

Exploitation without Responsibility: Sweatshops

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Abstract

It is commonly argued that workers in developing countries are exploited by western multinational corporations. Developing countries are often the victim of longstanding, deep and massively destructive injustice. Different accounts on exploitation are in disagreement about whether these injustices should play a role in evaluating charges of exploitation. This thesis tries to understand what obligations, if any, we can derive from the different accounts on exploitation. It argues that while we need to include the background conditions in which exchanges take place, we can't directly derive moral responsibilities from them and therefore have to supplement these with a different kind of responsibility.

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1. Introduction

Unethical behaviour can mean many different things for businesses and is related to various areas. It is generally recognized that corporations have responsibilities towards parties than themselves. This becomes evident when they fail to act accordingly. Assigning responsibilities to corporations that go beyond maximizing profits has been part of the public debate for some time, and we generally have strong intuitions about this claim. However, until today there is no commonly agreed account on what the obligations are that corporations have along their supply chains. Disputes regarding the working conditions along global supply chains are at the core of global justice debates. Sweatshop labour defined by long working hours, low wages, and unsafe working conditions is often the textbook example for charges of exploitation. It is argued that multinational corporations exploit workers in developing countries by taking an unfairly large portion of the cooperatively produced benefit (Zwolinski, 2011, 157). Nevertheless, while we can agree that poor working conditions are undesirable, they often represent the best alternative that people in these countries have (Powell and Zwolinski, 2012). It is, therefore, necessary to explain what exactly it is about the exploitative labour arrangement that makes it impermissible and how much we can demand from corporations. While there is growing literature on exploitation in the context of sweatshops, there has been no consensus. Philosophers disagree on the scope of information to include to evaluate charges of exploitation. Many argue that accounts of exploitation that only concern the exchange between interacting individuals are insufficient in the context of the prevalence of global socioeconomic inequalities that we see in the world (Sample, 2003; Kates, 2019; Miklos; 2019). Choosing to work in a sweatshop might be the most rational thing a person can, but it is the injustice that lays in the background of that decision that concerns proponents of structural accounts on exploitation.

While there are many different conceptions on what exploitation is, in this thesis, I will specifically focus on the obligations that we can derive from transactional and structural accounts of exploitation. Transactional accounts of exploitation are only limited to the exchange between the interacting individuals. The criticism made by scholars opposed to these accounts argues that it is insufficient to extract the transaction from its environment and that an analysis of the background conditions is necessary (Sample, 2003; Kates, 2019; Mayer, 2007; Miklos, 2019 Young, 2011). Proponents of these structural accounts argue that we need an analysis of the background conditions in which a transaction is situated in to make meaningful sense of whether someone is exploited. The question that I am particularly interested in is in what the exact obligations are that we can arrive from these two accounts and whether they are sufficient address the justice concerns in global supply chains, especially in sweatshop labour. I will argue, specifically that structural

accounts do not provide a sufficient normative foundation to ascribe obligations to corporations to go beyond paying market-clearing wages. Further, I shall argue that this is problematic, and these accounts need to be supplemented by a different form of responsibility.

Iris Marion Young (2011, p.15) asks the question, “how should we as individuals think about our responsibility with social injustice?” Young's idea was that those who take part in the unjust social, political and economic processes often could not be blamed for their actions. Young tries to make sense the claims of the anti-sweatshop movement and develops a model of responsibility to address structural injustice without relying on a form blame, fault, or liability (Young, 2011, p.40). I will finish this thesis by arguing that it is this kind of responsibility that structural accounts have to be supplemented with to assign responsibility for structural exploitation.

This thesis advances the debate between around exploitation by strengthening the claim that the considerations of background conditions are relevant to address related justice concerns. Furthermore, it provides crucial insights on what the limitations of the structural account are and how these can be overcome. The structure is as follows. First, I lay out the current debate over sweatshops. Second, I will give an overview of the different conceptions of exploitation and argue that transactional accounts are unsatisfactory because they leave responsibility gaps. Third, I argue that while structural accounts try to close these gaps, by incorporating the background conditions in which transactions take place, they fail in assigning obligations to corporations to pay workers non-exploitative compensation. More specifically, I shall argue that the structural accounts mistakenly rely on the same form of corrective justice as the transactional accounts. Lastly, propose Marion Young's version of political responsibility as an alternative way to assign obligation to corporations without relying on the principles of corrective justice.

1.1. Sweatshops and the charge of exploitation

Over the past decades, many firms and corporations have increasingly outsourced parts of their labour to the developing world for mostly cost-effective reasons. In 2013 the Rana Plaza garment factory in Dhaka District Bangladesh collapsed, which killed more than 1100 people and injured more than 2500. This event has caused much outrage and sparked a public debate around the obligations western corporations have towards those that work for them in factories around the world. While this led to economic gains for these developing countries, it has also created much controversy. So-called sweatshops, such as the Rana Plaza garment factory, are places of employment in which a worker's compensation or safety is compromised, child labour is employed, and local labour regulations are routinely disregarded in a way that is *prima facie* morally objectionable (Zwolinski, 2011; p.162). While this was initially ignored, there has been a growing awareness of what economists have to say about the regulation of sweatshops. Proponents of sweatshops argue that although they are widely regarded as morally problematic, they present the best alternative for people in developing countries. Sweatshops create jobs and bring economic growth to developing countries, which is one of the most efficient ways to systematically lift people out of poverty (Adams, 2002, p.19). As Zwolinski (2011, 162) notes, workers 'voluntarily and even eagerly accept these jobs'. This complicates the debate and requires more in depth analysis on whether these labour arrangements are exploitative.

It is important to note that wages and safety measures can be treated as one since they are both parts of the same compensation package (Powell and Zwolinski, 2011, p.455). A firm provides an overall compensation package that is most likely to attract the best possible worker for the job. Wages, safety standards, health standards, and for example, longer breaks are all part of this compensation package (Ibid, p.455). Therefore, as long as productivity is not affected, the firm is indifferent to what kind of compensation the worker receives (Ibid p.455). A survey with sweatshop workers shows that these are often not willing to sacrifice higher wages for better health and safety standards (Ibid, p. 455). Powell and Zwolinski (Ibid, p.455) argue that as long as the compensation package does not affect the profitability of the firm, it is the preference of the worker and not of the multinational corporation (MNC) that should determine and balance this compensation package. While it is disputable whether it is the preference of the worker alone that should determine the safety standards, this discussion is not part of this thesis. I will, therefore, treat safety measures and wages throughout this thesis as one. I will generally refer to this as the overall compensation a worker receives.

