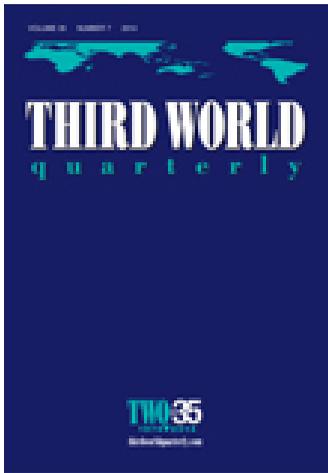


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Barbarian hordes: the overpopulation scapegoat in international development discourse

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Despite sustained critique of a neo-Malthusian focus on ‘overpopulation’, the issue continues to resurface regularly within international development discourse, particularly with respect to ‘sustainable’ development in relation to growing environmental security concerns. This suggests that the issue defies purely rational evaluation, operating on a deeper psychodynamic register. In this paper we therefore analyse the population question as a ‘scapegoat’, in the psychoanalytic sense of a fantasmatic construction concealing the gap between the symbolic order of international development and its persistent failure in practice. By conjuring the age-old image of animalistic barbarian hordes breeding inexorably and therefore overflowing their Third World confines to threaten the security – and enjoyment – of wealthier nations, the overpopulation bogeyman helps to displace attention from systemic issues within the political economy of development, namely, the futility of pursuing sustainable development within the context of a neoliberal capitalism that characteristically exacerbates both economic inequality and environmental degradation.

Keywords: development; psychoanalysis; population; environment; capitalism

Introduction

Yet in all societies, even those that are most vicious, the tendency to a virtuous attachment is so strong that there is a constant effort towards an increase of population. This constant effort as constantly tends to subject the lower classes of the society to distress and to prevent any great permanent amelioration of their condition.¹

The haunting spectre of ‘overpopulation’ has been one of the principle persistent concerns within international development discourse since its consolidation in the post-World War II period.² This concern is commonly grounded, of course, in neo-Malthusian reasoning concerning the apparent contradiction between an

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arithmetically increasing food supply and exponential population growth, resulting, ostensibly, in competition for scarce resources leading to a hierarchical divide between winners and losers in this struggle. Poverty, in this frame, is attributed to a combination of: (1) resource scarcity compelling competition for available wealth; and (2) the ‘inferior’ qualities of the poor themselves (explained alternately in biological and cultural terms), rendering them failures in the resource grab. This perspective is clearly evident in the quotation from Malthus’ foundational *Essay on the Principle of Population* reproduced in the epigram above, yet, as we will demonstrate below, it strongly continues in the present as well.

There are, of course, numerous deficiencies with this perspective, consistently highlighted by critics ever since the overpopulation spectre was first raised within development circles. Despite such efforts at refutation, however, the overpopulation bogeyman has continued to crop up periodically in development discourse to the present day. The resilience of this frame in the face of copious contradictory evidence suggests that its persistence defies purely rational evaluation of the factual basis of the thesis (if such a thing exists), operating at a deeper psychodynamic register. In this article, then, we draw on Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, primarily through the work of popular contemporary interpreter Slavoj Žižek, to suggest that the overpopulation argument functions as a ‘scapegoat’, a fantasmatic construction serving to conceal the gap between the symbolic order of international development and its persistent failure in actual practice. In developing this analysis, we introduce a synthetic conceptual framework, productively combining Lacanian psychoanalysis with Marxism and Foucauldian post-structuralism in order to treat development simultaneously as political economy, discourse and a desire-laden fantasy structure.³ In the process we build, along with the other contributions to this special section, on a growing body of research analysing international development from a psychoanalytic perspective.⁴

We begin by documenting the persistence of the overpopulation explanation within development discourse in the face of equally persistent efforts to discredit this line of reasoning over time. We then frame the overpopulation issue in terms of a characteristically modern preoccupation with ‘biopower’, showing how population and the regulation thereof have constituted a central preoccupation of modern society since its inception. In this sense, we show, population stands at the intersection of a variety of prominent conceptual frames through which modernity has been analysed, combining a Marxist focus on accumulation, a post-structuralist emphasis on governmentality and biopower, and a psychoanalytic concern with desire for *jouissance*. In doing so, we introduce our Lacanian–Žižekian perspective to describe the ways in which overpopulation functions as a scapegoat within development discourse, displacing concern from the (neoliberal capitalist) political economy within which development functions in favour of a focus on the ostensibly deviant deficiencies of the ‘underdeveloped’ themselves, and thereby sustaining a fantasy of development in the face of the latter’s widespread failure in practice.⁵ We conclude by highlighting the implications of our analysis for development studies, suggesting that what the fantasy of overpopulation and its resolution ultimately obscures is the impossibility of achieving widespread sustainable development within a

neoliberal capitalist system that commonly exacerbates both poverty and ecological degradation.

Beyond structure and discourse

In elaborating its analysis, this article contributes to a growing body of research exploring international development from a psychoanalytic perspective. More than this, however, it seeks to integrate this perspective with other prominent critical approaches to development, productively combining Lacanian psychoanalysis with Marxist political economy and Foucauldian post-structuralism in pursuit of a holistic theoretical framework capable of treating development as the intersection of 'transnational economic policies, material and cultural conditions, and psychic functioning'.⁶ Critical analysis of development has focused, in large part, on the question of why development has so frequently failed to achieve intended results, despite the investment of more than \$2.3 trillion⁷ and the deployment of innumerable workers worldwide in the second half of the 20th century alone. A Marxist perspective, represented most centrally by dependency, world-system, and uneven development schools of thought, has for decades critiqued conventional development planning for functioning as an ideological smokescreen, promising progress yet obscuring a more fundamental campaign to preserve the Third World in a chronic state of underdevelopment as a source of cheap resources and labour for the transfer of wealth from the periphery by the core.⁸ Beginning in the 1990s the so-called post-development perspective, grounded largely in Foucauldian post-structuralism, advanced an alternative analysis, treating development as a discourse – a 'structure of knowledge shaping practical intervention...with roots in the Western Enlightenment'⁹ – taking the honest intentions of development planners at face value and therefore attributing development's widespread failure to the intrinsic limitations of planners' perspective, which commonly asserts the superiority of rational, scientific knowledge and centralised planning and is unable to account for the complex sociocultural exigencies of life in particular locales.¹⁰ More recently scholars have introduced psychoanalysis to critique the post-development perspective for 'only examin[ing] those phenomena that appear in the symbolic order of development',¹¹ and failing to consider the deeper psychodynamic processes operating beyond yet undergirding the discursive order.¹²

