The politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece

Site – Psychology – Subject

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities

2022

Artemis Christinaki

School of Environment, Education and Development

& School of Arts, Languages and Cultures

To Aggeliki

Table of contents

Word Count: 88,055

Abstract

This thesis sits at the nexus of three important contemporary issues: psychology, migration, and subject formation. It critically explores what are the politics or, the role of, psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece. It focuses chiefly on the way aid workers' subjectivities emerge amid the spatial temporality of camps and within the combined discourses of psychology and aid. A growing critical literature problematises the concept of 'refugee crisis' to understand the current migratory situation since 2014 in the Mediterranean Sea, however, it does not critically discuss in depth the role of aid and the provision of support in camps. This thesis, with its theoretical roots in psychoanalysis, critical psychology, social theory, philosophy, postcolonialist and critical feminist debates within migration, uses what I name 'theory as method' to interrogate, on the one hand, the politics of support and, on the other hand, how aid workers understand, plan, and deliver programmes of psychosocial support and thus how subjectivity emerges in the refugee camps of Greece. A seven-month ethnographic study between October 2018 and April 2019 was carried out, during which 30 semi-structured interviews and 2 group interviews were conducted with aid workers in the mainland and the island of Lesvos in Greece. Also, critical observation and analysis of maps, and photographs as a reflexive diary constituted this study's methods. Research material is discussed within 'theory as method'.

Putting theory to work as a methodological approach, the thesis is structured around four core axes, i) the language of humanitarianism and psychology, ii) spaces of spatial temporality, iii) the conceptualisation of time and trauma, and iv) subject and colonialism, to discuss psychosocial support and the subject formation of modern aid worker. Apart from critical migration studies, humanitarian studies, including migration and refugee studies are discussed as enacted through psychology, with the role accorded work within their sector is usually seen as a performance of good will, 'of the humane' which is necessary amid a 'crisis event' or 'a management of a disaster'. Aid workers have been, overall, approached as the constitutive, but mechanical, link which connects, facilitates, and executes humanitarian and states' organisational support provision. Without

underestimating and eliminating the way migrants, refugees and workers tactically engage with the provision and delivery of humanitarian and psychological support for their own benefit, this project - by shifting the focus in-between aid workers and refugees (and vice versa) - argues that, since subjectivity is relational in the field of migration, this dialectic raises several vital psycho-political questions. It, therefore, suggests that psychology and work as labour amid these conditions are both psychological and political economy matters which are intricately and intimately implicated in a classed, racialised, and patriarchal understanding of aid and practice in ways which precisely re-enact and intensify the history of their fields.

Declaration

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

Copyright statement

i. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the "Copyright") and they have given The University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.

ii. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made only in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has from time to time. This page must form part of any such copies made.

iii. The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trademarks, and other intellectual property (the "Intellectual Property") and any reproductions of copyright works in the thesis, for example graphs and tables ("Reproductions"), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author, and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.

iv. Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this thesis, the Copyright, and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy, in any relevant Thesis restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, The University Library's regulations and in The University's policy on Presentation of The University's policy on Presentation of Theses.

Acknowledgements

When Erica published her Fanon book, it really surprised me that she had almost 3 full pages of people's names whom she would like to acknowledge. I think that was one of the times that I thought that an author's name follows the traces of several people, rather than themself. In the same way, far from treating this thesis the output of a single author, I see it in several people's efforts to discuss, support, help, critique and reflect with me during this process. Erica Burman, Rubina Jasani and Ian Parker, you know that this thesis would not have been possible without you. Erica and Rubina, what can I say for your timeless efforts to think with me. Your voices seem to have rested in me and every time I try to think, you are somewhere there to give me a shout. Ian, your trust to read parts of your work would never stop surprising me.

Sabah Siddiqui, you are a firecracker, every time we spent time together, you were giving me, honestly, courage to think. Elli Gerakopoulou your trust to me and your critique to academia helped me moving around my comfort zone and stand up. Fay Kolokytha, your presence, support, and existence, made every time I wanted to give up, a little bit easier to continue. The time we spent together in silence was invaluable to me. George Kalampalikis, thank you for your patience, support, and unlimited love all these years. I know how difficult I can be. Nikos Mylonas, I will never forget your help to complete my master's dissertation, your support during the madness of work at Ioannina and your help to apply for a PhD. Luan Carpes Barros Cassal and Matthew Varco, Fanon and Foucault would be boring without your readings. Luan and Rohi Jehan, thank you for walking around with me when I was crawling with the university madness. My Lacanian buddies, especially James Slattery and Bean Sharp, you are *a real* treasure to me (haha)! Sabah Siddiqui, Parise Carmichael-Murphy, Suddhasatwa Guharoy, Matthew Varco and Catherine Arthur my thesis would have been unreadable without your proofreading. Thank you so much! Lina Kadditi and Anestis Tsaftaridis, yes you both, you hold me up, without having to discuss a word. Felix Kwihangana, Sofia Eleftheriadou, Choen Yin Chan (Helen), Cristián Iturriaga Seguel and Huseyin Ulukuz, the cohort we created, and your friendships made a difference to my survival at the university.

Chapter One

Foundations for a political understanding: Work, refuge, psychology

1.1 Introduction

The so-called 'Arab Spring' (the almost simultaneous uprisings that happened in 2011 in different Arab countries) was generally hailed by the Western bourgeoisie world as a victory of their liberal democratic ideals and a defeat of corruption, a defeat of authoritarian regimes – regimes that the West had so well supported for its own benefit and profit. Little was known then about the tragic consequences that would follow, with Egypt, Libya and Syria descending into civil war and a recurrent instability which had as a result the forced migration and displacement of thousands of people. Luxemburg (2010; see also Cliff, 1980), almost 70 years ago, had warned about the detrimental consequences of imperialism and war, showing how both are entangled in the violent attempt of capitalist accumulation.

Forced migration as one of the immediate effects of the current war in Syria but also of the repetitive wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries in Africa like Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cameroon are tied to years of colonialism, imperialism, and capitalist accumulation. After the outbreak of war in Syria, many people were forced to flee from Western, Central and South Asian countries as well as African countries and seek refuge in the continent of Europe. Greece is one among other countries of the geographical and political south in the 'Global North', such as Italy, Spain and Portugal. It is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea and has experienced so far what in migration and humanitarian studies is usually called 'large population flows' as the aftermath of war, with reduced resources amid a debt crisis and the rise of right-wing populist and neo-Nazi parties.

Since 2014, the Mediterranean Sea has become the frontier, the blood-covered frontier, of the European continent and its politics. It is in this Sea that European politics started unfolding for those who dared to seek protection in the 'European home to come'. In this Sea, the promise of home and safety did not only echo

accounts of humanitarian discourse and practice but also immigration laws and policies addressing who is allowed to demand a place in another's home. It is in this Sea that home as an indication of refuge revealed its deeply racialised meaning because it started mattering the very moment it was getting crossed, taking within it all those who struggled to cross both the sea and the chance to get a 'home'. For those who have been left to die in this frontier-Sea, for those who managed to cross and those who are called to 'manage' the so-called 'crisis', the Sea was already making clear the spatial politics of Europe and who would soon come to be called an 'illegal migrant' or a refugee.

Scholars from Critical Migration studies (see New Keywords Collective, 2016) question vividly the concept and term of 'humanitarian refugee crisis'. De Genova, Garelli and Tazzioli (2018, p.255) argue that pluralization of crisis, a plurality of *crises*, allow us to conceptualise migration within the economic crisis, the political crisis of Europe with its internal re-bordering (i.e. Brexit), and the epistemic crisis 'at stake in the governmental labelling and administration of migrants' and refugees' heterogeneous mobilities'. Within this *plurality of crises* both Critical Migration Studies and Neocleous and Kastrinou (2016) discuss what the division of 'migrant – refugee' or 'migrant – illegal migrant' serves for. They argue, as will be discussed in chapter five, that there is a broader war against the migrant, whose figure is getting cut and prolonged between refuge and migration, the 'good, needed and vulnerable' and the one who is reiterating 'illegality, war, and terror'. Without underestimating forced migration and refugees, I am bringing up these intricacies, to show the politics of living under this naming, but also to highlight that race is a strong counter-ally within these politics. De Genova (2018, p.1765, his emphasis) suggests to approach 'migrant crisis' as racial crisis, to highlight that the multiplicity of crises lies in the 'unresolved *racial crisis* that derives fundamentally from the postcolonial condition of "Europe" as a whole'.