2. What do we mean by exploitation?

Exploitation is an inherently dyslogistic and moralized concept, which makes it difficult to agree on what exactly it is (Bigwood, 2003, 76). We tend to associate the term with the unfair advantage taking of another person, and while not all cases of advantage taking are morally objectionable, some are. An account that helps to identify what exactly it is in a specific situation that raises the charge of exploitation is necessary. In this section, I am going to examine different accounts of exploitation that are discussed in the context of sweatshops. I will then discuss what obligations these different accounts have for corporations and whether these are sufficient in terms of justice. Before discussing the different accounts in detail, I will make some general points about exploitation.

Bigwood (2003, p.197) argues that exploitation 'is using contracting power in ways or for purposes contrary to the underlying ethos, assumptions, intentions, or true purposes of contracting itself' (Bigwood, 2003, p.197). As Allen Buchanan defines it, exploitation is 'the harmful, merely instrumental utilization of him or his capacities, for one's advantage or the sake of one's ends' (Buchanan 1988: 87). Exploitation in that sense is the unfair advantage taking of strategic opportunities that allow extraordinary high bargaining power in exchanges and then using it for one's advantage. This is not to say that all forms of contracting power are objectionable; instead, it is wrong to use the vulnerabilities of other people for their own economic gains (Bigwood, 2003, p.198). Through this advantage, taking the exploiter generally derives an unproportionate high benefit from the transaction. The term is morally loaded in the sense that it implies the unfair treatment of another person, which requires a standard to evaluate the gains and losses both parties receive as well as a thorough conception of the term unfair. Exploitation in the context of sweatshops mostly concerns the low compensation workers receive. It refers to multinational corporations that systematically have workers agree to work for them under conditions that are objectionable.

An important distinction has to be made between forms of exploitation that are harmful and forms of exploitation that are mutually beneficial. Mutual beneficial exploitation concerns transactions where both of the interacting parties are left better off compared to no exchange. It is now widely recognized that sweatshops are the best alternative desperately poor workers can choose from, which complicates the debate (Powell and Zwolinski, 2011, p.494). This is problematic because how can something be morally troubling if non-interaction would make them worse off? While we can agree that certain forms of exploitation are beneficial for the exploited party, it is wrong in the sense that they cause a loss in relative terms. Exploitative transactions, therefore, fail in benefitting

their victims to the extent that fairness or justice requires (Mayer, 2007). The fact that a transaction might be beneficial for the exploited party, therefore, does not undermine the charge of exploitation itself as a moral wrong. For example, a drowning person is offered rescue in exchange for all of his/her wealth. Even if this exchange is beneficial for the drowning person, there still seems to be something within this exchange that is morally objectionable. In this thesis, I will not further elaborate on this and assume that an exchange can be mutually beneficial and still be morally troubling. Harmful exploitation, as opposed to mutual beneficial exploitation, concerns situations where the exploited party is left worse off compared to no exchange. Examples of this are modern slavery or forced labour. Since these forms of exploitation are not common in the textile industry, even though it is often associated with it in the public discourse, this thesis will be limited to labour arrangements that are voluntarily agreed to and beneficial for both parties.

Accounts on exploitation differ regarding the scope of information taken into consideration. Exploitation can take place on the transactional or the structural level. Transactional accounts of exploitation only concern the discrete transaction between two or more individuals. Structural accounts of exploitation, on the other hand, are interested in the unfair disadvantage that certain groups experience due to the given background structures, for example, the institutional arrangement in which people find themselves in. For example, if we go back to the drowning example. If we assume that there are multiple people drowning, but the ones belonging to a specific group are the only ones that need to be rescued. This can be explained by the fact that they are the only ones that cannot swim. Even if the price for the rescue is fair, structural accounts might question why they are the only people that cannot swim and whether this points to structural injustice. In the following section, I will discuss the transactional and structural account in more detail.

2.1. Transactional Accounts of Exploitation

Transactional accounts of exploitation only focus on the specific transaction between the interacting parties. In the context of the textile industry, these accounts are therefore only interested in the transaction between the sweatshop owner, for example, a local firm, and the sweatshop employee. They consider that there is a moral injustice if one of the interacting parties secures an unfair share of the cooperatively produced surplus (Zwolinski, 2011, p.157). Therefore, a price standard to evaluate the transaction is necessary. Transactional accounts of exploitation can differ in regard to whether they use an absolute or a relative standard to evaluate the transaction.

2.1.1. Sweatshops and the failure to satisfy 'basic needs'

Opponents of sweatshops commonly criticize that the compensation workers in sweatshops receive is not sufficient to secure a minimum standard of living and conclude that workers (Snyder, 2010). To address this, Jeremy Snyder introduces 'need' as an absolute standard to evaluate the permissibility of a transaction. Snyder (2008, p.396) argues, "employers are required to cede as much of their benefit from the interaction to their employees as is reasonably possible toward the end of the employee achieving a decent minimum standard of living". Snyder's argument is grounded in the intuition that has everyone has the right to have their basic needs fulfilled, and as long as employees' wages are not sufficient to do that, they are wrongfully exploitative (Snyder, 2008; p. 395). There is a general recognition that everyone should have access to the basic necessities of life (Rawls, 2003, p.62). A basic needs approach developed out of the failure to alleviate poverty in many developing countries (Stewart, 1989, p.347). Snyder's account directly appeals to an underlying intuition that most people share. While this intuition directly relates to the justice concerns, we have regarding sweatshop, I am going to argue that this account is not able to provide sufficient insights into the obligations for corporations.

While linking living standards directly to compensation might satisfy current intuitions about the complicated trade relationship between developed and developing countries, it fails in later stages of development. As Powell and Zwolinski (2011, p451) note, sweatshops are a reliable indicator of economic growth in developing countries. We can, therefore, expect increases in productivity associated with higher wages in the future. Regulation that links the charge of exploitation to certain living standard can have adverse effects when these minimum standards of living are secured independently of the regulation. Firms might then justify wages that are generally lower than workers productivity. For example, a worker has a marginal productivity of \$50, \$30 to satisfy his/her needs, and is paid \$40. According to Snyder's, these would not count as exploitative because the workers' basic needs are secured. While I agree with Snyder that unmet needs are troubling, I am not convinced by his proposal to link these two concepts together. Reaching a certain living standard does not eradicate the charge of exploitation. The basic needs of workers are not unfulfilled because of the specific transaction. Instead, the unmet needs they point to a broader justice concern that lays in the background of the transaction. Sweatshops jobs pay significantly better than other jobs are often the best alternative that people in developing countries can choose from (Powell and Zwolinski, 2011, p.466). Snyder's account would, therefore, regard almost all transactions that take place in developing countries as exploitative. Furthermore, multinational corporations often contract with local firms and are only indirectly linked to the transaction between the owners of local factories and workers. Snyder's account rests upon the

assumption that local contractors are able to pay workers' wages in line with their basic needs even though these might be higher than workers marginal revenue product.