There are of course multiple tensions among these different perspectives, which some scholars have recently been working to reconcile. Most ambitiously, perhaps, the 'community economies collective' led by JK Gibson-Graham has sought to bring these three perspectives together in a productive synthesis. Hence, Sato endeavours to reconcile Marxist and Lacanian perspectives through a focus on 'non-essentialist' class.¹³ Gibson-Graham themselves, meanwhile, draws on all three perspectives in their 'diverse economies' approach to post-development.¹⁴

In seeking to explain the 'unfailing belief in development, given the notorious inability of governmental and non-governmental institutions to keep their promises',¹⁵ a psychoanalytic perspective views development as essentially a fantasy structure propelled by the production of desire for the objects (ie development projects) it promises. Cato, for instance, calls development 'one of

a sequence of social fantasies born after World War II',¹⁶ while De Vries contends that 'development has a virtual or fantastic side' in that 'the actuality of development is supplemented by a virtual dimension, as manifested in the desire for, and imagination of, development'.¹⁷ In De Vries's analysis, an inversion of Ferguson's classic post-structuralist analysis of development as an 'anti-politics machine',¹⁸ development 'operates as a desiring machine', relying 'on the production of desires, which it cannot fulfil'.¹⁹ In this way 'the desire for development fills the gap between the promises and their meagre actual realisations, thus giving body to a desiring machine that also operates in between the generation and banalisation of hope'.²⁰

What our analysis contributes to this perspective is an appreciation of the way in which the issue of overpopulation complements this through production of desire, offering a scapegoat to explain development's failure and the frustration of the desire it produces. 'Overpopulation' helps to explain in advance why development fails, why it is unable to alleviate the poverty and create the harmonious whole it pursues. In the process it displaces focus from the structural inequality inherent in the neoliberal capitalist system through which development is pursued, as we explain further below. Before elaborating this analysis, however, we describe how the overpopulation thesis has developed (and been contested) over time.

The spectre of overpopulation

Malthus was not the first to invoke the spectre of overpopulation but has been by far the most influential. Since publication of his first *Essay on Population* (and five subsequent editions), arguments drawing on his ideas have resurfaced with clocklike regularity in both scholarly and popular discourse as well as public policy arenas. After World War II, in particular, the overpopulation argument has increasingly influenced both public consciousness and foreign policy in the West in relation to key issues, including security, the environment, poverty, food production and economic development in the global South.²¹ Hence it has been argued that neo-Malthusian narratives have achieved the status of 'hegemonic myths' within modern society.²² Closely echoing Malthus more than 200 years later, for instance, Jeffrey Sachs writes in *The End of Poverty*:

One reason for a poverty trap is a demographic trap, where impoverished families choose to have lots of children. These choices are understandable, yet the results can be disastrous...Rapid population growth also puts enormous pressure on farm sizes and environmental resources, thereby exacerbating the poverty.²³

In the 19th century, intellectually, both Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace were influenced by Malthus's argument in developing their theory of evolution by natural selection, as were so-called 'social Darwinists' such as Herbert Spencer (coiner of the classic phrase 'survival of the fittest').²⁴ When asked in 1835 for his diagnosis of 'the principle cause of poverty' in Ireland, Alex de Tocqueville responded: 'A too-numerous population. It is certain that the land divided up, or rather not divided up, as it is in Ireland, cannot furnish a constant employment for our population'.²⁵ In terms of policy influence, Malthus helped to inspire debate about population growth in England, resulting in the 1800 Census Act to

monitor growth rates. Increased population growth in many European countries in the 19th century, resulting primarily from advances in agricultural technology, served to spur colonisation in the interest of securing 'an outlet for surplus population'.²⁶

After the World War I the new discipline of demography arose in the USA, strongly influenced by eugenics, framing the overpopulation issue as essentially a question of women's fertility; it related the apparent diversity in fertility rates across societies and social groups to class as well as intelligence and other personal characteristics.²⁷ These narratives were still present three decades later with the establishment of The Population Council in 1952 by D Rockefeller III as a result of concerns about growing populations in developing countries and their impact upon wealthier societies with lower fertility rates.²⁸

With the consolidation of development discourse after World War II the question of overpopulation took on newfound importance. As one observer wrote at the time, 'It is probable that in the last five years more copies have been published of studies related to population than in all the previous centuries'.²⁹ This preoccupation increased such that 'during the late 1950s, for the first time, "overpopulation" came to be understood as an imminent threat... Reduction in the rate of population growth was now seen as a condition for successful investments in development'.³⁰ In 1964 US President Johnson cemented this concern by contending before the United Nations that 'each five dollars spent on population control was worth one hundred dollars invested in economic growth (at an estimated cost of five dollars per "birth averted")'.³¹ As a result, population control became an integral – indeed essential – component of international development policy: 'First hesitantly, and then by consensus, almost all Third World nations built up powerful population programmes'.³² It was supported by multilateral organisations like the UN's Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), created in 1969. In 1974 the World Population Plan of Action recommended that countries 'give priority to implementing development programs and educational and health strategies which, while contributing to economic growth and higher standards of living, have a decisive impact on demographic trends including fertility'.³³

The principle focus of such programmes was 'family planning' (ie birth control): 'During the early part of the 20th century, condoms had been associated with individual defense against unwanted children or syphilis in the pursuit of personal pleasure. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, they connoted a public defense against a new epidemic called the population explosion'.³⁴ Concerns and fears over adequate food, water and other natural resources sometimes led to coercive policies. India instituted forced sterilisation campaigns, while China implemented its one-child policy. Indonesian caravans of medical personnel, police and military officers entered towns to pressure families into limiting their procreation.³⁵

Population control programmes were often explicitly linked with national security concerns. The US National Security Council's (NSC) 1974 study memorandum stated that the political consequences of demographic factors were damaging to countries 'in whose advancement the US is interested, thus creating political and even national security problems for the US'.³⁶ It advised that aid priority should be given to 'selective development policies in sectors offering

the greatest promise of increasing motivation for smaller family size'.³⁷ This view is echoed in the NSC's decision memorandum a year later, where it is stated that 'population growth can affect domestic problems including economic expansion'.³⁸