Opposing the problematic distinction between 'the migrant and the refugee' and showing the racial politics of migration and refuge from the outset, this study is focused on psychology and migration to highlight how psychology becomes a political mechanism of support and adjustment in the 'European home to come'

and specifically in Greece. In terms of analytical frameworks, it works with psychoanalytic, feminist and postcolonial debates to critically discuss the way the humanitarian sector, along with states' insufficiency and the discourse of psychology, play out politics both with those who work in this 'field' and with those who are recognised as 'seeking support'. It is, therefore, discussed how politics is related to 'aid' and 'work' and how the provision of support, despite being presented as humanitarian and neutral, is politically embedded and charged.

The discourse around psychology and refuge, I propose, has a claim to make, an argument that shows -once again- how white, class-divided, and patriarchal is the 'European home to come'. It goes without saying that Europe is not one thing, and there are many homes, in the house of Europe. Nevertheless, for those who cross this 'home', asylum policies play out as if there were coherent. And in this attempt to present the policies as coherent, psychology comes to signal that there is no room for divided selves, there is no room for contradictions; there is room only for a united self within a united story, as if the latter vicariously protects Europe from revealing the deep divisions of its own story for 'the home to come'. It is precisely in the formulation of this discourse, that this study lies and explores both the politics of providing as well as receiving support.

1.2 Politics, psychology, subject: as sited in Greece

While I have mentioned above that the Sea's crossing started whispering the racial politics of the 'European home to come' for those recognised as needing support, it is also important to note that for others recognised as 'nationals' in the European terrain, it started promising a chance for a better home, a chance to work, a chance to find a job.

In 2014 when the so-called 'refugee crisis' started, the unemployment rate in Greece, already trapped since 2008 in a fiscal crisis, was 28% and for those under the age of 25 was 61.4% (BBC, 2014). Those aged 25 to 29 years shared common unemployment rate percentages and problems with conventionally defined youth (16-24 years old) (Bell and Blanchflower, 2015). For the jobless working-class and middle-class youth of Greece, graduated from faculties of humanities and schools

of social sciences, the crisis became an opportunity to work in this national territory, if not an opportunity to avoid becoming migrants themselves in other countries of the European continent.

One of these privileged-class youth was me. Having graduated officially in November 2016 from my postgraduate course on Community Psychology in the United Kingdom, I tried to find a job for approximately 6 months in Greece before I started working as an aid worker/psychologist in October 2016. Back then, but also up until the present moment, it was difficult for a graduate of social sciences to work in the sector given the financial crisis, the unemployment rate, and the very limited job offers in these fields. Even if you are lucky enough to find a job, the remuneration does not assure an independent life. The 'refugee crisis' with its huge humanitarian investments as a matter of crisis' response and management, literally, opened up opportunities for working young people to find a job and start building an independent form of living. International organisations like United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Red Cross, Oxfam, *Terre des Hommes*, *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF), *Médecins du Monde* (MDM) among others started recruiting personnel, establishing a network of aid, support, management, and making job offers in the local spatialities of refuge in Greece.

Social workers, psychologists, educators, social scientists, lawyers, nurses, doctors, administration staff, and drivers were recruited in different positions, but for the purpose of this research the focus draws on positions allocated for the facilitation of Psychosocial Support (PSS) programme. The latter refer to psychologists, social workers, educators, social scientists, and lawyers as well as staff members of higher positions such as team leaders or other managers in the programme. In this way, PSS as a programme is consisted of one-to-one sessions with psychologists, group activities organised mainly by psychologists, support from social workers for several issues, meetings with lawyers for legal advice, guidance and support, and language classes (usually English and Greek) with educators.

Importantly, the international sector, usually via organisations like UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM offered funding to local Greek NGOs that would correspondingly assist in the management of the crisis and the provision of support all over Greece. Since 2014, several local NGOS have come to the front. Just to name a few,[1] Solidarity Now, ARSIS – Association for the Social Support of Youth, PRAKSIS, INTERSOS are just some of them. Some of these national organisations emerged in the very beginning of or during the 'refugee crisis', while some others were established in the 1990s having, though, limited action and visibility.

Despite the opportunities the humanitarian sector brought to the fore, work in the humanitarian setting was embedded up to some extent in the financial politics of Greece. Although compared to the limited job offers in the public sector, international organisations were offering jobs and higher salaries than the national minimum wage. While the national NGOs usually offered a salary somewhat higher than the minimum wage, precarious work and contracts became the highlight of humanitarian labour in Greece. Most of us, having no other option to work in what we studied, agreed to work on 3-month contracts, or on contracts that were advertised as 'permanent' but were closely dependent on international renewing of funding[2] and thus of a tenuously fixed-term nature.

In the beginning, being enthusiastic that we had a job to start with, we experienced the fantasy of sustaining this work. A fantasy that promised that we had managed to get a job and therefore possessed 'a future'. As soon as the first funding came to an end, notwithstanding the declaration of permanence of our contracts, we would be soon confronted with discourses of 'understanding', 'aid' and assessment of 'self-performance'. Regarding the latter, after being evaluated

---

[1] Please note that the names of these organisations have not been translated in English. Rather, these are the actual names of the organisations, already discursively framed in English (with an exception of ARSIS which is also presented in Greek as *'ΑΡΣΙΣ'*). I mention the latter because I believe it already shows -even by name, by the linguistic framing- how the local non-governmental is entangled with the international non-governmental sector.

[2] It should be noted here that the focus on international funding is not only to stress the involvement of INGOs in Greece but also to highlight the absence and insufficiency of the Greek state.

by someone in the organisation and if we were lucky to be suitable for another post within the organisation and its programmes all over Greece, we would be transferred and start working in a different location, or we would be again unemployed and start searching for yet another job.

The humanitarian sector uses quite often the argument that when you work as a humanitarian worker this is not just a job; it is beyond work or money, it is about values, principles, and an unconditional offer of help and aid. A question, nevertheless, remains: is it a job? And if so, what are the politics surrounding it? What about forms of aid outside its institutional format? What about solidarity movements (along with antiracist and antifascist movements), occupations of buildings in islands and mainland where refugees live (such as the occupation of housing for refugees/migrants Notara 26 'Κατάληψη Στέγης Προσφύγων/Μεταναστών Νοταρά 26' (Tsavdaroglou, 2018; Gavroche, 2016), the occupation of City Plaza hotel Raimondi, 2019; Mezzadra, 2018; Squire, 2018 but see also Rozakou, 2017a)?[3] Aid and work are closely related in the humanitarian sector, and it is in-between aid and work that the politics of psychosocial support lies to depict both the role of psychology and the forms of subjectivities emerging from within it.

For many workers who work in organisations with fixed-term contracts, this is a working reality that they confront approximately every 3 to 6 months. In other words, mobility and migration does not only reflect a cruel reality for thousands of migrants and refugees but also for the local[4] working personnel. It is by no accident and comes as no surprise, that 'to possess a future' and have a job are both narratives situated and interlinked in the context of and within a discourse

---

[3] I come back to this point in the last chapter of the thesis.

[4] The international working personnel requires different lens, analysis and understanding as they usually work in managerial positions with a much wealthier salary. On top of that, there is also a difference between working in international and local organisations. International organisations provide much more wealthier salaries for all job positions, even more for positions in management, however, they also share fixed-term contracts, or permanent contracts which are dependent on funding and therefore they also become of a fixed-term nature. For a broader discussion on divisions between international and local humanitarian labour see Farah (2020); Pascucci (2019); Redfield (2012).

of development. As will be shown throughout the thesis, psychology and work are linked with development and progress, both signifiers of a very western, gendered and class-divided background and narrative.

For the sake of the present argument, it is pointed out how (im)mobility also reflects aid workers' experiences. Undoubtedly in a better and wealthier position from migrants and refugees, it is important to highlight that the discourse of development (i.e. to be able to get a job and 'possess' the future) traverses and intersects both, in different levels but with the same narratives.

Politics is entangled in the very nature of aid and work in the humanitarian terrain, and even more in the spatial complexity of work in Greece. Aid and work become two signifiers that are traced across this study to demonstrate, first, the divisive nature of *aid work*, and second, the way the subjectivity of the aid worker emerges always in relation to refugees and in between imperative discourses of aid, psychology, and labour. Thus, both aid and work are followed in relation to psychology and support provision to highlight the primary concern of this study: the politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece.