Instead of providing a clear conception of exploitation, Snyder is providing a mechanism that protects workers in securing their basic needs. While I agree that the unfulfillment of basic needs is a concern that has to be addressed, I am not convinced that wages are the most efficient mechanism for this and whether this relates to exploitation. In the next section, I am going to discuss fairness as a relative standard to evaluate a transaction.

2.1.2. A 'fair' Transaction

I have already shown earlier that exploitation is often directly linked to ideas about fairness. The probably most famous account on what exploitation is goes to Alan Wertheimer, who picks up the link between exploitation and unfairness in his book 'Exploitation' (Wertheimer, 1999). This account still plays a central role in the current literature and aims at answering the question of what a 'fair' exchange is. In this section, I am going to discuss exploitation as unfairness on the transactional level and argue that this account is insufficient. I show that this account implies a strict limit on the obligations that corporations have, which is problematic because it leaves many concerns of justice unaddressed.

The question of what a fair price goes back to Aristotle, who argues that within a voluntary transaction each person shall receive the amount of value that is equivalent to the whatever they transferred to the other (Reiff, 2013, p.51). This would mean that the worker is paid whatever value he/she creates or transfers to the firm. Wertheimer analyses the way individuals interact with one another and explicitly conceptualizes exploitation as unfairness on the transactional level, ignoring the broader structures in which the transaction is situated in. As Wertheimer defines it, "A exploits B when A takes unfair advantage of B" (Wertheimer, 1999, p.10). This requires a principle of fairness to evaluate the compensation firms pay their workers. Wertheimer (1999; p.230) suggests that what constitutes a fair exchange is any agreement that would have been reached in a hypothetical competitive market. This hypothetical market price creates a standard to evaluate discrete transactions in terms of fairness. Assuming that firms are morally obliged to pay non-exploitative compensation, workers should be paid whatever they would be paid in a hypothetical competitive market. This account is situated within the dominant ideology of neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism is a political, economic theory that proposes that the optimal way of organizing all exchanges of goods and services is by freely adopting market mechanisms (Harvey, 2006, p.145). It rests upon the idea that a free market and free trade leads to individual liberty and well-being,

and more efficient allocation of resources (Hayek 1973). Within neoliberal economics, wages in a competitive market are automatically generated through supply and demand. The maximum compensation can receive for their labour is the value, or the marginal revenue product, that he/she creates for the firm. The lower bound that determines the wage is the next best alternative the worker has. Workers are therefore paid somewhere between their value of labour and their best next alternative. A competitive market will leave every worker with compensation that is close to their marginal revenue product. The theoretical explanation for this is simple. If multiple firms compete for the same worker, the competing firms will offer compensation that is slightly higher than what the current employer is paying. This process will push the compensation close to the productivity of the worker, which is the upper bound that determines the overall compensation. For example, there are five different sweatshops that a worker could work for. In each of these sweatshops the worker would have a marginal revenue product of \$10 a day. This would be the maximum the owner of the sweatshop could pay the worker. The worker is currently paid 5\$. One of the other sweatshops now offers the worker \$5,50 because it would still mean that the sweatshop would profit from employing the worker. One of the other sweatshops then offers the worker \$6. According to economic theory this would go on until we reach a compensation that is close to the value the worker creates for the firm. It is, therefore, to say that a hypothetical competitive environment will generate relative standard that enables us to evaluate whether the transacting parties receive their fair share of the cooperatively produced benefits. This relative standard is representative of the value the worker has in the market. An exploitative wage on the transactional level would, therefore, mean that a worker is paid significantly lower than the value that this worker creates for his/her employer. For example, a sweatshop worker creates a value of \$20 each day for the firm that employs him/her. The firm only pays the worker \$5, whereas, in a hypothetical market, the worker would receive \$18. It follows that the firms are exploiting the worker on the transactional level.

From the fairness account, we can derive an obligation to pay workers in line with what they would be paid in a hypothetical competitive market. We can derive specific responsibilities for corporations, such transparency in regard to their trade partners and wage reports. Furthermore, they should encourage unions and other mechanisms that bring the two bounds that determine wages closer together. However, the marginal change that we would expect from this is not transformative because the maximum the worker can receive is limited by his/her productivity. If we recall, the compensation already includes all other benefits like fewer hours, health standards, safety standards, or for example, longer breaks. Paying workers market-clearing wages will not resolve the justice concerns opponents of sweatshops have. What explains wage differences

between countries is the productivity of a worker, namely the value he/she creates for the company, and not the bargaining power or the competition. What becomes evident is that the transactional view on exploitation implies a clear limit on the responsibilities and obligations that corporations have towards the workers. These are bound to the theoretical underpinnings of neoliberal economic theory, expressed through to upper bound that determines wages. This establishes an environment in which western corporations can justify their inaction to address justice-related concerns by the low productivity of the people that work in these factories. To me, this is problematic because as Powell (2014, p. 119) notes, "given their recent rates of economic growth, most of these countries are many years away from reaching a level of development at which adopting such standards would not risk undermining the development process". The question thus arises whether a fair market wage is morally compelling? I believe that it is not because it leaves what Andreas Matthias' responsibility gaps'. Matthias describes these as situations in "...where the traditional ways of responsibility ascription are not compatible with our sense of justice and the moral framework of society..." (Matthias,2004, p.117). The situation that sweatshops are often located to raise serious justice concerns, and I think it is rather uncontroversial to say that these need improvements. These responsibility gaps do not rely on any particular conception of justice. It is compatible with a form of justice that requires to secure minimum basic needs or capabilities (Pogge, 2005; Nussbaum, 2000). It accommodates theories of justice that concern equality in terms of distribution (Dworkin, 2002; Cohen 1989; Rawls, 2003; Sen 1992). Finally, the claim also accommodates theories of justice that aim at securing people's negative rights (Steiner, 1984). The transactional account leaves these justices concern unaddressed, while it implies that corporations are fulfilling all their responsibilities.