Environmental degradation first became linked with overpopulation in the 1960s with the growth of the modern ecological movement, most notably by Paul (and Anne) Ehrlich in their 1968 book *The Population Bomb*, which predicted environmental collapse, human suffering and massive starvation on a global scale as a result of future increases in human population.³⁹ Garrett Hardin reinforced the association in his famous 'Tragedy of the Commons' essay, also published in the same year,⁴⁰ an association further solidified by the 1972 Club of Rome report *The Limits to Growth*.⁴¹ In 1974 The Rockefeller Commission on Population Control expanded the focus by issuing a report linking environmental deterioration and decreasing natural resources to increasing numbers of people seeking a higher standard of living.⁴² In subsequent years the Ehrlichs and co-authors pushed the argument to extremes in a series of publications, eventually introducing the famous IPAT (Impact = Population x Affluence x Technology) equation both to emphasise the centrality of population to environmental degradation and to qualify that population's environmental impact is complicated by contextual societal conditions.⁴³

In the 1980s sustainable development discourse – born out of the same, mostly Northern environmentalism⁴⁴ – while initially seen as more sympathetic to different explanations of the environmental and social crises, commonly invoked the same neo-Malthusian reasoning, blaming the poor for exacerbating their poverty by refusing to reduce their fertility and thereby precipitating a downward spiral of increased poverty and environmental degradation.⁴⁵ The inclusion of 'environmental refugees' within the sustainable development lexicon further fingered the poor as threats to local, regional, national and international security and conflicts.⁴⁶ Echoing such concerns, the influential 1987 Brundtland Report identified poverty-induced environmental stress as an important source of conflict.⁴⁷

This paved the way for the emergence of the environmental security field in the 1990s,⁴⁸ cementing this association between population and environment. Centred largely around the work of Thomas Homer-Dixon,⁴⁹ environmental security discourse highlighted the potential for increased violent conflict and international migration (thus bringing national security concerns back to centre stage) as a result of environmental degradation, natural disaster and resource disputes spurred by population growth.⁵⁰ While Homer-Dixon has denied the centrality of overpopulation in his conceptual framework, qualifying this with the statement 'environmental scarcity is never a sole or sufficient cause of large migrations, poverty, or violence; it always joins with other economic, political, and social factors to produce its effects',⁵¹ critics such as Peluso and Watts assert that 'Homer-Dixon places much more weight on population growth than he is prepared to admit, and that he reads into scarcity (or abundance) a demographic presence that vastly exaggerates the causal significance of population in conflict and violence'.⁵² Meanwhile, less nuanced analysts, such as journalist Robert Kaplan, heavily influenced by Homer-Dixon, pushed the argument further, contending that 'it is Thomas Malthus, the philosopher of

demographic doomsday, who is now the prophet of West Africa's future' and identifying 'disease, overpopulation, unprovoked crime, scarcity of resources, [and] refugee migrations' in the rise of 'criminal anarchy' in the region.⁵³ Kaplan thus identified 'The Environment' as 'the national-security issue of the early twenty-first century',⁵⁴ – a position that quickly became influential within US and other foreign policy arenas,⁵⁵ having been taken seriously, among others, by the Clinton administration.⁵⁶

The United Nations has also been prominent in keeping the Malthusian argument alive. In his foreword to the *Global Environmental Outlook GEO 4 Report*, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon asserts that water 'supplies are under great duress as a result of high population growth, unsustainable consumption patterns, poor management practices, pollution, inadequate investment in infrastructure and low efficiency in water use'.⁵⁷ In the following *GEO 5 Report* this perspective is reiterated when UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director Achim Steiner states that 'the 7 billion humans alive today are collectively exploiting the Earth's resources at accelerating rates and intensities that surpass the capacity of its systems to absorb wastes and neutralize the adverse effects on the environment'.⁵⁸

Recently the overpopulation spectre has been resurrected yet again by the newest player in the global development game, the Gates Foundation, which in July 2012 helped convene the London Family Planning Summit at which, 'along with USAID, UNFPA and other international organisations, they rolled out a 2.6 billion dollar family planning strategy'.⁵⁹ Echoing Truman some 50 years earlier, the Foundation contends, 'Voluntary family planning is one of the most cost-effective investments a country can make in its future. Every dollar spent on family planning can save governments up to 6 dollars that can be spent on improving health, housing, water, and other public services'.⁶⁰

Overpopulation and its discontents

In the face of such persistent concerns, critics have consistently sought to refute the overpopulation thesis since Malthus first brought it to public attention. In *Of Population*, for instance, William Godwin contended that Malthus' calculations of population growth rates were grossly inflated.⁶¹ Among Malthus's earliest critics were Marx and Engels, who indeed called the overpopulation thesis 'the crudest, most barbarous theory that ever existed, a system of despair'.⁶²

Critique of neo-Malthusian reason picked up following publication of *The Population Bomb*.⁶³ In his 1971 *The Closing Circle*, for instance, Commoner contended that 'population trends in the US cannot be blamed for the deteriorated condition of the environment' for 'there simply has not been a sufficient rise in the US population to account for the enormous increase in pollution level'.⁶⁴ Such critiques were reinforced by the so-called 'cornucopians', who denied environmental limits and viewed the environmental and social crises as less serious than neo-Malthusians suggested, claiming that such crises could be easily overcome through technological innovation. Under this perspective, population growth actually serves as a driver of ingenuity, agricultural revolutions and increases in productivity.⁶⁵

Perhaps the strongest critique of the overpopulation argument comes from the perspective of political ecology, in terms of which overpopulation is seen to distract attention from 'deeper political and economic forces that generate poverty, environmental degradation, violence, and migration'.⁶⁶ Political ecologists assert that the Malthusian argument places blame for the poverty and environmental crises on the poor, ignoring the role played by powerful interests in environmental degradation, for instance, the demands placed on natural resource extraction for export by the globalised political economic system, namely neoliberal capitalism, under the influence of transnational corporations, international financial institutions (IFIS) and development assistance agencies.⁶⁷ Durham points out, for instance, that the famous IPAT equation does 'not bother with the internal structure of human populations (including ethnicity, gender, class, power relations, etc), with internal cultural differences in resource use and technology, or with the surrounding world system of inter-population relations'.⁶⁸ As a result, the overpopulation argument puts the responsibility for environmental degradation, poverty, hunger and conflicts on the people with the lowest ecological footprint and least access to resources and power.⁶⁹

