. They not only create economical winnings for the organization, but also works as a marketing tool making the brand or logo a part of everyday life and society.

They also create a sense of self-promotion for the buyer - using a wallet from Save the Children not only reminds you that you have contributed to a good cause, it also shows it to others. In that way, the altruistic essence of donating to charity or nonprofits is combined with a highly contemporary urge to 'become who you are' through your consumption choices, expressing personality and taste as well as politics (Nickel & Eikenberry 2009, Micheletti 2003).

6.3.2 The symbolical fundraising commodity

In common for the organizations that work through sponsorship programs is that the monetary donation does not benefit just the single child, but the whole community. Still, the individual

child is needed to make aid identifiable, to individualize the idea of a development project, thus involving it in a process of symbolism and commodification (Jefferess 2002). Visible here is a negotiating discursive process regarding how far this commodification is drawn, where some actors clearly oppose the individual sponsorship. Others have developed it into a concept where the role of the sponsor as consumer is further strengthened by the fact that options to choose specific attributes for the child, both when it comes to selection of gender and country, are available. It thereby connects to the discourse of freedom of choice discussed earlier, when the individual wants and needs of the sponsor is taken into account to increase the personal identification and connection.

The most prominent commodification within the discourse of fundraising, though, seems to be the *symbolical gift* - donating by purchasing a gift certificate that symbolizes an actual product, an animal, a construction or an opportunity. The majority the cases in this research offer this sort of *giving as consuming* possibility. The most popular themes within this genre is access to clean water, education and school supplies, the construction of sanitary facilities, vaccinations and disease prevention as well as agriculture and livestock.

6.3.3 Consumer power and meaningful consumerism

Commodification can be said to have two functions within fundraising discourse. In the first, the donor is approached not just as a charitable person, a compassionate human being but also as a consumer - someone who can buy the answers to the problems defined by the organization. As Forstorp (2007) and Naylor (2011) notes, the activity of mediating and transforming money into concrete help is an important part of the logic of giving aid, it makes both the problems and the interventions comprehensible for the public, makes them 'real'.

It creates a hands-on context for the donor, explicitly giving an account for how much can be accomplished from the gift. It is turning the abstract concept of development or social work into a concrete reality. It is also an ideological turn, adjusting the language to that of the market and expressing the need for donations and help in a way that corresponds to a cost effective and purposeful discourse.

In a society filled with uncertainty, you do not want to give your money away to something that you do not understand, or have no power over. You want to be able to see results of your investment and feel that you are making a difference. Commodification gives that power to the donor, being able to fully control where and how the contribution will be spent, and by whom. It also connects to the economy of (dis)trust discussed earlier, where it positions the donor in relation to the organization - drawing on a discourse where nonprofits, and their receivers of aid, need to be controlled and monitored, making sure that they live up to the standards of effectiveness.

In a way, it might also be argued that this form of fundraising also draws on the implicit understanding of *consumer power discourse* (Micheletti 2003). In a society where personal political participation is more often encouraged in the market than in the public debate, it might be easier to demand one's rights as a consumer than as a citizen. There are logics and rules at play in the market, that gives the consumer certain security and agency, being able to demand a refund or trade if the commodity bought would not live up to the expected standard.

Shopping with a conscience

The second function works through a convergence of the need for 'meaning' in consumption, to fight off older connotations of exploitation and frivolous excess, and a hegemonic view of the market as the only conceivable arena for societal development and human interaction (Bauman 2001, Eikenberry 2009).

A characterizing trait for this is how charitable consumption is defined as 'meaningful' as opposed to an implicit meaningless and extravagant form of shopping. This is one of the discursive processes where signs of struggle are visible - a struggle over the way market logics are adapted into the world of fundraising. The 'meaningfulness' is not just attributed to the products, but the act of consumption in itself by its connection to the charitable cause. Drawing on a pseudo-critical discourse, the 'meaningful shopping' embraces the market, but from a perspective where it is okay to shop and engage in activities for personal fulfillment - as long as you do it with a conscience. In the light of the distinction of discourses made by Nickel & Eikenberry (2009), the marketized fundraising works as a *falsely transformative discourse*,

where the possibility for change is situated within the inevitability of the market and consumer society.

6.4 Non-political politics

When it comes to the ideological aspects of nonprofits, and especially the politics explicitly visible in the texts, it is obvious that there is a consensus on a *discourse of non-politics* dominant within this world. Almost every organization is very clear on pointing out that it does not ‘take sides’ or have any political affiliations. This is done even though all of them operate within a context that is filled with political conflict and pressures.

While this of course is a part of the organizational strive towards being able to be present in any country or region in the world, it can also be viewed as a part of marketization forces that construct the organization in such a way that it is salable to anyone, anywhere. To sell the organization (to businesses as well as private donors), it is necessary to hide the politics behind the invisibility cloak of human decency, and basic human rights. This can be said to situate them outside the normative political spectra and conflicts, thus connecting them to Beck’s (1992) concept of subpolitics.