I, therefore, conclude that merely relying on market-clearing wages is insufficient in light of the given situation. Transactional conceptions of exploitation fail to address these underlying conditions that contribute to the exploitative character of global institutions, expressed in the transactions between workers, local firms, and multinational corporations. As Preiss (2014, p.61) notes "A central flaw for the economic case for sweatshops is that it ignores the relevance of background justice to the ethics of sweatshop relationships, including worker exploitation". The question arises, whether exploitation as a violation of the market norms is fully able to capture and satisfy the intuitions that we have when thinking about exploitation and what it tries to conceptualize. Whether a particular transaction itself is exploitative has little or nothing to say about whether this transaction is part of a broader exploitative institutional arrangement or unjust social context. I, therefore, think that relying on market processes is insufficient to address the unjust conditions in which transactions take place.

2.2. More than the transaction

Working in a sweatshop might be the best available option for workers in developing countries. It might also be that firms pay their workers' wages that are close to their marginal revenue product; however, this does not tell us anything about whether conditions, under which workers enter the transaction, are just. As Zwolinski (2011, p.171) notes 'most sweatshops operate within a social context that is plagued by longstanding, deep and massively destructive injustice'. Markets themselves are neutral towards the preexisting injustices and can even reflect these (Sunstein, 1991, p.22). For example, a society in which a group is systematically put at a disadvantage, relying on market mechanism will most likely be insufficient to correct for this injustice. Structural accounts consider this and see exploitation not only a feature of the specific transaction. Instead, they derive their moral wrongness from preexisting social, economic, and political institutions that sustain and encourage the transactions that take place (Sample, 2003, p.97,98). In this section, I will first explain what social structures are and how we should think about them. Next, I am going to discuss how structural accounts of exploitation incorporate these structures in their evaluation of whether someone is exploited.

2.2.1. Social Structures

According to Marion Young, "Structures refer to the relation of social positions that condition the opportunities and life prospects of the persons located in those positions (Young, 2011, p.65). This positioning occurs because of the way that actions and interactions reinforce the rules and resources available for other actions and interactions involving people in other structural positions. The unintended consequences of the confluence of many actions often produce and reinforce opportunities and constraints, and these often make their mark on the physical conditions of future actions, as well as on the habits and expectations of actors. This mutually reinforcing process means that the positional relations and the way they condition individual lives are difficult to change." (Young 2003: 6). These socio-structural processes that we can find anywhere around us can then result in structural injustice. Structural injustice occurs when we can identify structures that put systematic constraints on large groups of people and hinder them from developing their capacities resulting in a systematic disadvantage (Young, 2003, p.7). Young describes structures with four distinct features. Firstly, we, as individuals, experience structures as an objective given social facts that are either enabling or constraining (Ibid, p.53). We can encounter them in a material form that carries effects of assumptions from the past (for example, the physical infrastructure of a city) or in the form of institutional and social rules. Secondly, the population is distributed in so-called social positions that define the social relations in which we stand to each other (Ibid, p. 57). This allows identifying structural differences between groups that have far-reaching implications for people's life regarding their opportunities. Different groups might live in different parts of the same

city. Within these different parts of the city there are significant differences in the level of schools and the access to, for example, health care. These material given facts are out of our own control but will impact the development of the people that find themselves confronted with them. Thirdly, individuals consistently reproduce these social structures through their actions (Ibid, p.60). Lastly, social structures are often the unintended consequences of many individuals seeking their ends (ibid, p. 63). These structures define our world and the system we find ourselves in. Structural injustice happens when we are able to detect structure that put systematic constraints on certain groups of people (Young, 2001, p.12).

2.3. Structural Exploitation

Structural accounts of exploitation try to identify and incorporate the structures that systematically disadvantage workers. Sample, for example, argues that globalization "exploits to the degree to which background injustices experienced by vulnerable nations work to the advantage of their stronger interactors" (Sample 2003: 165). Taking the background structures into account allows viewing the situation workers in developing countries find themselves in as morally problematic while acknowledging that a fair market exchange takes place. The exploitation does not lie within the specific exchange between transacting parties but within the structures that run in the background of the exchange. Unjust structures can express themselves in various ways. However, in the context of sweatshop labour, it is most likely the lowered productivity that reflects the systematic constraints workers experience. For example, the structures in a developing country are the result of past injustices imposed by other countries. These past injustices negatively impacted the economic stability of these countries, which led slow economic development, which is now reflected in the low productivity. To make a strong case for a specific country a detailed analysis of the development would therefore be necessary. These structures could also concern, for example, certain trade policies that disadvantage specific countries.

A common criticism that structural accounts face is a tendency for over-inclusiveness. It is argued that these accounts sometimes miss the differentiation between exploitative and non-exploitative transactions that take place in unjust background conditions (Snyder, 2010, p.192; Zwolinski, 2011, p.171). Conducting business in unjust structures as a sufficient condition to classify corporate activity as exploitative leaves nearly all foreign investment in developing countries as morally objectionable. This would be problematic from a practical point of view because, as Powell and Zwolinski point out (2011), the textile industry plays a significant role in economic development and creates essential employment opportunities.

To address the issue of being overly inclusive Miklós (2017, p.62) offers a more fine-grained account on structural exploitation and argues that "a mutually beneficial exchange between an employer and a worker can be classified as exploitative—in the sense of the employer taking unfair advantage of an underlying injustice—if and only if the employer obtains a greater surplus from the exchange than what it could maximally obtain in a just state of affairs." This enables us to differentiate between exploitative and non-exploitative transactions in unjust background conditions. For example, let us say a western corporation is selling a pair of jeans for \$50 and has its production in a developing country with unjust background conditions. Every worker has a marginal revenue product of \$5. Without these background conditions in place, every worker would have a marginal productivity of \$10. Assuming that the corporation is still selling the pair of jeans for \$50, one can see that the unjust background conditions allow the corporation to increase its profits. This example demonstrates how corporations can take advantage of these unjust structures. If a corporation gains a higher surplus unjust condition, they are exploiting the workers according to Miklós. This account allows us to develop a more advanced baseline to differentiate between exploitative and non-exploitative transaction within unjust conditions. I will later use Miklós account as an exemplary case for structural exploitation. However, the argument that I am going to make does not depend on this account specifically. In the next section, I am going to respond to some of the criticism that structural accounts face. While I agree that the background structures of the transaction do not give us a full account of what exploitation is, I think that they give valuable information regarding the obligations that corporations have. This relates to what I said earlier about responsibility gaps. Only analyzing the specific transaction can imply sufficient action on the side of the corporation while simultaneously leaving many justices concerns unaddressed.