It is more than well-documented today that neoliberalism grows within psychological discourses (Adams et al., 2019; Teo, 2018; Klein, 2016). It needs psychology to reproduce because psychology as a discipline sustains the fantasy of well-being, growth, and progress. This does not imply that neoliberalism works solely with psychology, but that psychology -undoubtedly among others- becomes a very useful mechanism of neoliberalism to sustain, propagate, and mutate itself (Parker, 2007; Rose, 1999). A quick recap from the positive psychology movement led by Martin Seligman (2011) and the modification of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) into Growth (Post-Traumatic Stress/Growth)[5] there is something

---

[5] This is one of many examples. See for instance how the discourse of resilience becomes a political mechanism to sustain neoliberalism, capitalise and colonise the political imagination (Neocleous, 2013 but also Burman, 2020). Or how psychology is linked with 'behavioral economics' (see McMahon, 2015).

particular in the way neoliberalism seeks to extract and present every 'crisis' as a moment of chance and opportunity (see Wright, 2021).

Following the argument of Klein (ibid) that development and the process of 'developing minds' is an anchor point, if not a signifier, between psychology, neoliberalism and power, I propose that it needs to be, additionally, located and critically exposed within migration studies, programmes of psychosocial support, and theories of subject formation (see for instance the work of Burman, 2021a on *Developments: Child, Image, Nation*). Mills (2013) in her book *Decolonizing Global Mental Health: The Psychiatrization of the Majority World* described meticulously the rise of the Global Mental Health (GMH) industry and the implications the latter had and still has on the Global South. Using postcolonial theory, she addressed the rise of GMH and the way WHO scaled up psychiatric diagnoses and treatments to societies across the Global South. Elaborating on the colonial nature of this movement, Mills showed not only how local knowledge around 'mental health' is wiped off but also the interlink between diagnoses, drug treatment and the profit of pharmaceutic companies. As if, Klein (ibid, p.68 citing Moncrieff, 2007) succinctly comments, the Global South signalled 'an untapped market'.

To take this argument a bit further, Moncrieff (2007 but see also 2009) has vividly pointed out how the mental health industry along with pharmaceutical companies lobby local governments and has identified mental health as a major and profitable area of development. Taking into consideration what happened in India, for example, when the GMH movement tried to establish a 'psy-narrative' away from local understandings of suffering and healing, or how pharmaceutical companies attempted to take advantage of this market gap as an 'untapped market', politics play out constantly within psychology and mental health, provision and delivery of support, aid, and work. Work and refuge, politics and support, psychology and subject require to be always situated within a socio-political and contextualised understanding that critically reflects what 'the will of development and progress' mean. They also need to be positioned within a postcolonial framework that asks, 'who pursues to develop whom' and 'for what purpose'?

Although these questions, queries and critical commentaries addressed towards a positioning and moving of the West to the 'Global South', the so-called 2014 'refugee crisis' shifted all these questions and positioned them vividly within the territory of the West. Considering how the West built a narrative since 2001 on the 'war on terror', when it comes to issues of migration within the 'western territory' in which Europe plays a significant role, mental health also needs to be critically explored within the discourse of 'terror'.

Klein (ibid, p.70) writes that 'international relations policy has focused on the subjectivities of the "other" and specifically the "Middle Eastern other" as a matter of security and nation building'. It is specifically within this argument that Chapter Five will discuss the genealogy of the term 'hotspot' and how their space signals, embodies, and protects the west from the 'war on terror' (De Genova, 2018; Neocleous and Kastrinou, 2016). It is precisely because of the way in which the 'war on terror' is infused by migration the very moment the Sea is crossed, the moment that people are getting accommodated in hotspots and camps, that I seek to deploy the arguments of Mills (2013), Klein (2016), De Vos (2020; 2011) and reconfigure them in relation to psychology, subject formation and politics within migration in the European territory.

While psychosocial support may be a mechanism of support in migration, however, it is crucial for it to be critically explored within its institutionalised format. Given the fact that mental health has been dealt with so far as the modern depression of our times and as a problem for economic development, 'a waste of promising human capital and labour' as Klein put it so well (ibid, p.70 but see also De Vos, 2012; 2011), it is important to unravel this paradox. The contradiction lies in the fact that while capitalism since 1990s used psychology as one of its key allies, the rise of mental health issues posed a challenge to capitalism's production. Capitalism, for example, used a psychological language to exploit further its labour force (i.e. in economic depression, business management, HR resolutions etc.), but at the same time the more exploited the labour force was, the more issues of mental health arose. Hence, the irony is that the system of capitalism needs to keep its labour force *happily depressed* to keep producing without dissent.

And migrants are the epitome of this relationship. A relationship that highlights the politics of psychology when migrants are configured to be 'vulnerable' (i.e. a certain identity is imposed on them so as to be understood and 'helped') but the lack of the system when they are 'too vulnerable' and thus the system must provide them with rights and benefits. It is also often the case for migrants to be vulnerable in the opposite way; in their configuration as one of the most well-exploited and cheap labour forces, which is the state's most productive and cost-effective way to develop and show progress. Structurally oppressed, their oppression demands them to be happy to get a job, but nothing more than depressed to sustain it. Migrants bring together and raise the way psychology is entangled with economy and development. They also embody and depict how economy and development are entangled accordingly with colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism (see the discussion of Critical Migration studies at the New Keywords Collective, 2016, also De Genova, 2017; 2016).

And at this point, the role of aid / work is crucial to understand these forms of entanglement in-between psychology, colonialism, and work as labour because 'aid work' as a concept brings together these entanglements in the figure-epitome of migrants and refugees. It is for that reason, to elaborate and shed further light on these specific entanglements, that the focus of this project is constantly moving in between psychology as a form of (western) support and delivery of work, and in this way, subjectivity emerges and performs in-between aid workers and refugees. It is in the in-between(ess) or -at the margin, as postcolonial and black feminists (hooks, 1990/2015; Nayak, 2015; Lugones, 2003; Anzaldúa, 1987 but see also Chapter Three) argue, that we should position ourselves so to open a site of resistance, a space of different possibilities of understanding.

In this attempt, the politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece will raise the aforementioned issues in relation to four analysis chapters. The first is language and how the language of state, humanitarianism and psychology build, on the one hand, a certain representation of refugees as 'other', by either othering them as vulnerable or as a threat, and on the other hand, a certain representation of aid workers as 'the professionals'. The second looks at space and psychology,

and how these both co-constitute a certain subject formation, while the third brings together trauma and time to underline the relationship of psychology with neoliberal development and progress. The fourth and last analysis chapter connects psychology, subject, and colonialism to depict the way psychology becomes a political mechanism of adjustment in the 'European home to come'.

Hence, before moving to the second chapter, which will develop the conceptual framework of this study, the next section will briefly present each chapter and then conclude with some comments and critical reflections on positionality and authorship.

1.3 Thesis outline

This chapter, the first of eight, has so far introduced an initial discussion on the politics of work and support within migration and specifically in Greece. In this section, I present the thesis outline and I offer a summary of each chapter's focus.

The second chapter introduces the conceptual foundations of this project. Illustrating three key concepts mobilised in humanitarian and disaster management studies *aid, crisis,* and *the subject of psychosocial support*, discusses the critical aid literature on humanitarianism (Duffield, 2004; 1997) and the psychosocial aspect of disaster (Pupavac, 2004a; 2001). Crisis as a concept and signifier is portrayed a) in the contextualisation of Greece within its financial crisis, b) in the context of migration under the so called 'refugee crisis', c) in the understanding of the psyche, in which crisis is located as concept of psychological interpretation and d) in the way that camps are justified as a quick attempt to manage 'the crisis'. By highlighting the psychotherapeutic turn of humanitarianism in the 1990s as an attempt to overcome its internal crisis (Pupavac, 2004a), I discuss what the terms and concepts of 'psychoeducation' and 'psychologization' (De Vos, 2011) offer within migration. These concepts, besides being fruitful across this study, mainly depict how and when war and displacement are accompanied with appropriate signifiers of mainstream psychological theory, and thus subjectivity emerges within normative ways of understanding.

Camps, according to this perspective, are spaces of an ideological format which co-constitute the existence, necessity, and reiteration of theories like these. They are a product of a political strategy (Neocleous and Kastrinou, 2016; Agier, 2011; Agamben, 1998), where, if race is also taken into consideration (De Genova, 2018; 2016; Fanon, 1964/1967), it adds another layer of complexity in the normalisation and commodification of subjectivity amid capitalism, humanitarian aid and psychology. Lacan (1973/2018) and Fanon (1952/2008; 1961/2004; 1964/1967; 1959/1965), thinkers of the psychoanalytic and postcolonial thought respectively, are presented as core theoretical figures in this thesis in which they co-exist to break with psychology and psychiatry, with the psychologization and racialisation of the subject. However, this thesis is neither Lacanian nor Fanonian. As will be discussed in chapter three, I use theory as a method to approach my analysis and ground my arguments. In this way, Lacan and Fanon are part of the *theory as method*, but do not define it.