Probably the most prolific of the political ecology critics of the overpopulation thesis, Betsy Hartmann, deconstructs what she calls the 'degradation narrative' asserting that environmental degradation, and the resulting migration and 'environmental refugee' flows leading to possible violent conflicts, are caused by overpopulated poor communities in the global South.⁷⁰ By contrast, Hartmann contends that the poor are commonly forced into unsustainable resource use because of a lack of alternatives stemming from limited availability of land and natural resources.⁷¹ In short, Hartmann asserts, 'The belief in overpopulation is so pervasive because it is reinforced in schools, the media, and policy circles where scapegoating the poor conveniently obscures the role of the rich and powerful in depleting natural resources and deepening inequality'.⁷²

In the following we draw on psychoanalytic theory to build on this framing of the overpopulation thesis as a scapegoat diverting attention from structural inequality within the overarching political economy of international development. First, however, we describe the relationship between overpopulation concerns and a characteristically modern preoccupation with 'biopower'.

Population and biopower

As Foucault informs us, 'population' became a newly central preoccupation with the rise in the 18th century of the modern state, in its shift from a form of governance concerned with the control of individual subjects to one emphasising the exercise of 'biopower' over a collection of citizens now conceived as an organic whole.⁷³ 'Biopower' is, of course, Foucault's term for a form of power exercised in the interest of 'life itself',⁷⁴ deriving legitimation from its claim to nurture and enhance the vitality and productivity of the population. It is, Foucault summarises, a power to 'make live and to let die' (as opposed to a sovereign prerogative to 'let live or make die').⁷⁵ The state's success in this regard would be assessed by statistics – literally the 'science of the state'⁷⁶ – measuring dimensions of the population (life expectancy, morbidity, infant mortality, birth and death rates, etc) taken as indicators of its collective vigour. The

ultimate measure of biopower, in this sense, would be the population growth rate, a distillation of all other salient indicators and the most fundamental symbol of the state's success in exercising 'a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them'.⁷⁷ In this process, as Duden describes it, 'Statistics became the new "Latin" of all modern sciences and the term "population" lost its tie to actual people'.⁷⁸

Perhaps not coincidentally population became central, in the same period, to the emerging capitalist system as well. Indeed, Silvia Federici asserts a fundamental link between capitalism and biopower, contending that 'the promotion of life-forces turns out to be nothing more than the result of a new concern with the accumulation and reproduction of labor-power'.⁷⁹ Despite his general reticence regarding explanations in terms of the economic base, Foucault himself called attention to this link, acknowledging that:

bio-power was without question an indispensable element in the development of capitalism; the latter would not have been possible without the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes...The adjustment of the accumulation of men to that of capital, the joining of the growth of human groups to the expansion of productive forces and the differential allocation of profit, were made possible in part by the exercise of bio-power in its many forms and applications.⁸⁰

Federici describes, with the rise of capitalism, a newfound preoccupation with women's reproductive capacities, resulting in a brutally violent campaign against spheres of public female influence (ie herbalism, midwifery), leading to the infamous witch trials, in which hundreds of thousands of women were killed, and to women's subsequent mass confinement to the private sphere to become, in a very real sense, breeding machines for replication and expansion of the capitalist workforce.⁸¹ After all, Marx noted long ago that capitalism requires a surplus labour force in order to create the competition for employment, reducing wages (and thus inflation) to a minimum. Eighteenth century proponents of liberal capitalism such as Adam Smith explicitly advocated stimulation of population growth as a requisite for increasing the 'wealth of nations'.⁸² This argument extended to colonial emigration, grounded in the logic that 'a million Frenchmen in Africa, or a million Germans in the Pacific, would...provide better customers and a surer market for their mother-countries than a million naked savages'.⁸³

The key to the effective exercise of biopower was to manipulate the various statistical indicators in order to achieve optimum results, and the principle means of doing this was through regulation of sexuality – the essential vehicle, of course, for expansion of population. As a result, Foucault describes, sexuality became a central concern of the modern state, the focus of a wide range of disciplinary institutions – what Althusser calls the ideological state apparatus⁸⁴ – from the Church to families to schools to mental hospitals, and their correspondent regimes for the production of knowledge including medicine, psychiatry, biology, political science and economics.⁸⁵ This newfound 'importance assumed by sex as a political issue' was the result of its position at the intersection of the two principle mechanisms – the disciplining of bodies and the regulation of populations – for the exercise of biopower: 'at the juncture of

the “body” and the “population”, sex became a central target of a power organized around the management of life rather than the menace of death.⁸⁶ Sex became, essentially, ‘the index of a society’s strength, revealing both its political energy and its biological vigor’.⁸⁷

This preoccupation with sexuality in relation to biopower was essentially racist – Foucault asserts that it in fact spawned ‘racism in its modern, “biologizing,” statist form’⁸⁸ – for the state’s concern with nurturing life applied primarily to its own population, conceived as an organism in competition with other national populations for limited resources and living space.⁸⁹ Others’ population growth, in this sense, threatened one’s own – as did, of course, excessive relative expansion of the ostensibly ‘impure’ (ie lower-class) elements within the home population as well, spurring a twofold ‘mythical concern with protecting the purity of the blood and ensuring the triumph of the race’.⁹⁰ This played out on various fronts. Within Europe Tobin highlights a general ‘tendency to desire a high birth-rate and low death-rate within one’s own State, and a low birth-rate and high death-rate in other States’. Meanwhile, ‘ratios between native and imperial populations were of significant concern’ for many colonial administrators.⁹¹ Domestically, within the USA, fears of ‘race-suicide’ were raised among others by President Teddy Roosevelt, who in a 1905 speech ‘condemned birth control among specific US populations (read white women) for fear of the annihilation of the white race’.⁹² The logical extension of this reasoning was of course eugenics, the ‘art of determining good marriages, of inducing the desired fertilities, of ensuring the health and longevity of children’ on the part of one’s own group so as to ensure its success relative to others in the competition for ‘survival of the fittest’ (see below).⁹³

It is within this context that the concern with overpopulation should be understood. The spectre of overpopulation thus presents something of a paradox for the modern state. On the one hand, it signifies the triumph of a biopower bent on expanding human life, an overflowing evidence of the state’s efficacy in this regard. After all, it was in fact the efforts of the state to improve life for its population that gave rise to the population ‘explosion’ that would subsequently provoke concern. Foucault writes:

through a circular process, the economic – and primarily agricultural – development of the eighteenth century, and an increase in productivity and resources even more rapid than the demographic growth it encouraged, allowed a measure of relief from these profound threats [epidemic and famine]: despite some renewed outbreaks, the period of great ravages from starvation and plague had come to a close before the French Revolution; death was ceasing to torment life so directly.⁹⁴

On the other hand, the very population growth spurred by this process comes to threaten the biopower propelling it by compromising, through increased competition for ostensibly ever-more-scarce resources, the life of the population whose abundance and virility it signifies.