2.3.1. Responding to the critics

A more nuanced objection that all accounts face that propose higher compensation than the marginal revenue product is what we can call the economic argument against sweatshop regulation. In this section, I will shortly lay out what the concern behind this argument is and show why it does not undermine the charge of structural exploitation.

What motivates people to object to the liberal understanding of exploitation are often concerns regarding the welfare of the workers. Most of the people that work in sweatshops would significantly benefit from even small improvements in their labour conditions (Powell and Zwolinski, 2011, p.451). However, opponents of sweatshop regulation still reject most proposals that try to force firms to improve safety standards or pay higher wages. The core of the economic argument against higher compensation takes an empirical claim about employment level effects of

wage regulation in combination with a liberal commitment to maximizing the welfare of the already worst off. Economic theory predicts that any regulation that raises the cost of labour above the marginal utility of workers will likely result in less labour demanded (Ibid, p.460). Forcing firms to pay wages that are higher than the value workers create will force firms to save costs by firing workers in order to stay profitable (Ibid, p.460). Economic growth is known to be as one of the most stable and most effective ways to fight poverty (Ibid, p.451). Regulation could, therefore, negatively affect the employment opportunities of people in developing countries and undermine the process of industrialization that directly related to economic progress. Structural accounts of exploitation tend to ignore this, which is problematic if we want to increase workers welfare. There are two ways to object to this claim: Firstly, we can differentiate between a pro tanto and an all things considered argument. Secondly, we can question whether economic theory is applicable to real-life situations.

Pro tanto vs all things considered

Exploitative wages, according to the structural accounts, might be desirable if we accept a form of consequentialism that prioritizes the outcome and the aggregate utility. This relates to the economic response to sweatshop regulation. Forcing firms to pay non-exploitative wages can have adverse consequences if these wages exceed the marginal revenue product of the workers (Ibid, 460). In this case, exploitative wages might be the preferred option. Whilst it may be true that wages are exploitative, and firms generally have an obligation to not pay those if it were not for the adverse consequence, I reject the economic argument as a valid claim to undermine the moral responsibility firms have. The economic argument is not convincing to undermine the charge of wrongful exploitation. The duty to not exploit does not imply that all parties at all times have to refrain from it (Wertheimer, 1999, p. 286-289; Arnold, 2003, p.254). As I have argued earlier, forms of exploitation can be mutually beneficial and have welfare benefits on the societal level. Nevertheless, this does not undermine that the action is morally objectionable in other circumstances. For example, we can think about cases where stealing is the right thing to do, for example, for survival reasons. This, however, does not undermine the claim that stealing in most circumstances is considered to be wrong. This shows that there might be cases where it is morally permissible to inflict harm on another person in order to prevent more significant harm. Even if the firm does something pro tanto wrong by not paying the worker a non-exploitative wage, it might be the right thing to do all things considered. As Miklos (2017, p. 68) notes' fairness within a transaction is only one value that has to be balanced between others. It is reasonable to conclude that due to the unemployment affects the obligation to pay non-exploitative wages is overridden by welfare concerns. I, therefore, dismiss the objections proponents of transactional accounts.

Economic theory

Some scholars question the applicability of economic theory by asking whether the underlying assumptions of the market are met in the kind of labour market that we find in developing countries (Arnold and Hartman, 2005). These include competition between firms, free access to information, voluntary transactions, rational actors, and multiple buyers and sellers. If these conditions are not sufficiently met, we have reasons to believe that the adverse consequences that defenders of sweatshops predict will not result from regulating wages and safety standards. Powell and Zwolinski (2011, p.452) reject to this by claiming that all markets suffer from imperfections. I think they are wrong in viewing these imperfections as a dichotomy. Market imperfections vary in their degree, and we can, therefore, expect different probabilities for the successful application of economic theory. Developing countries are more prone to, for example, corruption, or limited access to information. It is, therefore, more likely that economic theory does not apply to these. Harrison and Scorse (2010) looked at the effects of wage increases in the Indonesian Textile, Footwear, and Apparel industry. They found that wage increases due to activism, and policies did not have a negative effect on unemployment. The massive unemployment claim that economic theory predicts is not evident in data. Another study on the effect of the implementation of a minimum wage in Indonesia shows that there was no adverse employment impact for large corporations, such as the Nike (Atalas and Cameron, 2008). As Powell and Zwolinski (2011) correctly note, that these examples do not directly challenge the theoretical argument, but it should leave us with caution when applying it in the real world. Instead of following a one fit all theoretical approach, we should consider each country individually before drawing conclusions. Even though we have evidence to question the empirical foundation of the economic argument against sweatshop regulation, we might encounter situations in which the theoretical assumptions are met, and unemployment effects are likely to result from sweatshop regulation. However, this still leaves open the question of who is responsible for increasing wages beyond the current marginal revenue product comes from.

In summary, transactional accounts of exploitation are not able to deal with the justice concerns that we have, especially in developing countries. These accounts fail to address the unjust conditions that run in the background of the labour agreements and transactions. Structural accounts of exploitation incorporate these unjust conditions and provide us with more in-depth on how to think about labour agreements that take place within unjust structures. I agree with the general necessity to be aware and to account for the unjust background structures. However, in the next section, I argue that structural accounts fail to provide a sufficient normative foundation to ascribe responsibility to corporations, given the economic and political context.

3. The obligation to not exploit

The central question of this thesis concerns the obligations that we can derive from the different conceptions of exploitation and whether these obligations are sufficient in light of the issues that we find in sweatshops. In the previous section, I argued that the focus on discrete transactions of individual actors is insufficient because it leaves responsibility gaps. Structural accounts try to close these gaps by incorporating the unjust conditions in which transactions take place. Both, the transactional and the structural accounts of exploitation claim that exploitation is morally objectionable. They imply that the victims of exploitation should be compensated or not exploited. The two accounts define a standard that helps to evaluate whether a specific labour arrangement is exploitative. The marker we use to evaluate is the compensation workers receive, which implies that this obligation lies within the responsibility of the corporation or the firm that employs the workers (Wertheimer, 1999; Miklos, 2019; Kates, 2018). A non-exploitative labour arrangement would, therefore, require the firm to increase their compensation. In this section, I am going to argue that this implication is normatively not feasible. More specifically, I shall argue that we cannot derive obligations to pay non-exploitative wages from structural accounts of exploitation as long as they are not complemented with a form of responsibility that does not depend on liability.