The third chapter describes the qualitative research methodology, and the methods underpinning this study. Presenting the epistemological location of the thesis, this chapter discusses the research aims, the way fieldwork started, the spaces in which my fieldwork took place, the methods mobilised to collect the study's material and the rationale under which this material was collected. Additionally, I present how discourse analysis (Burman and Parker, 1993) is situated according to what I name as *'theory as method'* and the way I analysed the material of this study. Elaborating on the importance of theory in the process of analysis and understanding, I conclude with some critical reflections on how the concepts of ontology, epistemology and methodology work within a postcolonial approach and methodological framework amid what Lacan (1991/2007) calls 'the Discourse of the University'. Critical reflections on methods and positionality run throughout the chapter.

Chapter four is the first of the four analysis chapters. The chapter draws on some of the aid workers' interviews, my previous working experience, fieldnotes and documents from previous humanitarian trainings. It critically discusses the performativity of language in the humanitarian psychological terrain as it unfolds

between the organisation's encounters with aid workers and aid workers with refugees. Language is approached from a Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective (Lacan, 1973/2018) to highlight its psychological intricacies in the level of the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real. While 'the language of the Imaginary' explores how refugees are being constructed as 'danger', 'threat' or 'vulnerable' in the aid worker's imaginary position, 'the language of the Symbolic' discusses an aid worker's metaphor that relates their current refugee structure as the Vatican City in Italy. This metaphor, by being approached as a form of the language of the unconscious, portrays to some extent refugees' reality and how aid worker's subjectivity performs amid the spatiality of the camp. It also depicts and discusses in more detail how Christianity is embedded in the semiotic structure of some aid organisations and the history of aid.

'The language of the conscious', then, as a discursive manifestation between the personal and the professional, highlights the politics of humanitarian language in aid workers' subject formation. The language of professionalism, which includes the ability to identifying oneself as a professional, is suggested as a twofold mechanism which, on the one hand keeps the organisational order going, and on the other hand, depersonalises the inscription of the political onto the personal. Considering the feminist standpoint that the personal is political (Hanisch, 1970), aid workers' experiences may reveal how oppressive the system in which they work is, and invite ways to rethink the psychic level at which they might align, not with the organisation, but with refugees. The chapter concludes, with its last section on 'the Real is traumatic'. It depicts how the language of psychology opens the kernel of the traumatic wherein what resists symbolisation in the everyday experiences of the camp is not a psychologised performance of truth but rather a constant conflict of race, class, gender, and struggles.

The fifth chapter focuses explicitly on the hotspot of Moria in Lesvos and demonstrates the link between space, subject formation, and psychology. Following Massey's (2005, p.9) conceptualisation that 'thinking the spatial in a particular way can shake up the manner in which certain political questions are formulated', I elaborate on a story which arose while I was in the hotspot of Moria

and shows how space, subject formation and psychology are politically interlinked. Next, after discussing the genealogy of the term 'hotspot' (Neocleous and Kastrinou, 2016), I use a map from the hotspot of Moria, as a research method, to analyse the way space is officially represented and how aid workers use maps to find their way there. Linking, maps, cartography, and colonialism, what is discussed and illustrated here is how the spatial trajectories in Moria are extended across and between body and psyche and infuse the way subjectivities perform. The chapter ends by envisaging the role of space, within what I call and discuss as therapeutic spatiality. Bringing the Lacanian notion of 'topology' in dialogue with the work on emotional geography (see Burman and Chantler, 2004; Bondi and Fewell, 2003), space is seen as working as a metaphor of the therapeutic spatiality of the camp and the subjectivities encapsulated in and by it.

Chapter six begins with the way time is inscribed in the *traumatic present* (Kapsali and Mentinis, 2018) of aid workers as they move psychically towards the traumatic reality of the refugee. Traumatic present as a concept is fruitful not only to depict that traumatic reality could be a component of refugees' and aid workers' experience, but also to highlight the psychoanalytic relationship between time and trauma in the manifestation of *the act* (Bistoen, 2016). Locating the possibilities of the radical in the traumatic, this chapter discusses the role of normative understandings of suffering as structured within the elaboration of two themes: activation and psychosomatic symptoms. Linking time as presented in humanitarian and psychological discourse (past-present-future) with Benjamin's reversal of dominant conceptions of historical time (Benjamin, 1955/2007; Khatib, 2017), it is argued that aid workers' call for refugees' activation reproduces a mainstream understanding of 'time and symptom' which prevents refugees from performing their own subjective act. Psychosomatic symptoms, then, stress that the symptom carries a political and postcolonial meaning. The process of distortion within mainstream discourses misrecognises the 'symptom's own time' (Fanon, 1952/2008), a moment that is deeply historical and political. Approaching 'the essence' of symptom with a postcolonial Fanonian framework, I argue that the existence of psychosomatic symptoms makes a subjective claim inscribed in

the body. It tells how what makes refugee reality traumatic is our own symptomatic and racial reading, because it blurs 'the every day' the possibilities of 'symptom' as a radical subjective act. The chapter ends by discussing how bodies perform as an accumulation strategy of knowledge (Harvey, 2000) as reflected in and provoked by the antinomies that lie underneath the humanitarian discourse of the psychological. The latter, undoubtedly ruptured, could also perform as a new beginning, as an act against pathologisation and racialisation. An act in the political.

The seventh chapter, the last of the four analysis chapters, focuses on the ways in which psychology and psychosocial support perform 'psycolonial encounters' with refugees. Following postcolonial thought and debates (see Danewid, 2017; Fanon, 1952/2008; 1961/2004; 1959/1965; Mahmood, 2005; Mohanty, 2003; Said, 1978/2003; Mignolo, 2000; Spivak, 1988), there are racialised configurations in the way psychosocial support works, even if the latter attempts to provide a liberatory framework. This chapter builds upon refugees' 'stories' as a concept and practice (i.e. to learn and tell a coherent story so to succeed in asylum and get papers) and how the latter is, paradoxically, transformed into a mechanism which disconnects connected histories. In this way, the chapter discusses the role of 'story' as a tool in refugees' living in and leaving from the camp before it moves to the second section and locates the role of psychosocial support in disconnecting their history, a history of war and interventions, via techniques of 'self-development' and 'social adjustment'. The chapter ends by critically deliberating on what a critical psychology of liberation would look like amid these conditions. Drawing upon an account of an incident of rape and how it had been handled within a therapeutic spatiality, it considers what a feminist and postcolonial encounter could add to the framework of critical psychology of liberation.

Chapter eight, the last chapter concludes by providing an overview of the project, its contribution to knowledge, its limitations, and the way forward towards a critical knowledge production and future research. It shows the different but also the interdisciplinary ways in which the study contributes to knowledge. It discusses how it forms, transforms, and traverses current debates in academia,

humanitarian, and psychological research and practice in relation to migration and support. In this way, it critically discusses how it extends theoretical discussions on psychopolitics and how the latter is important for a critical understanding of migration. Bridging the contributions with the current limitations of this study, it opens pathways for future research.

1.4 Conclusion, positionality, authorship

Barthes (1977, p.148) refers to the dynamics of a text as a procedure which to 'give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at cost of the death of the Author.' Assuming that readers could not understand the meaning of a text by tracing it back to the 'author', the person who wrote it, Barthes called for the birth of the reader, the birth of an active participant in text. Parker (2002, p.137) commenting on the latter, argues that:

> 'The discourse analyst is an active reader who encourages those who are positioned by discourse to read the texts they live within and so to assume a position of understanding and greater control over their lives, the positions they would want to adopt.'

In the same spirit, I acknowledge all the privileges that enabled me to become a researcher in the field of migration, such as my previous experience, my already subjectification as an aid worker, my whiteness and my middle-class background. I often think that if this thesis may become useful is only by demanding the death of the author and the birth of the reader. As a reader myself in the plurality of ways that led my own subjectification in the refugee camps of Greece, the way I also psychologised refugees, and I gained 'value' from the system of work and refuge as a worker in Greece, I read this thesis as a way of exposing the humanitarian and psychological texts in which we, as workers in the humanitarian terrain, may have lived or still live in. In that sense, I am a reader as well as writer of the thesis.

Faraway from believing that the present study constitutes 'a truth', this project aims to depict 'the myths' (to use the literary language of Barthes) of humanitarianism and language. The way humanitarian and psychological myths

are organised as discourses which structure certain forms of social bond or certain forms of understanding the way of building, bridging and making our social bonds. This study is just an introduction to some of the ideological formats in which aid and support are entangled, to perhaps help some of us to rethink what we see, do, and encounter in hotspots and camps. To illustrate the way our subjectivities, perform, and emerge. To initiate a reflection and a discussion which could be move forward only by the birth of us, as readers.