6.4.1 With the authority of God and human decency

The characterization of why the organizations need to exist, and why the donor should contribute, do not follow the traditional separation between left and right wing politics. The demands and basic principles are instead based upon two factors; a *discourse of humanitarianism*, and the *authoritarian discourse* of either international law, or God.

What is interesting with this approach is that it draws upon global concepts such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international humanitarian law, and the Convention of the Rights of the Child, to justify its own existence. At the same time there is little or no mention that these are all political agreements, obscuring the fact that they did not just appear from thin air or common sense but are the result of debate, conflict and interpretations.

It is debatable if this discourse of humanitarianism conveys that politics can be something outside the normative field of left and right - or that it is possible to take a stand without taking a political stand. In a worst case scenario, it replaces political participation with apolitical concern and pity, thus making the distribution of resources for social work and international aid a question of individual benevolence rather than collective responsibility.

Benevolence as a mission from God

From this perspective, the Christian churches stands out from the other organizations, using a language and characterization of the problems at hand that is more explicitly 'political' than the others. In the context of the Church of Sweden, this might be due to its special relationship to the state, the separation between state and church being only little more than a decade away and thus still providing a notion of security and authority, besides the one from God.

What is interesting here, from the perspective of discursive processes, is how the identity of the Christian faith is being re-negotiated and used within the nonprofit discourse. There is a continuum visible between the involvement of the faith in the efforts of the organization, and the explicit deletion of this aspect. There are also cracks, where the specific interpretation of the faith do not go together with the the humanitarian ideals, and thus must be dimmed out or re-configured so that they at first sight seem to be one and the same (as the case of the Salvation Amy's attitudes towards abortion or homosexuality).

Poverty sells, but not at home

Despite this non-political approach, there is also a common trait of highlighting the organizational identity as a lobby organization, both abroad and at home. This means that the organizations operate within the national parliamentary system, making efforts to shape public opinion and political policy. But national, more politically charged, topics of child poverty and social welfare are - as stated before - not in the spotlight for fundraising efforts. It seems like poverty sells when it is the poverty of the well known Other, not when it is placed in a closer context.

7. Conclusions and discussion

To conclude I will first try to summarize the results so that they correspond to the research questions asked in the introduction. After this, a discussion on what these results entail for the contemporary political debate and the future of nonprofit fundraising will follow, as well as a look to future research in this area.

7.1 Defining fundraising discourse

The objective of this study was to find out how fundraising works as a discursive practice - how is the world constructed, who and whom are participants in this world, and why should the presumed donor get involved? This was done by looking at the websites of six Swedish nonprofit organizations that all have some traits in common, but also represent three different types of organizational structure and history.

Initially, one of the most distinct findings is that in the world of fundraising, the problems addressed are predominantly situated outside of the national context. Even the organizations that do operate within the area of social work in Sweden concentrate their fundraising on the international efforts, or keep them strictly separated. The act of giving thus, is constructed as a way of contributing to the solution of problems that are distant from the donor, and hard to address in any other way.

In the construction of problems, the focus on *lack* is common - lack of resources, education, health care, and power. A Western cultural understanding of poverty as a natural state for some parts of the world, that Jefferess (2002) refers to, is visible in some of the texts, but what is more interesting is a tendency to circle reasoning when it comes to the causes of poverty. In many ways the explanations available rely on the understanding that the lack of education, for example, causes poverty, at the same time as poverty is constructed as the reason to the lack of education.

7.1.1 Local solutions to global problems

The solutions provided are predominantly formulated as actions directed towards the self-help of the people and the community, to promote sustainability and lasting change, as opposed to a 'traditional' view of aid as a quick fix and directed from above. Despite the many mentions of the problematic life situation of the recipients, there is a will and a strive towards making the image of the 'subject in need' more nuanced, together with the methods and efforts of aid. This is done through focus on the individual agency of those afflicted by problems and disasters.

When it comes to the specific fundraising, it is dominated by the image of women and children, either in a disaster situation or as smiling and happy recipients of the opportunities provided by the organizations. There is also a distinctive feature of highlighting the effectiveness and trustworthy nature of the efforts and the organization, in relation to the donors and presumed business partners.

It might be argued though, that the focus on local power and agency serves a distancing function, taking away some of the responsibility of the donor to solve the problem by changing life styles or politics in the West. Even while it is crucial to work on a local level - no change will come unless it is grounded in the experiences and will of those affected - this singular interest does in some ways conceal the connection between the situation 'here' and 'there'.