The transactional account of exploitation that Wertheimer discusses is situated in a theory of contract law that rests on the widely persisting ideology of liberal individualism, which is present in most western societies. This liberal individualism gradually arose out of a time marked by feudal obligations and aimed at the protection of individual choice, the maintenance of freedom, personal liberty and development of a capacity for self-determination (Dow, 2014, p.2). It describes the market as a paradigm of individual freedom and spontaneous order in contrast to various forms of collective planning (Dow, 2014, p.3). Fundamental to this economic liberalism and the market economy are 'private property' and 'individual contracts' that aim to protect and enable individuals to pursue their own goals and desires (Ibid, p.3). Theories such as neoliberalism, laissez-faire liberalism, or free-market liberalism rest on the assumption that the pursuit of self-interest results in the best outcome for everyone, which is sometimes referred to as the 'implicit morality of the market' (Heath, 2014, p.173). Fundamental to this market individualism' is the freedom to transact in ways that one thinks are best to achieve one's desired goals. The moment a worker voluntarily agrees to work under certain conditions, he/she enters a contract with the employer. Transactional exploitation, therefore, rests upon our understanding of contractual relationships between parties. Within the liberal context, these are strictly governed by principles of corrective justice (Bigwood, 2003, p.68).

3.1. Two forms of justice: 'Distributive' and 'corrective' justice

In this section, I shortly introduce distributive and corrective justice and show how the principles of corrective justice relate to the transactional account of exploitation. I am going to argue that the principles of corrective justice that govern transactions within this liberal context cannot be applied to the structural accounts.

The distinction between these two forms of justice goes back to Aristotle, who presents corrective and distributive as two different forms of justice (Brickhouse, 2014, p187). Distributive justice deals with the allocation of resources, typically by the state, based on some chosen values or principles (Oliveira and Cardina, 2016, p.195). It asks how we ought to distribute the benefits and burdens among the members' specific group, for example, society. It can be any group and whatever is distributed is not limited to material goods, such as wealth or resources but can also concern and non-material goods such as rights or freedom (Rawls, 2003, 477). We tend to associate distributive justice with principles or ideas about welfare, and equality, that can either concern the process of distribution itself or the distributive outcome. (Rawls, 2003, p.55). It aims at creating proportional equality by allocating of resources according to a specific criterion of distribution (Weinrib, 2002, p.349). Distributive injustice, therefore, is a violation of whatever one is entitled to due under that geometric mathematical operation that guides the distributional process and the outcome.

Corrective justice, on the other side, is as a form of transactional justice that helps to govern exchanges interactions between individuals. This form of justice deals with voluntary and involuntary transactions, focusing on whether one party has committed, and another party has suffered from a transactional injustice (Weinrib, 2002, p.349). It addresses a wrong imposed by A on B, which is expressed through the transfer of resources from one to the other. It is bilateral and only limited to those that are part of the specific transaction, in contrast to claims of distributive justice that concern every member of the group (Bigwood, 2003, p.70). Under the logic of corrective justice, both parties are seen as equals when entering the transaction. In contrast to the proportional equality that guides distributive justice, corrective justice underlies a form of notional equality, which concerns maintaining and restoring the status quo at which both parties enter the transaction (Weinrib, 2002, 349). The wrong that one party commits, therefore, disturbs this notional equality. A contractual transaction itself is therefore indifferent to who is contracting and what that person brings into the transaction. For example, if A buys a product on a market or in a store, this exchange is governed by corrective justice. The price paid does not take into consideration individual wealth. Instead, corrective justice only concerns the act of choice of the transaction itself and adapts a form of neutrality towards the existing individual differences between

the parties that contract (Bigwood, 2003, 67). This allows the pursuit of one's own interests, which is fundamental to individual liberal ideology.

Furthermore, as Weinrib (2002, p.350) notes, that what the one party has suffered, and the other party has gained cannot be independent events. Instead, they are both parts of the same injustice. The loss one party experiences and the gain the other party experiences are in a correlative relationship with one another, which is the bipolarity of corrective justice (Weinrib, 2002, p.351). This means that the resources that one party loses are equivalent to the resources the other party gains. It is a single wrongful event that links the victim and the wrongdoer together. It is this bipolar relationship that allows holding the exploiting party liable, and require the restoration of resources (Bigwood, 2003, p.218). Rectification reverses the injustice by giving back what was lost. In the next section, I am going to apply the principles to transactional exchanges to then show that these cannot be applied to accounts on structural exploitation. From there, I am going to show how transactional exploitation rests upon corrective justice to assign the obligation to not exploit, whereas structural accounts fail to provide this normative foundation.

3.2. Applying Corrective Justice

If we recall Wertheimer's account on exploitation, unfairness on the transactional level is the use of bargaining power to pay workers less what they would be paid in a hypothetical competitive market. The moment workers are paid below their marginal revenue product, the firm violates what the workers are rightfully entitled to, which is the value they worker create for the firm. In cases of transactional exploitation, both parties are linked through the dictates of corrective justice, which creates the obligation for the firm to pay a non-exploitative wage. Let us say a worker has a marginal revenue product of \$5, but the firm is entering a transaction and uses its bargaining power only to pay \$2. Based on the fairness standard, we can see how the firm takes away what rightfully belongs to the worker. It is evident how the gain and the loss are part of the same event and causally related to one another. The correlative relationship of the loss is fundamental to the resulting obligation to correct for this. The obligation to pay the \$2 difference stems the principles of corrective justice. Justice here requires rectifying the unjust act by paying a non-exploitative wage. A reference to justice on the contractual level is, therefore only asking the question of what a party is owed correctively and not distributivity (Bigwood, 2003, p.216).

Proponents of structural accounts argue that paying the worker \$5 is insufficient because it does not take into account the unjust structures that lay in the background of the transaction. In the hypothetical 'just' labour market the worker would have a marginal revenue product of \$5 + X and is therefore morally entitled to whatever value X has, assuming this allows the firm to increase their surplus. Even if we agree that workers are morally entitled to a wage that represents their productivity under just conditions, the structural account by Miklos fails to provide the normative

foundation to explain this obligation. For example, a firm can decide to move their production to either country A or B. Country as A has been the victim of a series of past injustices, whereas country B has not. In both countries, ' workers have a marginal productivity of X. Only in country A, the workers have a marginal productivity of X+Y if it was not for the unjust background conditions. Moving the production to country A allows the firm to secure a higher surplus due to the unjust conditions (compared to country B under just circumstances). According to Miklos (2019, p.60), the firm then unfairly benefits from the unjust conditions. Even if we have a labour market that allows higher wages than the marginal revenue product of the worker, it is not clear where the obligation to pay this wage comes from. This is a problem all structural accounts face. The conclusion that corporations are obliged to pay workers' compensation that these would receive under just circumstances is therefore much weaker than it seems. To make things clearer, imagine the lowered productivity does not stem from the unjust background conditions but is due to a specific identifiable agent that we can refer to as Y. Y is directly responsible for the lower productivity of the worker. While we can agree that worker is entitled rectification for the injustice by Y, it does not follow that the firm bears a special responsibility in this. The example demonstrates that we cannot apply the principle of corrective justice because the injustice the worker experiences is independent of the gain the firm experiences. They are not in a correlative relationship with one another, which is fundamental to apply principles of corrective justice. My aim here was to show that in cases of background injustices principles of corrective justice cannot be applied.