Without forgetting or underestimating that Barthes, from a postcolonial and feminist viewpoint, may bypass that the death of the author could be also read as a white or patriarchal argument, since not all of us are given access to authorship or equal opportunities, it is argued, in Butler's (2005a, p.82, their emphasis) words, that:

'I am only in the address to you'.

This is not as a matter of recognition, but as matter of mutual understanding, mutual struggle, and mutual authorship. This thesis is, among everything else, a reflection on some of our experiences on the politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece.

Chapter Two

Conceptual framework

2.1 Introduction

In their book *Psychoanalysis and Revolution: Critical Psychology for Liberation Movements* Parker and Pavón-Cuéllar (2021, p.14-15) argue that:

> '...psychology, in fact, is constituted by much of what we try to solve through psychoanalysis. From the psychoanalytic point of view, the psychological sphere is problematic. Psychology takes shape for us as an illusory, deceptive and even delusional experience, namely, the experience of each of us as an undivided and separate individual who can fully know and control themselves as if an object. This unitary self is exactly part of the problem because it leads each person to imagine that they should take responsibility for their unwanted unpleasant feelings and makes them feel all the worse if they feel 'divided', if they sense that there is an unconscious dimension to their lives. Such a division which affects us all, is recognized by psychoanalysis and denied by psychology. Its denial conceals our alienation and prevents us from resisting what alienates us. It thus contributes to what dominates us as if "from the inside", to manipulate us and to manage us ideologically.'

This thesis critically explores the politics of psychosocial support to show, on the one hand, that the discipline of psychology is devoted to the maintenance of a united individual attached to one psychological sphere and, on the other hand, that everything is saturated with a psychological 'tone' powerful enough to justify any troubling contradictions. As these comprise two of the major axes that characterise *the political* of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece, psychoanalysis is mobilised here as a conceptual framework to tackle the theoretical controversies of the psychological. This psychological mechanism, as will be shown, pathologises, desocialises, depoliticises and dehistorises all those implicated in its discourse, in its instantiation as a discourse of neoliberal aid,

capital accumulation, and imperialist-capitalistic crises. Psychologization (De Vos, 2013) is one of the key concepts that emerged within the discipline of psychology to critically reflect on the discipline's procedural temptation to turn everything back to the subject in the form of notions of psychological capacity, deviancy, or incompetence; that is, in relation to a unified self. Psychologization as a concept and procedure traverses this research and is indicated across the contextualisation of the political in the refugee camps of Greece. The way, for instance, language is spoken, space is made, trauma is linked to time, and stories get told in a western and white terrain of histories are some of the key aspects of how context and the political come to be understood under the remit and process of psychologization.

The materialisation of context (or to put it differently, what anthropologists and 'psy' professions designate as 'context' is deeply material) reinforces the need to pay particular attention to the politics of language, space, time - trauma and (his)-story (to note heteropatriarchal axes of power informing who and what determines this) within migration studies, humanitarian accumulation and practice. Although, from a feminist and postcolonial-decolonial view (Lugones, 2010; 2003; Fanon, 1952/2008; 1961/2004; 1959/1965; Mahmood, 2005; Mohanty, 2003; Said, 1978/2003; Mignolo, 2000; Spivak, 1988) the latter undoubtedly matters, language, space, time, and history have emerged in the humanitarian and psychological research of migration as simple variants which add to but do not constitute the psychopolitical intricacies of migration. This psychologization of context exemplifies exactly how, as indicated earlier, psychology is tuned in with every material aspect of experience and is getting more and more infused with - if it is not already absorbed into- today's brutal neoliberal capitalist attempt to adjust everything for its own benefit and profit.

Thus, the focus in this thesis on the politics concerning the psychosocial support work addresses this as a twofold mechanism. It portrays, first, the politics and limits of the psychological in and outside its academic and humanitarian clinic and shows, second, how psychoanalysis can move analysis beyond psychiatry and psychology to offer a break with the metalanguage of both. In this way, this project

is psychoanalytically informed - but not limited to psychoanalysis - to trace how the symptom of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece speaks.

The emphasis on the symptom, though, is not to support a 'symptomatic reading' (as per Best and Marcus, 2009) of what constitutes psychosocial support. These authors approach the emphasis on the symptom as a form of surface reading. Contrarily, the attention, here to the symptom comes, first, to highlight what makes psychoanalysis different to psychology and psychiatry; that is, the radical possibilities of (what is sometimes called) the symptom in the refugee landscape of migration. Second, it comes to indicate, as De Vos (2020, p.47 my emphasis) puts it, thoughtfully, that 'psychoanalysis is not about searching for a hidden truth behind reality, such as what a symptom would mean or signify, but rather it concerns *the lack of, or within, meaning* leading to, for example symptomatic manifestations'.

In this chapter, and in the sections that follow, I offer a literature review and a summary of my main theoretical resources that were mobilised to inform my analysis chapters. As will be shown, the first part of the chapter, entitled *Aid, crisis, subject: the spatial temporalities of psychopolitics in migration*, discusses the critical aid literature on humanitarianism and the psychosocial aspect of disaster, how crisis is a signifier which needs to be traced and followed to grasp the inter-national spatial politics of migration. The formulation of 'spatial temporality' is also situated along and within the socio-materiality of camps and the provision of support.

The second section, *Lacan, Fanon and the postcolonial critique of livelihood*, offers a critical exploration of the theoretical framework mobilised throughout the analytic strategy of this research, which is theory as method. Psychoanalysis, postcolonialism, feminism, critical social theory, and critical psychology comprise the foundations of my theoretical elaboration to process the material presented in the analysis chapters *four*, *five*, *six* and *seven*. To put it simply, this addresses how space, time, trauma, and history comprise the political intricacies of the psychological in the humanitarian landscape as well as in the field of migration.

2.2 Aid, crisis, subject: The spatial temporalities of psychopolitics in migration

Crisis, as a signifier and a concept, highlights *the paradigm, political and conceptual crises* that are internalised in the domains of a) theory (psychology and its mainstream paradigms in the field of aid and migration), b) theory and context as of an economic socio-material milieu (the political manifestation of aid) and c) the conceptual incorporation of aid as progress. As a concept, *crisis* has had an exemplary interpellation in the field of psychology and specifically in the field of social psychology with the crisis of the field to be based on 'a paradigmatic, political and conceptual crisis' (Parker, 1989, p.11). The crisis in social psychology raised the way the discipline of psychology was fighting to promote itself as a strict individualist, positivist and experimental field in the social sciences (Dafermos, 2015; Greenwood, 2004). Critiques of this discipline-performance argued for the sociality of the self (Henriques et al., 1998), the link of theory within the broader liberation of society (Martín-Baró, 1994) and the formation of what is now called 'critical social psychology' (Hepburn, 2003; for the field of critical [social] psychology in Greece see Mentinis and Critical Psychology Network, 2013; Dafermos and Marvakis, 2006). In this way, the reference to the concept of crisis in the field of social psychology is mentioned so as to argue that 'crisis as a concept' traverses this thesis at the level of theory (critical psychology, critical social theory, psychoanalysis), at the level of epistemology (anti-individualist), at the level of context (Greece, aid and the practice of aid in Greece under the so-called 'refugee crisis') and, finally, at the level of the conceptual political intricacies of aid and psychology as a matter of progress (for a critique of aid and humanitarianism see Oliver, 2017; hospitality and colonialism see Deutscher, 2003, and on postcolonial approaches to psychology see Hook, 2005; Mills, 2013; Gendzier, 1976).

Psychologization, a concept raised in the introduction, is a by-product of that 'crisis' as yet another attempt to critically discuss and dislocate the individualist, positivist, and non-political, or rather ideological, formation of the subject.

It is no accident that the concept of crisis goes hand in hand with the humanitarian concept of aid. If aid and crisis have a certain form of relation, then it is, for sure, interlinked. Redfield (2005, p.336; see also Redfield, 2010) has applied the term *crisis* to 'a general sense of rupture that demands a decisive response'. In the context of this decisive response, the concept of aid works supplementarily to address the critical literature of aid (or aid and crisis, see Polman, 2010) along with critical literature on aid and psychology (see Kapsali and Mentinis, 2018; De Vos, 2011; Summerfield 2002; 1997), and aid - development and progress (see Hayter, 1971).