This tension has been evident in the politics of modernity for several centuries. If William Petty, in *Political Arithmetic*,⁹⁵ foreshadowed Adam Smith by nearly a century in asserting that ‘the wealth and power of states depends on the number and character of its subjects’,⁹⁶ Smith’s publication of his *Wealth of*

Nations in 1776 cemented this position by contending, as noted earlier, that the state's ultimate interest lay in encouraging population growth, for in this increase in human labour, consumption and military power lay the key to capitalist wealth generation. Soon after, however, the spectre of 'overpopulation' first reared its pernicious head with Malthus's publication, in 1798, of his (in) famous *Essay*, wherein he argued that the population growth advocated by Smith threatened to outstrip the food supply and thereby retard this wealth generation (at least for the lower classes).

A similar tension resurfaced in postwar development discourse. On the one hand, overpopulation became seen as a central threat to development.⁹⁷ On the other hand, development itself became diagnosed as a chief cause of overpopulation. Via overpopulation, therefore, development could become the vehicle for its own negation. In this view,

population explosion is the result of development. In the wake of development came vaccines, antibiotics, improved sanitation and better nutrition...Modernization reduced the death rate long before it reduced the birth rate. As a result, development may increase GNP and at the same time reduce GNP per capita...High rates of population growth create unemployment faster than jobs, increase the number of mouths to be fed faster than the productivity of rice paddies, squatters faster than people housed in modern facilities, excrement faster than sewers can be built.⁹⁸

At the same time, however, it was increasingly argued that development would ultimately lead to a reduction in population growth; on-the-ground ethnographic studies suggested that voluntary population control measures 'were the psychological result of an advanced stage of development: they came with stable employment, urban living, and the motivation to keep children in school. While infant mortality and mothers' deaths in childbirth could be dramatically reduced with low levels of expenditure, even costly family planning programmes did not show perceptible results unless the "target population" had already benefitted from the development'.⁹⁹

In the rest of the article, we draw on Lacanian psychoanalytic theory to analyse this dynamic in terms of overpopulation's function as a scapegoat within the political economy of development. In this, we rely primarily on the work of Žižek, probably the most popular contemporary interpreter of Lacan. Although others have lamented the 'zizekfication of Lacan',¹⁰⁰ we find this focus appropriate because of Žižek's efforts to bring Lacan into dialogue with the other essential elements of our theoretical synthesis, most notably Marx but to a lesser extent Foucault as well. We do, however, expand our analysis to include other prominent voices applying Lacan's work to analysis of contemporary political dynamics.¹⁰¹

Fantasy and scapegoats

Key to a Lacanian political analysis is an appreciation of the role of fantasy in suturing the inevitable gap between the impossible Real and its symbolic representation.¹⁰² Fantasy, here, is to be understood not merely as a projection of future fulfilment but as also offering an explanation for why that fulfilment is

not achieved. In this way, Žižek explains, ‘fantasy is a means for an ideology to take its own failure into account in advance’, constituting ‘the frame through which we experience the world as consistent and meaningful’,¹⁰³ and obscuring the symptoms signifying the ‘irreducible excess’ of the Real bursting our symbolic quest for order and coherence. One of fantasy’s principle functions is to structure desire, giving form to the raw libidinal force Lacan called *jouissance* – usually translated as ‘pleasure’ but more properly a mixture of pleasure and pain in equal measure or an ambiguous ‘excitement’¹⁰⁴ – and channelling it in pursuit of objects (what Lacan called the *objet petit a*) that promise the satisfaction fantasy proffers. Hence, Žižek writes, ‘In the fantasy-scene desire is not fulfilled, “satisfied”, but constituted’; rather, ‘through fantasy, *jouissance* is domesticated’.¹⁰⁵ Or as Stavrakakis puts it, fantasy should be seen ‘not only as a screen which promises to fill the lack in the Other, but also as what “produces” this lack’.¹⁰⁶

In its essential function of explaining its own failure to fully satiate, fantasy commonly invokes a ‘scapegoat’, an ‘external element’ or ‘foreign body’ ostensibly ‘introducing corruption into the sound social fabric’ and thereby subverting the fulfilment that would otherwise be achieved.¹⁰⁷ In this manner, ‘what is excluded from the Symbolic...returns in the real as a paranoid construction of’ that which is repressed.¹⁰⁸ In relation to modernity, Žižek asserts, this place is filled by the archetypal figure of the Jew, onto whom is projected all the attributes and problems suppressed within the dominant symbolic order and who is thus depicted as the ‘force of corruption’ sabotaging an otherwise functional order.¹⁰⁹ In short, Žižek contends, “‘Society doesn’t exist”, and the Jew is its symptom’.¹¹⁰ In this way fantasy sutures the gap between expectation and actuality, illustrating Žižek’s observation that ‘one of the ideological strategies is to fully admit the threatening character of a dysfunction, and to treat it as an external intrusion, not a necessary result of the system’s inner dynamic’.¹¹¹

A common feature of scapegoating is to emphasise the ostensibly perverse ways in which the demonised Other pursues *jouissance* and the threat this poses to one’s own attainment of pleasure. In this way ‘the *jouissance* we are deprived of is concentrated in the Other who stole it from us’.¹¹²

This focus on the ‘theft of enjoyment,’ by conveying the idea that somebody else – the Jew, for example, or the national Other – has stolen our enjoyment...preserves our faith in the existence and the possibility of recapturing our lost enjoyment – a faith enhanced by the partial enjoyment we get from our experience – but projects its full realisation onto the future, when we will manage to get it back from the Other who has stolen it from us.¹¹³