Given the unfair preexisting conditions under which the parties enter the contract, how can a contract that ignores these be morally sufficient? This question resembles the concern's proponents of structural accounts of exploitation express. The transaction merely reflects the social-political and economic order that we find before the transaction is entered. As mentioned earlier, these are often inherently unjust and insufficient from a broader perspective. While this might be true, it is vital to understand (and accept) the role contractual transactions have within a liberal society (Bigwood, 2003, p. 68). Contractual transactions aim to protect the role transaction itself has. This is not to say that we do not need distributive mechanisms in society and that transactional relationships governed by principles of corrective justice are sufficient. As Bigwood (Ibid, p.74) notes, we have to differentiate between those rules that govern the structures of society, principles of distributive justice, and those rules that apply to transactions within these structures, principles of corrective justice. Structural accounts of exploitation tend to ignore this demarcation of roles. While my argument does not undermine the intuition that background conditions are not necessary, it does undermine our ability to assign responsibility to corporations to raise

compensation based on the same logic that the transactional account can. It is, therefore, necessary to supplement structural accounts with a form of responsibility that does not undermine the role contractual transaction have by not relying on the principles of corrective justice.

4. Political Responsibility

In the last section, I argued that structural accounts do not provide a sufficient normative framework that allows deriving the obligation to address the concerns of exploitation that lay in the background of the transactions. Marion Young recognizes this limitation when she makes the distinction between personal responsibility and political responsibility to assign responsibility independent of past wrongdoings. In the next section, I am going to use Youngs 'social connection model' to supplement the structural accounts on exploitation.

Before I move on to Youngs model, I want to justify this move. Generally, I think there are other ways to respond to the responsibility gaps that transactional accounts leave. The rules governing exchanges show that the ideology itself constraints contracts and the obligations we can derive. As I have shown, it is limited to the internal fairness of transactions. On a theoretical as on a practical level, we see how the appeal and protection of liberal values limit the responsibility we can ascribe. One way to address this problem would be to question whether this focus on liberal values is, in fact, beneficial for the overall welfare and justice concerns. This would allow questioning whether relying on market processes, such as supply and demand, is a satisfactory mechanism to determine the price. Using market mechanisms is just one way to determine a price for labour. For example, Kates (2018) offers a framework to determine a more morally compelling wage by modelling a Rawlsian veil of ignorance. While this is a valid option to explore, I think it is important to emphasize that this is a more general criticism of neoliberal economics, the market as an institution, as well the underlying liberal values. I am somewhat sceptical of that because as Powell and Zwolinski (2011, p.451) note, economic growth is one of the most stable and effective ways to fight poverty. The market is, therefore, an efficient institutional arrangement that can be seen as a means to an end. I am sceptical whether an alternative economic system would be more successful in reaching the desired end, which in this case is reducing poverty increasing the welfare of the worst off. I, therefore, choose to stay within the boundaries of neoliberal economics and argue for supplementing accounts on structural of exploitation with a form of political responsibility. I will now move to Marion Young to show how social connection model is able to address this issue.

Young builds upon Hannah Arendt's distinction between responsibility and guilt that she uses to make sense of the crimes committed during the Holocaust. Arendt tries to conceptualize a form

of responsibility that differs from moral or legal responsibility as we know it. This allows her to move away from the causal link that is usually required to ascribe responsibility. For Arendt, the membership of a political community is enough to make an individual responsible for the doings by specific agents within that community (Arendt, 1987; p.45). Arendt argues that by passively being part, one automatically supports the social system that underlies and enables the crimes that take place (Young, 2011; p. 86). While Young sympathizes with the idea of assigning responsibility based on something other than the causal relationship to the event, she criticizes Arendt's use of the term political responsibility and its scope. For Young simply being the member of a political community is not sufficient to ascribe responsibility (Young, 2011; p.79). The goal that Young has in mind is similar to that from Arendt. Both hope to make people take on their responsibility to take action in maintaining the world without being directly responsible for the wrongdoings (Arendt, 1987; p.47) (Young, 2011; p.93). While Arendt is concerned about criminal wrongdoings, Young tries to make sense of the role individuals play in regard to structural injustice, for this reconceptualizes the term political responsibility by grounding responsibility on the connection to the structures that ultimately define our life's as I have demonstrated earlier. Every decision we make individually, collectively, or as a representative of some other entity happens within a system of these structures. Within this system of structures, injustices arise either because they embedded into the system as a whole or due to the cumulative effect of many individual actions. The immediate problem that follows from this conception is that if injustice is caused by structures instead of individual agents, how are we supposed to assign responsibility? I think Young's account is one that allows filling the responsibility gaps that we find in liberal conceptions of exploitation.

4.1. Responsibility from connection

Young develops her model to address global harms, such as exploitation, created by the economic and institutional order. She moves away from assigning responsibility in terms of liability. She claims that responsibility in term of liability is not sufficient to deal with issues of structural injustice (Young, 2011, p.100). Young (2003; p.8) notes' that the traditional understanding of agency is not capable to adequately address the structural causes of injustice because it requires a direct causal link between the actor and the consequence of the action. This view on responsibility is isolating and backwards-looking and comparable to the principles of corrective justice that we find it in contractual relationships. Personal responsibility in terms of liability aims to identify and blame particular agents that are responsible for wrongs that have occurred in the past (Young, 2011, p.4). Problems such as pollution, low-wages, or unemployment are often not the result from individual wrongdoings but instead result from the accumulation of many temporally and geographically dispersed actions. These take place in an interdependent relationship with large scale structural processes such as the economic and political system (Young 2011; p. 52). It is the injustice that

results from the regular order of the social, economic, and political institutions that are in place. For Young, this injustice is built into the system, which is why she argues that agents that take part in this system bear a moral responsibility to address the harms. Under this conception of responsibility, individuals do not have to be the direct cause of harm. Instead, mere connection to the structures that create the injustice lead to a non-blameworthiness, shared, and forward-looking responsibility. Instead of assigning blame or a duty to compensate for the harm created, political responsibility is to collectively take part in addressing the unjust structures that actors find themselves in.