7.1.2 The consumer donor and commodified aid

The act of donating is constructed as a form of contributing to a mediated cause, by making it possible for the organization to continue its efforts. Fulfilling dreams, providing a future, and making a difference are some of the predications connected to the act of giving. The donor is someone with the power to make change happen, but not by changing themselves but through providing opportunity for others. Drawing on a discourse of presumed uncertainty and powerlessness, the organizations provide a form of participation that is quick and easy, a concrete way of making real change, saving lives and giving hope.

A dominant feature is to construct the donation as a transaction, offering a commodity in the form of symbolical gifts or family members (sponsored children) in return for the money. It is here that the marketization of fundraising is most visible, incorporating a discourse of consumer power and commodification into the act of giving.

What is problematic in this situation, is that you are invited, more as an informed and aware consumer than a citizen, to 'buy' a voice or a platform for participation through the organization as a form of 'critical consumption'. The act of choosing, the freedom of choice, is constructed as a contemporary way to change society by choosing where, why, what and how you exercise political agency. This is done by 'putting your money where your mouth is' as a consumer, a way of displacing responsibility on to the individual person, rather than on a structural level of international relations and economic inequality.

7.1.3 Consumer culture and the future of fundraising

While this might be an easy and sometimes effective way to raise your voice and make an impact, it does have problematic implications. The most dire of all being the fact that if change is attained by consumption, those without economic means have little opportunity to make their opinions heard. It might thus result in a societal climate where awareness and critical thought becomes a thing of the well to do, while the organizational structure of the working class crumbles under the stress of aggressively neoliberal policies.

As Forstorp (2007) puts it, aid is one of the few alternatives for helping that is available in contemporary society and given that the willingness to contribute to change is serious, it must be regarded as a good thing. At the same time, the ideological implications of individual giving, despite being directed at problems and solutions far away, is something that supports the dismantling of social security at home. This form of redistributing resources formerly directed through taxes, makes the welfare system more fragile and dependent on the good will of individuals rather than political policy.

Another problematic aspect of the development of a marketized philanthropy and fundraising discourse is that if commodification and symbolical shopping becomes the way contributing and participating is constructed, it leaves little room for the efforts that can not be as easily transformed into products.

Organizations that work mainly through lobbying, awareness raising and shaping both public opinion and political policy will in this scenario have a lot harder time with fundraising, trying to commodify their work into easy to grasp concepts and concrete help. Is it at all possible to buy rights, or justice? There is also the risk of a development of hierarchy within the symbolical commodities, where ‘fun gifts’ such as a goat or a grocery bag becomes more popular than the ‘boring’, but maybe more needed, alternatives. How do you commodify and market for example an accountant to help with the audit of a local partner organization?

7.2 What is to be done?

Some of the actors in this study claims that the state has a special responsibility to care for the rights and lives of its citizens, and that responsibility is in turn monitored by and through the civil society. What happens then, when the state must execute power over an actor that it have increasingly less power over – the Market?

In a society where the regulating policies of the government is used to make it clear that no regulation over capital’s liberties will be exercised (Bauman 2001:26), it remains for civic minded, responsible individuals only to exercise their personal power as consumers, rather than citizens. The present-day lean towards situating fundraising and responsibility-taking in a context of consumerism does not really challenge the concepts of society as it is, but risks to continue the tradition of using the sight of the poor to keep the non-poor at bay and in step (Bauman 2001:117). In a capitalist discourse, it is only more informed and aware consumption that can eliminate the problems caused by consumption, a notion that has become so ubiquitous that it is almost impossible to challenge it. This in turn influences a development where philanthropy and nonprofit efforts are joined in one single medium (the market), together with the causes for suffering it seeks to eliminate, making them both depoliticized (Nickel & Eikenberry 2009:983).

The possibilities for nonprofits and other actors of the civil society to engage in politics as a discourse of power, rather than of apolitical benevolence and individual choice, thus shrinks. This leaves less room for the 'counterculture to democratize everyday life' that Eikenberry (2009:591) opts for. In this counterculture she argues for an alternative democratic approach to fundraising and nonprofit organizing, shifting the transactional giving model to one that is more transformational, engaging individuals more deeply and regularly in the work. Emphasizing the distinct value-driven dimensions, instead of the efficiency and business-like approaches, of the organization can contribute to a discourse where the cause asks more for your voice, than your wallet.

What this research have done is developing the understanding of how marketized fundraising works, and how it is articulated in a specific context. Looking forward, it would be interesting to see further research that takes on the issue from the inside - a more detailed study of the everyday discursive practices of fundraising within organizations. Another perspective would be that of the donors - how do they perceive the act of donating, in a context of political participation and responsibility? A gendered perspective on fundraising techniques and discourses would also be something to develop, both when it comes to the familiar face of the Other as a suffering, but independent, woman, and when it comes to the presumed donors being addressed in the communication.

8. References

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