This Lacanian perspective has important implications concerning social analysis, challenging the pervasive assumption that simply providing appropriate evidence will suffice to correct erroneous ideas and the behaviours they inspire – something often called the ‘education model of social change’.¹¹⁴ Yet increasing evidence suggests that the reality is far more complex, that beliefs are commonly quite ‘resistant to criticism and change’,¹¹⁵ even in the face of abundant contradictory evidence.¹¹⁶

For a Lacanian this resilience of established belief is explainable by the fact that, while proponents of the education model of social change commonly

assume that perceptions and the decisions they influence operate at a conscious, intellectual level, in reality belief is usually sustained by an unconscious, libidinal attachment rooted in a ‘disavowed enjoyment that structures ideology in the realm beyond meaning’.¹¹⁷ Žižek thus asserts that ‘the last support of the ideological effect (of the way an ideological network of signifiers “holds” us) is the nonsensical, pre-ideological kernel of enjoyment. In ideology, “all is not ideology (that is, ideological meaning)”, but it is this very surplus which is the last support of ideology’.¹¹⁸ That is why, Žižek argues, ‘we must avoid the simple metaphors of demasking, of throwing away the veils which are supposed to hide the naked reality’.¹¹⁹ Hence Stavrakakis asserts that ‘knowledge and/or “rational” argumentation are not enough as catalysts of change’; rather, in conducting analysis and advocating social change, ‘we need to shift our attention from knowledge and consciousness to another level, to the level of an often unconscious enjoyment’.¹²⁰

Žižek therefore outlines ‘two complementary procedures of the “criticism of ideology”’, explaining:

- one is *discursive*, the ‘symptomal reading’ of the ideological text bringing about the ‘deconstruction’ of the spontaneous experience of its meaning...
- the other aims at extracting the kernel of *enjoyment*, at articulating the way in which—beyond the field of meaning but at the same time internal to it—an ideology implies, manipulates, produces a pre-ideological enjoyment structured in fantasy.¹²¹

Below, we apply these complementary procedures to an analysis of overpopulation discourse. First, however, we situate our study within a growing psychoanalytical approach to analysis of international development in general.

Barbarians at the gate

Lacanian analysis of the role of scapegoats and desire for *jouissance* sustaining the fantasy structures that suture gaps between real and symbolic, outlined above, may help to explain why the discourse of overpopulation in international development is so ‘sticky’,¹²² so resistant to refutation by the copious evidence contradicting it. At the heart of concerns regarding population and its regulation, as noted earlier, stands a preoccupation with sexuality. This is particularly the case with overpopulation, which commonly conjures longstanding images of barbarian hordes breeding inexorably thanks to their inability to restrain their animal urges through rational planning and deferral of gratification and therefore overflowing their Third World confines to threaten the security – and enjoyment – of wealthier nations. As Duden puts it:

the term ‘population’ evokes images of an explosion, mainly of uneducated Third World people, in countries that cannot repay their debts...Population evokes anger at irresponsible procreation, insufficient funding for birth control programmes, and against the Catholic Church for opposing contraception and abortion...Population has come to evoke something threatening, something which casts a shadow over the future and something which in Northern latitudes looks yellow or brown.¹²³

In such imagery, of course, sexuality is central: it is a lack of control of one's sexual urges that is most commonly seen as the main cause of overpopulation – and thus of poverty – within the terms of development discourse: ‘The “underdeveloped” – only recently defined as a distinct class of populations by the development discourse – were henceforth perceived as outbreeding the North and at the same time frustrating their own development’.¹²⁴ Here, of course, we confront the issue of *jouissance*. The ostensive inability of the poor to control and regulate their desire – their unrestrained pursuit of *jouissance* – is at the heart of overpopulation discourse. Hence the pervasive imagery of hyper-sexualised natives populating both the colonies and postcolonial societies targeted for development. In this view, sex is seen as ‘caught between a law of reality (economic necessity being its most abrupt and immediate form) and an economy of pleasure which was always attempting to circumvent that law’.¹²⁵ Combating ‘deviant’ sexuality was one of the main concerns of Christian missionaries and colonial administrators alike, evoking ‘fantasies of the Other’s special enjoyment’,¹²⁶ foreclosed by the ‘civilizing process’¹²⁷ (a view Freud’s *Civilization and Its Discontents* dramatically illustrates¹²⁸).

One of the main keys to addressing overpopulation, then, became the regulation of sexuality. As a result, postwar development policy ‘led to the creation of a well-financed establishment whose task consisted in trying to bring about a worldwide change in sexual behavior’.¹²⁹ As Sato paraphrases, this view (strongly echoing Freud):

This repression of the Underdeveloped is the price they have to pay in order to enter the symbolic order of development. The Underdeveloped represses her own knowledge and desire – in other words, gives up the enjoyment experienced before entering the symbolic order of development in order to derive the enjoyment available within the fantasy of Development.¹³⁰

From the outset Third World profligacy was considered a problem not only for ‘developing’ societies, by sabotaging their own potential for development, but for the ‘developed’ world as well, because of the pressure expanding Southern populations would place on wealthy nations by overflowing borders and migrating North. In other words, the unconstrained pursuit of *jouissance* by Third World populations is a threat not only to themselves but to wealthier populations as well. Thus in his 1949 inaugural address US President Truman had proclaimed, ‘More than half of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate, they are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas.’¹³¹ Or, as former World Bank Chief Economist William Collier reiterated in 2007, the persistence of poverty ‘matters, and not just to the billion people who are living and dying in fourteenth-century conditions. It matters to us. The twenty-first-century world of material comfort, global comfort and economic interdependence will become increasingly vulnerable to their large islands of chaos.’¹³² Clearly illustrated here is the sense of potential threat posed by Third World Others’ pursuit of their particular (perverse) *jouissance* to the (legitimate) *jouissance* ‘we’ (Northern populations) enjoy thanks to the ‘material comforts’ earned via suppression of primal enjoyment in pursuit of development.