In order to assign responsibility, she proposes four parameters that help to assess to what extent someone is responsible for addressing structural injustice: the power to influence the relevant social processes, the privilege they receive from the unjust structure, the interest they have in stopping the injustice (which applies, for example, to sweatshop workers themselves) and the ability to draw on existing organizations to affect change (Young, 2011, p.144). Young's model complements the structural accounts on exploitation in the sense that it is able to assign corporations the role to address the structures that exploit workers.

4.2. Objections

Zwolinski objects to Young's model by asking whether it is fair to hold MNC's responsible for the unjust structures in which they operate (Zwolinski, 2011, p.173). He criticizes Young for not specifying why social connection creates special obligations. Furthermore, he argues that her claim collapses into the standard liability model of responsibility from the moment that one classifies the participation in these unjust structures as wrongful (Zwolinski, 2011, p.174). Nevertheless, Young does not do this. She explicitly refers to political and personal responsibility as two distinct forms of responsibility that complement each other. Exploitation can take place on the transactional level and simultaneously on the structural level. It is necessary to treat those forms of exploitation separately. Young tries to show that exploitation is embedded in the system of capitalism and requires a form of responsibility that stems from being part of that system without having to abolish the system as a whole. Furthermore, Zwolinski (2011, p.175) argues that if the power to fight these injustices is not universally present among, for example, MNC's or sweatshop owners, we cannot derive universal obligations. I disagree with Zwolinski. For example, we can imagine industry dependent institutions that overview corporate activity and on a global level. These could enforce progressive policies, such as taxes, that are paid based on profits or another parameter. This way, we could derive universal obligations that are more sensitive to the abilities of individual actors.

A second possible objection to my argument is the demarcation of roles between the government and corporations. In "The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits" Milton Friedman rejects any business activity that could negatively impact the economic performance of the corporation based on a particular obligation towards their shareholders (Friedman, 2007). Heath (2004) provides us with a more nuanced version of Friedman argument and claims that justice concerns are left to the state based on effectiveness. Heath (2015, p.90) argues that it is not the profit-seeking motive that leads to immoral behaviour on the side of the corporation, but instead the exploitation of market failures. These are situations in which the free market is not able to provide the perfect allocation of goods. Modern welfare economics assigns the role of correcting for these market failures and obtain the perfect allocation of resources to the state (Singer, 2018, p.98). This allows corporations to justify their profit-seeking motive. However, the legitimacy of a corporation to strive for profits assumes the effectiveness of the state in securing justice. Welfare economics assumes that if market actors strive for profit, follow a form of business ethics and states fix the failures of the market, and the end result is optimal to aggregate welfare. As Powell and Zwolinski (2011, p.451) note, economic growth is one of the most stable and effective ways to fight poverty. The market is, therefore, an efficient institutional arrangement that can be seen as a means to an end. Proponents of Heath's argument might oppose my argument by claiming that it would be more useful to leave justice concerns in the hand of local governments and not corporations. While this might be true but as Singer (2018, p.105) argues' the moral legitimacy to strive for profits requires the state's ability to secure justice, which leaves corporations as the second best to step in case of government failures. It is not only the firms that have the interest to have the production orders but also the local governments. As an example, to attract foreign industry, local governments might establish export processing zones, that allow corporations not to pay taxes, which is one of the essential redistributive mechanisms to address justice concerns. How should local governments invest in development if all international industry is free from paying taxes? We can treat this as a government failure due to the structure of the economic system. This is only one example, but it points issues this debate faces. Based on these government failures we can assign the role to corporations to address these concerns.

4.3. Further Outlook and Limitations

In this section I am going to address some limitations of my work. Throughout the thesis, I have reduced the concept of exploitation to the monetary compensation workers receive. While this has some analytical advantages, it might ignore the essential features of the transactions that take place. For example, the psychological well-being play in these labour arrangement is unlikely to be reflected in the compensation workers play. Many other injustices are not expressed in material form. My approach might unfairly ignore them and should, therefore, be treated with caution. I

think this is a general problem of this debate that I was not able to address. Furthermore, this thesis only focusses on exploitation that concerns human agents. It seems like it would be necessary to also incorporate the role environmental exploitation plays in this debate. I have no specific reason for not incorporating this.

While Young discusses the question of political responsibility, she does not offer specific guidelines on how to deal with the difficulties that this model brings in its application. Young proposes power, privilege, interest, and collective ability as four "parameters of reasoning about individual and organizational action concerning structural injustice" (Young, 2011; p.144). However, it is not entirely clear how these parameters have to be balanced and whether current institutions can coordinate this kind of task. Until today this model is underdeveloped and needs further work to offer a full framework on responsibility independent of personal liability. I was only able to shortly introduce Young's model. I think it would be necessary to further incorporate Young's work into a full framework on structural exploitation. This would allow to overcome the normative limitations I showed in this thesis.

5. Conclusion

This thesis began by showing that the justice concerns we find in the sweatshop debate are far from being solved. The debate between proponents of a liberal conception of exploitation and those that argue for the inclusion of underlying conditions and unjust structures is the primary concern of this inquiry. This thesis has sought to critically question the obligations that we can derive from only focusing on the particular details of an exchange. The aim of this thesis was to advance the way we think about structural exploitation and the responsibilities to address justice concerns that go beyond liability. We have seen that normative force to pay non-exploitative wages on the transactional level is not transferable to the structural accounts of exploitation. I have argued for the idea to supplement structural accounts on exploitation with the kind of political responsibility that Marion Young proposes. This would allow assigning responsibility to a corporation to address the unjust structures that constrain and exploit workers. It is important to emphasize that I have not articulated a full account on how to best incorporate a model of political responsibility into the current accounts on structural exploitation, but instead I tried to show why this is important. How we should best approach trade relationships between developed western countries and countries that are still plagued by poverty is an important and sensitive topic. With my remarks on this, I hope to indicate how a more developed account of structural exploitation might look like. While my focus was on the role corporation play concerning large scale, structural processes, this shall not imply that individuals and governments do not also play in a role in this. Despite these limitations, I hope that this thesis has been able to provide relevant insights both for the debate on structural exploitation and business ethics in general.

6. References

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