Aid, crisis, race and the subject(s) are four master signifiers that bring together in this project a specific discussion on the politics of humanitarianism, the role of crises in the calls for interventions (i.e. as in the current 'refugee crisis') as well as the role of the crisis' diagnostics (i.e. emergence of disorders) and how different subjects are implicated amid crises, humanitarian interventions and support provision. In that sense, 'refugee crisis' is a signifier that will be deconstructed by the end of the thesis. Since the mid-nineteenth century, humanitarian interventions have been a primary instrument of response and aid in the name of protection globally. Barnett (2011) traces humanitarianism's birth, entitled as 'The Age of Imperial Humanitarianism', in the missionary movement which sought to 'awaken' (i.e. convert to Christianity) the masses in the colonial provinces of Europe, with India and West Africa as distinct examples.

After the World War II, and even more in the wake of the Cold War when the stability of the nation-state became visibly undermined, new forms of private and humanitarian sovereignty came into play. As De Lauri (2016, p.2) argues, in the second half of twentieth century humanitarianism had started transforming not only the history of nation-state and international relations but also -and here comes the emphasis of the present research- 'in the reconfiguration of human relations (with a monopoly on the definition of concepts such as aid, solidarity, need, etc.)'. It is not by accident that Barnett (2011) called 'The Age of Neo-Humanitarianism' the period from the end of World War II to the end of the Cold

War, and 'The Age of Liberal Humanitarianism' the period followed from the end of Cold War to the present.

We live in a neoliberal era of capitalism where humanitarianism is shifting into a form of state-enterprise that works hand in hand with security and militarisation (De Lauri, 2019; Pandolfi and Rousseau, 2016; Fassin and Pandolfi, 2010). In so doing (as can be seen in what happened in Rwanda and Bosnia as examples), it is interesting to observe how the state, humanitarian, and media-public discourse that signals 'what matters' focuses on the claim of humanitarian principles and values: humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence (see for instance Mills, 2005). Taking these principles into consideration (see Mertek, 2021), it is worth noting the unaddressed dependency of the Global North on the Global South. In contrast to the colonial and neoliberal stereotyping of progress in the Global South, and thus the supposed one-way dependency of the Global South on the Global North for protection, normality, and progress, today we experience a plurality of crises in the North which makes more and more crucial the delivery of aid to the South. What encapsulates the element of centrality or significance in the delivery of aid is the prosperity that the latter brings (or continues bringing) to the Global North: job acquisitions for the educated but inexperienced youth labour force, 'expat salaries' for the expert and managerial staff, exploitation of local resources and interest payments (De Lauri, 2016; Hayter, 1971).

Since 2014 and the rise of the so-called 'refugee crisis', the dependency between job acquisitions and the practice of aid came also to be seen within the 'Global North' territory. This time, work and aid did not have to travel from the Global North to the Global South as 'work' was piling up in the southern terrains of Europe. Greece, one of the southern (in both geographical and political senses) territories in the Global North, offers the conceptual and material ground I am engaging with in this thesis to critically reflect upon the role of practicing *aid work* within the territorial mark of 'Global North'. However, the interplay between north and south is not used to reinforce the well-established geographical opposition between 'the Global North and the Global South'. Rather, it is referred in such a way to recognise the territorial politics of the South(s) within the North.

The country of Greece has occupied a peculiar position in the politics of 'Global North and South' being itself in the south of the Global North but in the north of the Global South.[6] This distinct location in-between the global sphere transformed it into a geopolitical melting pot for implementing global power politics. For instance, since 2007-2008 Greece became known as one of the countries in the south of Global North which was immersed in a fiscal crisis. The financial crises in Greece, Spain, and Portugal, as additional examples of 'souths' situated in the Global North, revealed a broader form of crisis in the European and global politics: the failure of the current European and global capitalist power to overcome the crisis of its own over-accumulation. And so, for the working-class people that meant salary cuts, precarious jobs (as well as job-hunting), unemployment, privatisation of public goods, and poverty. From 2014, then, the *monetary* crisis came to be situated in the signifying chain next to the so-called *refugee* crisis. Greece and the Mediterranean Sea formed the pathway (or entry point) to Europe and their position in the European migration politics unfolded in a discourse in which crisis, legality and refuge became intertwined. Not surprisingly, their entanglement did not aim to protect the people who were 'crossing' the frontier Sea of Europe, the Mediterranean Sea, but on the contrary the countries which would soon be getting crossed in the name of protection and thus control 'the migration flows'. It is as Derrida (Derrida and Caputo 1997, p.110) once commented:

> 'The word "hospitality" derives from the Latin hospes, which is formed from hostis, which originally meant a "stranger" and came to take on the meaning of the enemy or "hostile" stranger (hostiiis), + pets (polis, potes, potentia), to have power.'

---

[6] It goes without saying that the latter positioning lies also in the western way of looking upon the world as what is in 'the north' or 'south' relies on the situated position of the observer. It is a form of acknowledgement, therefore, that this research comes *under western eyes* (Mohanty, 1984) but it engages with the postcolonial literature to decentralise both 'the west' and what comes with it, i.e. the notion of 'whiteness'.

Europe has 'hosted' so far more than 1,259,309 refugees (UNHCR, 2021a) in spaces which have been publicly and extensively denounced as hostile (just to name a few, Moria in Greece or Calais in France, which became known as 'the Jungle'; see Calais Writers, 2017). Even a quick 'google search' about the 'hotspot' (a notion I will discuss later) of Moria, in the island of Lesvos in Greece, will feature the hostilities the asylum law engenders in the European continent. Notwithstanding the public and humanitarian denunciation of spaces like Moria (see Barberio, 2018; MSF, 2016; V.H., 2018), there is an open question with regards to the role of psychosocial support overall in the formulation, acceptance, and reproduction of spaces such as refugee camps and hotspots in the name of emergency, crisis, and acute assistance.

2.2.1 Crisis and psychosocial support: The psychologization of the humanitarian aid

Critical scholars in the field of critical aid (see Duffield, 2004; 1997) and international relations (see Pupavac, 2004a; 2004b; 2001) have situated the emergence and rise of psychosocial programmes in humanitarian interventions in the humanitarianism's psycho-therapeutic turn in the 1990s. Specifically, they have linked this turn in-between discourses and procedures of therapeutic (Pupavac, 2004b) and global governance (Duffield, 2004). Pupavac (2004a, p.497, see also Pupavac, 2001), for instance, has argued that humanitarianism's psycho-therapeutic turn took place in a period of upheavals and internal crisis as an attempt to humanize the bureaucratisation of aid 'foregrounding how people and communities *personally* experience disaster or conflict'. In contrast to this 'qualitative attempt' at an international level, a matrix of therapeutic governance (Pupavac, 2004b) was established, reducing politics to an administrative psychic task. Duffield (2004; see also Mavelli, 2017) has conceptualised the aforementioned turn within a Foucauldian-Agambian perspective to underline the way biopolitics and 'the power over the life of populations' comes as a form of global governance. While biopolitics responds to Foucault's theory and the way human life becomes the target of the organisational power of the State (Foucault, 1979/2008), the perspective of Agamben (1998) highlights the 'hidden tie'

between sovereign power and biopolitics. According to him, sovereign power is established via the production of political order, an order that is based on the exclusion of human life and the production of what he calls 'bare life', a life stripped of rights.

Duffield (1997) argues that in contrast to the paradoxical argument that calls for a performance of neutrality in humanitarian discourse and assistance, the crisis of humanitarianism in 1990s brought the politicisation of the humanitarian battlefield to the surface. As De Vos (2011, p.111) emphasizes, Duffield's argument stresses the role of western NGOS as 'a form of sovereignty within the crisis regions', a form of power that produces a certain political order. In this respect, it is not only the dependence of NGOs on military protection, logistics and their intervention in politicizing the so-called 'failed or weak states'[7] that creates a form of sovereign power, it is also 'the partnership with warring parties or sectarian political entities [that further] involves a complex redefinition of sovereignty' (Duffield, 1997, p.532). The latter means that even though the formal sovereign of the 'region in crisis' is upheld, it is reshaped to create the space for an emergence of external involvement. It is, therefore, here that the role of the UN is implicated because to assist suggests claims of neutrality (for a discussion on humanitarianism, its sovereignty and claims of neutrality see Oliver, 2017). In other words, whilst the UN collaborates with political agents to gain access or 'empower' the process of development towards a liberal democracy, any aid that wishes to be part of relief in war zones must perform neutrality. The politicisation, hence, of humanitarian aid becomes a depoliticisation of the *field* as yet another iteration of geopolitical power relations (see Hyndman, 2000).