The fantasy of development is essentially a version of what Žižek calls ‘the fundamental ideological fantasy’: ‘the corporatist vision of Society as an organic Whole’¹³³ – a vision, of course, central to the exercise of biopower as well, noted above. Cato, for instance, describes development as an effort ‘to guarantee social harmony in the sociosymbolic field’.¹³⁴ In its classic Parsonian form, in particular, conventional development theory depicted ‘human society...like a biological organism’ that strives towards ‘homeostatic equilibrium’ involving ‘harmonious coordination among institutions’, such that ‘if one of the parts changes, then the other parts will change accordingly in order to restore equilibrium and reduce tension’.¹³⁵

According to Sato, ‘the unconscious psychic investment in the search for social harmony (from which the subjects of development derive considerable enjoyment) stabilizes Development’.¹³⁶ Overpopulation helps to explain ‘the distance between this corporatist vision and the factual society split by’ a profound and persistent division between rich and poor.¹³⁷ Overpopulation serves to explain away what could otherwise be seen as one of the main ‘symptoms’ of development’s failure, namely the production of ‘waste’ in terms of the surplus labour force whose bodies are expendable and who are thus denied the fruits of development. Overpopulation, in short, may be the means for the development apparatus – like the stereotypical Jew in fascism – ‘of taking into account, of representing its own impossibility’.¹³⁸ As Žižek writes of totalitarianism, ‘it is insufficient to designate the [development] project as impossibly utopian...the problem is that in a way, the [development] ideology *knows it*, recognizes it in advance’. In the figure of the Third World peasant breeding inexorably, development discourse ‘includes this knowledge in its edifice’.¹³⁹ The overpopulation bogeyman ‘is nothing but a fetishistic embodiment of a certain fundamental blockage’.¹⁴⁰ Paraphrasing Žižek, then, we might similarly contend that development does not exist (as a global project capable of widespread realisation), and ‘overpopulation’ is its symptom.

Conclusion

In the above we have contended that the spectre of overpopulation functions as a scapegoat within international development discourse, focusing attention on the ways in which the subjects of development, widely imagined as animalistic barbarian hordes blindly pursuing perverse forms of *jouissance* at the expense of rational family planning, ostensibly subvert their own development potential by breeding out of control and thereby also threaten the ability of (more sensible) developed populations to attain enjoyment in a world of rapidly diminishing natural resources. In the process the role of the neoliberal capitalist economy in exacerbating both economic inequality and environmental degradation is obscured and the fantasy of widespread development within this framework sustained.¹⁴¹ We have suggested that Lacanian psychoanalysis helps to shed light on this situation, challenging analyses of development grounded in either Marxist or post-structuralist perspectives by highlighting the ways in which the mobilisation of *jouissance* functions to sustain attachment to beliefs in the face of contradictory evidence. As Stavrakakis explains, ‘by taking into account emotion, affect, and passion one may be able to reach a more thorough

understanding of “what sticks”: both what fuels identification processes and what creates discursive fixity’.¹⁴²

Ultimately diagnoses of both poverty and environmental degradation come down to either of two causal factors: (1) overpopulation; or (2) the structural inequality of the global capitalist system. A focus on overpopulation, in this sense, displaces focus from this second potential cause, blaming individuals themselves for their predicament rather than the overarching political economy in which they function. Or, as Hartmann phrases it, ‘The grossly unequal division of wealth in a society of resource abundance and waste demands the ethic of social scarcity to explain poverty’.¹⁴³ In this way, as Žižek observes, the overpopulation scapegoat has helped capitalism come to occupy, in a sense, the space of the Real, setting ‘a limit to resignification’,¹⁴⁴ to what can be imagined and, therefore, imagined otherwise. Echoing Žižek, De Vries thus observes that, since widespread (sustainable) development, within the framework of neoliberal capitalism, ‘is constitutively impossible, it functions as its own critique’.¹⁴⁵ Our study adds to this analysis by demonstrating the ways in which the overpopulation scapegoat functions to mask this impossibility, blaming development failure on an ostensibly external, corrupting element rather than on the intrinsic political economy of development itself.

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Notes

1. Malthus, *An Essay on The Principle of Population*.
2. Duden, “Population”; and Escobar, *Encountering Development*.
3. See Fletcher, “Bodies Do Matter”; and Fletcher, *Romancing the Wild* for more detailed explanation of this synthesis.
4. For example, De Vries, “Don’t Compromise your Desire for Development!”; Fletcher, “The Art of Forgetting”; Kapoor, “Participatory Development”; and Sato, “Subjectivity, Enjoyment, and Development.”
5. De Vries, “Don’t Compromise your Desire for Development!”; and Sato, “Subjectivity, Enjoyment, and Development.”

6. Helstein, "'That's Who I Want to Be,'" 277.
7. Easterly, *The White Man's Burden*.
8. For example, Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*; Gunder Frank, *Latin America*; Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism*; Smith, *Uneven Development*; and Wallerstein, "The Rise and Future Demise."
9. Fletcher, "What Are We Fighting For?," 54.
10. For example, Sachs, *The Development Dictionary*; Escobar, *Encountering Development*; Escobar, *Territories of Difference*; Ferguson, *The Anti-politics Machine*; and Li, *The Will to Improve*.
11. Sato, "Subjectivity, Enjoyment, and Development," 274.
12. See De Vries, "Don't Compromise your Desire for Development!"; Fletcher, "The Art of Forgetting"; Kapoor, "Participatory Development"; and Sato, "Subjectivity, Enjoyment, and Development."
13. Sato, "Subjectivity, Enjoyment, and Development."
14. For example, Gibson-Graham, "Surplus Possibilities"; and Gibson-Graham, *A Post-capitalist Politics*.
15. De Vries, "Don't Compromise your Desire for Development!," 26.
16. Sato, "Subjectivity, Enjoyment, and Development," 275.
17. De Vries, "Don't Compromise your Desire for Development!," 29.
18. Ferguson, *The Anti-politics Machine*.
19. De Vries, "Don't Compromise your Desire for Development!," 26, 30.
20. *Ibid.*, 30.
21. Bellamy Foster et al., *The Ecological Rift*; Hartmann, "Population, Environment and Security"; Hartmann, "Rethinking the Role of Population"; and Ross, *The Malthus Factor*.
22. Hartmann, "Rethinking the Role of Population; and Thompson and Rayner, "Cultural Discourses."
23. Sachs, *The End of Poverty*, 65.
24. Spencer, *Principles of Biology*, 444.
25. In Tobin, *Politics and Population Control*, 64.
26. *Ibid.*, 67.
27. Caldwell and Caldwell, *Limiting Population Growth*; and Ross, *The Malthus Factor*.
28. Ross, *The Malthus Factor*.
29. In Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 355.
30. Duden, "Population," 150, 151.
31. *Ibid.*, 151.
32. *Ibid.*, 154.
33. World Population Plan of Action, "Recommendations for Action."
34. Duden, "Population," 151.
35. Boland, "Environment, Population, and Women's Human Rights."
36. National Security Council, *Executive Summary*.
37. *Ibid.*
38. National Security Council, *National Security Decision*.
39. Ehrlich and Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb*.
40. Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons."
41. Meadows et al., *The Limits to Growth*.
42. Rockefeller Commission on Population Control, *Population and the American Future*.
43. Ehrlich and Ehrlich, *The Population Explosion*.
44. Adams, "Green Development Theory?"; and Hartmann, "Rethinking the Role of Population."
45. Harrison, *The Third Revolution*; and Hartmann, "Rethinking the Role of Population."
46. Black, *Refugees, Environment and Development*; Hartmann, "Rethinking the Role of Population"; and Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*.
47. WCED, *Our Common Future*.
48. Hartmann, "Rethinking the Role of Population".
49. For example, Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict"; and Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*.
50. See also, among others, Baechler, "Why Environmental Transformation Causes Violence"; Dinar, "Resource Scarcity and Environmental Degradation"; and Klare, *Resource Wars*.
51. Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*, 16.
52. Peluso and Watts, "Violent Environments: Responses," 95.
53. Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy."
54. *Ibid.*
55. Peluso and Watts, *Violent Environments*; and Peluso and Watts, "Violent Environments: Responses."
56. Hartmann, "Will the Circle be Unbroken?"
57. UNEP, *GEO 4*, xvii.
58. UNEP, *GEO 5*, xvi.
59. Wilson, "Challenging Neoliberal Population Control."
60. <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/What-We-Do/Global-Development/Family-Planning>, accessed December 24, 2013.
61. Godwin, *Of Population*.
62. In Bellamy Foster, *Marx's Ecology*, 106.

63. Angus and Butler, *Too Many People?*
64. Commoner, *The Closing Circle*, 242.
65. Boserup, *The Conditions of Agricultural Growth*; and Simon, *The Ultimate Resource*.
66. Hartmann, "Population, Environment and Security."
67. For example, Benjaminson, "Does Supply-induced Scarcity Drive Violent Conflicts?"; Blaikie and Brookfield, *Land Degradation and Society*; Dalby, "Security and Environment Linkages Revisited"; Davis and Tilton, "The Resource Curse"; Fairhead "International Dimensions of Conflict"; Hartmann, "Population, Environment and Security"; Hartmann, "Will the Circle be Unbroken?"; Hartmann, "Rethinking the Role of Population"; Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War"; Peluso and Watts, *Violent Environments*; and Ross, *The Malthus Factor*.
68. Durham, "Political Ecology and Environmental Destruction," 251.
69. Angus and Butler, *Too Many People?*; and Bellamy Foster et al., *The Ecological Rift*.
70. For example, Hartmann, "Population, Environment and Security"; Hartmann, "Will the Circle be Unbroken?"; and Hartmann, "Rethinking the Role of Population."
71. Hartmann, "Population, Environment and Security"; Hartmann, "Will the Circle be Unbroken?"; and Hartmann, "Rethinking the Role of Population." See also Fairhead, "International Dimensions of Conflict; and Peluso and Watts, *Violent Environments*.
72. Hartmann, "Population Control."
73. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*; Foucault 'Society Must Be Defended'; and Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*.
74. Rose, *Powers of Liberty*.
75. Foucault, 'Society Must Be Defended', 241.
76. Ibid.
77. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 136.
78. Duden, "Population," 148.
79. Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*, 16.
80. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 140–141.
81. Foucault, in *The History of Sexuality*, notes a similar focus on women's reproduction *vis-à-vis* biopower in general.
82. See Graeber, *Debt*.
83. Tobin, *Politics and Population Control*, 67.
84. Althusser, "Lenin and Philosophy."
85. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*.
86. Ibid., 145, 147.
87. Ibid., 146.
88. Ibid., 148.
89. See also Foucault, 'Society Must Be Defended'.
90. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 149.
91. Tobin, *Politics and Population Control*, 67, 61.
92. Kuumba, "Perpetuating Neo-colonialism," 81.
93. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 148.
94. Ibid., 142.
95. Petty, *Political Arithmetic*.
96. Duden, "Population," 147.
97. Ibid; and Escobar, *Encountering Development*.
98. Duden, "Population," 146, 150, 151.
99. Ibid., 153.
100. Stavrakakis, "On Acts," 3.
101. For example, Stavrakakis, *Lacan and the Political*; and Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left*.
102. Žižek, *The Sublime Object*; Stavrakakis, *Lacan and the Political*; and Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left*.
103. Žižek, *The Sublime Object*, 142, 138.
104. Fink, *The Lacanian Subject*.
105. Žižek, *The Sublime Object*, 132, 138.
106. Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left*, 241.
107. Žižek, *The Sublime Object*, 142.
108. Ibid., 143.
109. Ibid., 141.
110. Ibid., 140.
111. Žižek, *In Defense of Lost Causes*, 389.
112. Žižek, "The Seven Veils of Fantasy," 209.
113. Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left*, 197–198.
114. See Bernard, *Research Methods in Anthropology*.
115. Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left*, 163.
116. Lakoff, *The Political Mind*.
117. Wilson, "The *Jouissance* of Philanthrocapitalism," 6.

118. Žižek, *The Sublime Object*, 140.
119. *Ibid.*, 25.
120. Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left*, 165, 180.
121. Žižek, *The Sublime Object*, 140 (emphasis in the original).
122. Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left*.
123. Duden, "Population," 146.
124. *Ibid.*, 150.
125. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 154.
126. Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left*, 202.
127. Elias, *The Civilizing Process*.
128. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*.
129. Duden, "Population," 151.
130. Sato, "Subjectivity, Enjoyment, and Development," 277.
131. In Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 3 (emphasis added).
132. Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, xi.
133. Žižek, *The Sublime Object*, 142.
134. Sato, "Subjectivity, Enjoyment, and Development," 275.
135. So, *Social Change and Development*, 20.
136. Sato, "Subjectivity, Enjoyment, and Development," 285.
137. Žižek, *op cite*, 142.
138. *Ibid.*
139. *Ibid.*, 142.
140. *Ibid.*, 143.
141. Fletcher, "Using the Master's Tools?"
142. Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left*, 165.
143. Hartmann, "Population, Environment and Security," 115.
144. Žižek, "Da Capo Senza Fino," 223.
145. De Vries, "Don't Compromise your Desire for Development!," 30.

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