What happens in the border(s) of the main bloc, Duffield (ibid, p.532) points out, is seen as a temporary solution towards liberal democracy and not as new types

---

[7] The term 'failed or weak states' refers to states established or redefined as ethnocentric or fundamentalist arrangements. Before 1989, Singapore and Bangladesh were two of the new states that have been formed on the principal of ethnic succession whereas after 1990s 10 more states emerged in Eastern Europe, Middle East and in some parts in Africa (see Duffield, 1997 but also Smith, 1993).

of 'socio-political formation adapted to exist on the margins of the global economy'. As De Vos (ibid, p.111) puts it, succinctly: 'one can now argue that the psychologization of humanitarianism serves precisely to legitimate the twofold politicization of humanitarian assistance'. And, as he continues (ibid, my emphasis), 'if, for example, humanitarianism has traded the perspective of a long-term development for a focus on relief in war zones, *then it is the psychosocial discourse which provided the scientific support for this political shift'*.

In this way, the focus around the notion of crisis, as a signifier that links Greece's financial crisis, 'refugee crisis' and humanitarianism's psychotherapeutic turn as part of its own internal crisis, demands that we pay attention to the politics of humanitarian aid inside its western territorial borders. On the other hand, it recentralises the argument in De Vos' (ibid, p.118) radical conclusion, that subjectivity has become 'the *ultimate* commodity with psychology as the other side of money'. Regarding the first, the forceful displacement and migration of people from countries like Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone (among others) as a product of staggering inequality (Khiabany, 2016) came to be framed and addressed as *crisis*. Without underestimating the forcible displacement of 79.5 million people worldwide by the end of 2019 with 26 million of refugees, 45.7 million of Internally Displaced people and 4.2 million asylum-seekers (UNHCR, 2020), I argue that the notion and term of 'refugee crisis', inscribed in the politics of naming, is on a continuum with imperialism and colonialism but have come to be seen inside the west's geographical borders. Additionally, as Khiabany (2016) critically observes, 'refugee crisis' has been given the name of *crisis* because it pointed out the challenge of dealing with a massive reserve of army of labour.

Migrants have always been visible as a potential and very cheap labour force in formal and informal sectors of imperial economies. This is the point Chakrabarty (2000) made in her well-known project of '*Provincializing Europe'*. In such a way, and with reference to De Vos' argument, the current discussion of psychosocial support amid the so-called 'refugee crisis' cannot be conceptualised without a serious discussion of capitalism and imperialism (Summerfield, 2002; see section I

in Nelson and Grossberg, 1988; Luxemburg, 1913/1951) as a form of capitalist accumulation, and a form of psycho-politics that enhances, if not produces, the commodification of subjectivity.

Psychology works via psychologization. Given the fact that psychologization as a process de-psychologises and de-subjectivises because the human is being reduced to a neuro-behavioural automaton (De Vos, 2012), the treatment of the wounded, displaced and tortured has to pass through a knowledge-distribution and education; what is well-known as *psychoeducation* (Burman, 2006; also for a critical, feminist and political approach to psychoeducation see Burman, 2016). Humanitarian programmes of psychosocial support have made psychoeducation central to their interventions. Although they do not name it as such, one-to-one psychological sessions, recreational (but socially and practically useful) group activities like cooking, sewing, dancing, drawing, 'educational' daytrips outside of the camp (for instance, museum visits) and language classes of non-formal education (i.e. particularly focused on English or the local language) comprise the spectrum of psychoeducation's role in these programmes (see Pupavac, 2004b).

Psychoeducation performs as a discursive psychological matrix which is transfused and transmitted in the form of an educational psychological praxis. As the later analysis chapters indicate, war and displacement are accompanied with appropriate signifiers of mainstream psychological theory, and they introduce a normative way of understanding subjectivity. In this way, the focus on psychology as a form of psycho-educational praxis works to indicate this normative way of understanding as well as the way that normative models of subjectivity are introduced. Taking into consideration that psychological theories are normative (Burman, 2017; 2007; Squire, 2001; Parker, 1999; Rose, 1998; Henriques et al., 1998; Parker et al., 1995 Foucault, 1975/1995) and implicated in a capitalist formulation of 'surplus value' in subjectivities themselves (i.e. better adjustment – more flexibility – better control), when race also comes into play - as structured within notions of help and refuge - it adds another layer of complexity in the commodification of subjectivity. Before I introduce, though, the role of race, or rather relational structures of racialisation procedures as key axes of power, we

should pay attention to the way aid manifests itself as the administration of normalisation.

Hoffmann (2016) notes that humanitarian aid has taken for granted that refugees require intervention and some form of 'correction' in order to have 'normal lives'. Key tropes at play here are trauma as a psychological discourse, pathology as inferiority in psycho-medical discourse, abnormality vs normality as an established colonial 'truth' practice, and incapacitation as a developmentalist narrative of progress. These are some of the ways that normality is introduced via an othered and deviant discourse of expertise (see Khan, 2014). And if the field of medical anthropology has a long-standing tradition to document the medical intricacies of disaster (Ticktin, 2011a; Fassin and Rechtman, 2009), the role of the psyche in the reproduction of victimhood, as well as in the politics of migration, is still not a well-developed area of understanding. With this respect, this project focuses on the psyche as an embodied entity (Fanon, 1952/2008; 1961/2004; 1964/1967; 1959/1965; Oliver, 2004; Fuss, 1994; 1989) with the hope that it will not fall into another psychologised (or psychoanalysed) critique of psychology.

The turn of psychology to education, or the educative form of psychology under the institutionalised form of humanitarian assistance, creates a peculiar ground of performing subjectivities for the system's own profit. In this dialectical equation, it is not only the institution of aid or even the 'beneficiary', as humanitarian institutions call the refugees registered in their programmes, that matters but their entanglement also with the 'modern' administrator of aid, *the humanitarian aid worker*. It is the way that psychology, race, and refuge are interlinked with the aid worker in between the battlefield of 'disaster' (on the notion of disaster capitalism see Klein, 2007; also, Pyles et al., 2017; Fletcher, 2012) and the commodification of their subjectivities that matter in this research. It is the way their embodied psyches perform a body of knowledge which provides routes into exploring insightful understandings of how subjectivities are constituted, as aid becomes power, and psychology a power of normative knowledge framework. In the following section, I discuss how space and time work as the core and context

of this research, each and together playing a significant role in the psychopolitics of migration and the racialisation of the field.

2.2.2 The spatial temporalities of the psychological

The previous section underlay the question about the role of psychosocial support in the name of emergency, crisis, and assistance. To show how crisis and psychology are embedded in 'The Age of Liberal Humanitarianism', in this section I discuss how space, time and subject are intricately involved in *the spatial temporalities of the psychological.* The question, then, of *the politics/role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece* encapsulates the dimensions of space and time to depict, first, how that conceptual and theoretical move from the level of biopolitics (Tazzioli, 2020; Foucault, 1997/2003) to psychopolitics (Kapsali and Mentinis, 2018; Han, 2017; Hook, 2004 but see also De Vos, 2013; Sedgwick, 1982) does not abject, refuse or disavow the subject's embodied entity. Contrariwise, second, it highlights how psyche[8] is embodied and manifests along with the spatial-temporal, both as a topological or geographical imagination, and a socio-material element of intersubjective relations at the level of politics and migration. That is, subjects and psyche are produced and constructed.

And to clarify what is the relationship between subject and psyche, Oliver and Edwin (2002, p.viii) mention that in the field of psychoanalytic social theory the status of the subject is approached as a psychic and social being. At the same time Butler in *The Psychic Life of Power* (1997, p.10) suggests that the subject 'ought to be designated as a linguistic category, a place holder, a structure in formation'. Thus, psyche is approached as a psychoanalytic formulation, whose link with psychopolitics addresses this very relationship between language, as in the form of discourse, and politics in the subject formation.

Furthermore, space and time are deployed as essential analytical concepts in this thesis to help make sense of the psychic trajectory of migration and its politics,

---

[8] The absence of the article 'the' in front of *psyche* is another way to situate discursively its plurality. Contrarily to psychological readings that attempt to locate, structure, and interpret psyche under an individualistic microscope, the omission of 'the' in psyche's reference is yet another way to emphasise on psyche's pluralities.

materially speaking. And it is this material basis that marks and informs one of its key contributions. As Massey (2005, p.9) critically observes, the concept of space does not only reflect the argument or position that 'spatial is political' but it also suggests that 'thinking the spatial in a particular way can shake up the manner in which certain political questions are formulated'. Elaborating on space as a concept, while working within the spatial trajectory of migration that is the refugee camps, is a path I trace from feminist geographers such as Massey (1994), Hyndman and Giles (2011) and Bondi (2003; 1990) as well as other geographers and theorists of space as Harvey (2006) and Lefebvre (Goonewardena et al., 2008). The reason I follow this pathway is to contribute to the questions that the space of refugee camps, raise in the sphere of psychopolitical: what does 'embodying space and movement' mean in a camp? How is subjectivity performed in-between space and subject? To what extent does psychology perform a 'therapy of space' in spaces such as refugee camps? What is the role of 'safe space' in camps?

And it may be observed when reading this thesis, *refugee camps* are cited as a persistent repetition without an explicit reference or analysis of their spatial temporality. On the other hand, Chapter Five, as the second analysis chapter, is devoted to the space of one setting, Moria, which – within European Immigration, state, and humanitarian policy- is designated a hotspot and not a camp. Although refugee camps, undoubtedly, comprise the spatial and temporal context of this research, I made a choice to focus on the hotspot of Moria in my analysis on space as I present it as an intentional spatial metaphor of the contradictions of the psychological apparatus. Refugee camps, as material contexts of spatial and temporal dimensions, traverse the underpinnings of my analysis at all stages and form the conditions and context of its formulation. Camps are manifested via analysis of language, time and trauma, story and history while co-constituting one another. I will start with a review of refugee camps as a concept and key spatial term in migration studies and humanitarian literature, before I move to a conceptual elaboration of the questions raised above in relation to space, subjectivity and psychology in the analysis chapters.

Harvey (1990, p.418) argues that 'a study of the historical geography of concepts of space and time suggests that the roots of the social construction of these concepts lie in the mode of production and its characteristic social relations'. Refugee camps and hotspots, as spatio-temporal products of social and historical practice, are situated in the mode of production and in the correspondent social relations they serve. Following Smith's (2008, p.107) claim that 'the relativity of space [a major also feminist claim] becomes not a philosophical issue but a product of social and historical practice', I believe that these concepts are in dialogue with Malkki's (1995) almost genealogical (Foucault, 1971/1981) approach to the role and meaning of refugees and refugee camps.

As Malkki (ibid) shows, refugee camps have not always been spaces inextricably linked with the international humanitarian domain. In the same way, refugees have not always been institutionally or discursively approached as an international humanitarian problem. It was towards the end of World War II (WWII) that refugee camps became registered as 'a standardized, generalizable technology of power in the management of mass displacement' (ibid, p.498). Between the last years of WWII and the immediate post-war years, people who were displaced in Europe started being classified as a military problem. It was, thus, anticipated that upon victory the displaced population would be an enormous 'refugee problem' concentrated in Germany. The camp, already quasi-military in design, offered a place of mass control of the refugees. After the liberation, its architecture enabled efficient population quarantines to prevent or limit any upcoming epidemics. Malkki (ibid, p.499) critically notes that '…there is a bitter irony in the fact that many of the hundreds of work and concentration (including extermination) camps in Germany were transformed into 'Assembly Centres' for refugees, when the war ended'.

During the war, the Displaced Persons Branch of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) was the juridical power responsible for the uprooted masses. In the aftermath of war, several different international organisations such as Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, International Refugee Organization and United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

(UNRRA) followed SHAEF's direction. When UNHCR was officially established in 1951, refugees began to appear more clearly as an international humanitarian issue. In this transformation, where refugees did not appear any more as a primarily military but a social-humanitarian problem, camps continued to play a key role in making accessible interventions like 'the study of the population' and their documentation (Malkki, ibid). Along with that important transformation and the role camps played in it, both refugees and camps, as notions embedded in the procedure of spatial concentration, were born in war.

Similarly, as Neocleous and Kastrinou (2016) point out, hotspots also acquired their spatial meaning during WWII. Although the term 'hotspot', prior to the war, carried a range of meanings from night clubs to points on the skin stimulated by heat or metal and areas of non-uniformity on photographs, during the war it took on a military meaning as an area of danger or violence. As they comment (ibid, p.4) '*politically speaking, a hotspot is a space of conflict where the enemy will be confronted. The hotspot is a warzone*'. Lefebvre (as cited in Busquet, 2012-13, p.4) had linked space with ideology. 'He defined spatial ideology as a system of meanings of spatial reality, a product of a "political strategy" that would impose their representations, indeed their needs and aspirations onto the dominated classes'.

Along these lines, there are several studies that discuss displacement and the politics of space (see Agier, 2011; Hyndman, 2000). Hyndman and Giles (2017) in their book *Refugees in Extended Exile: Living on the Edge* comment that many scholars have asked if refugee camps, and corresponding settlements can be accounted for by Agamben's (1998) concept of 'state of exception'. Ticktin (2005, p.354) for example suggests that policing and humanitarianism represent two sides of the same coin. Examining the latter relation in the policing of prostitutes in (or around) detention centres, the Refugee Appeals Commission and undocumented migrants, she argues that the camp could be understood as a space of exception because there is a power to define who is included and who is excluded.

According to Nyers (2006, p.xiii), the subjectivity of refugee 'is constituted as being exposed to the violent limit of the sovereign relation known as "state of exception"'. Nonetheless, refugee identity and political subjectivity are not merely oppositional because the refugee is not simply excluded from the political realm, but rather is included via its exclusion (ibid but see also Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013). This image of refugees being stuck in camps for years while they entered them in the name of emergency, crisis, and acute assistance reflects Agamben's idea that states employ exceptionalism diminishing people to 'bare life' during moments of crisis (Hyndman and Giles, 2017). Nevertheless, Hyndman and Giles (ibid, p.75) move away from a strict Agambenian approach to extended exile because, as they say, Agamben 'fails to provide political space through which power circulates and subjects are shaped'. Following their argument, while acknowledging that 'the identity of refuge' works in-between an 'inclusive exclusion', I show in this research what the space of camps, as an inclusion-exclusion, does to refugees and those who work with them and are co-constituted with them, the humanitarian aid workers, in line with the 'inclusive-exclusive' discourse of the psychosocial.

From the *Illness Clause* of Ticktin's (2011a) conceptualisation on the 'suffering body', this project moves from a medical geography of body and suffering, while acknowledging its importance and its political trajectories, as well as a discourse which may end up psychologising that from which it attempts to break free. This thesis moves, thus, towards a discussion in-between space and the commodification of subjectivity, a critical discussion of therapy and the notion of 'safe space' in spaces such as Moria or other refugee camps. The work of Kapsali and Mentinis (2018) on the psychopolitical control of migration was the first research published in Greece which discussed critically the role of psychology in hotspots and camps in Greece. On top of that the journal Mi$fit (Mylonas and Christinaki, 2020) with its first volume on *Refugees, camps and NGOs,* was one of the few attempts to publish in a broader Greek audience the experiences of people working in the refugee camps and the politics that psychology encapsulates within it. In the same line, the work of Lagios, Lekka and Panoutsopoulos (2018) on

Borders, bodies and narratives of crisis in Europe, gave in its full format the questions that borders as a spatial territoriality raise within narratives of crisis. Their work indicated how 'the border' does not refer solely to national and international borders, territorial waters and defences, data bases and digital borders (i.e. EUROSUR, EURODAC, biometrics) but it intervenes and is situated on and around the body, its mobility, and the spaces in which is allowed to move (Christinaki, 2020a). Anastasiadou et al. (2017 & 2018) had also documented the chronicle of Idomeni, one of the first camps that was set up in 2015 in the Greek border with North Macedonia, which became famous as a geographical gateway to 'the Balkan route'.

Inspired by this critical work on camps, their chronicle, their role within borders and narratives of crisis, and most importantly within the discussion on the psychopolitics of migration, the spatial temporalities of the psychological is used in this thesis as a concept so to bring together the multiple critical understandings of this phenomenon. It does not divide bodies and psyches but on the contrary, it shows how *psyche is an embodied entity* produced within the spatial temporality of the camp. Massey (1994, p.254) argued that 'the aphorism of the 1970s – that space is socially constructed – was added in the 1980s as the other side of the coin: that the social is spatially constructed too, and that makes a difference'. This is what the space of the camp adds to the broader discussion on psychopolitics and migration; that the psyche - both of refugees and aid workers - are spatially constructed, and that indeed makes a difference. A difference that, as will be shown in the following analysis chapters, rests also upon the level of *the psychological.*

2.3 Lacan, Fanon, and the postcolonial critique of livelihood

If the psychological matters because it makes a difference in the level of space and time as an element that is co-constituted within the spatial and the temporal of the camp, it does so in parallel with the way that the space of capitalist accumulation has gradually started to come to life. Lefebvre (1974/1991, p.275) argued:

'Between the twelfth and the nineteenth centuries wars would revolve around accumulation. Wars used up riches; they also contributed to their increase, for war has always expanded the productive forces and helped perfect technology, even as it has pressed these into the service of destruction […] This process of animation is admiringly referred to as history, and its motor sought in all kinds of factors: dynastic interests, ideologies, the ambitions of the mighty, the formation of nation states, demographic pressures, and so on.'

And Massey (1994, p.269) continues: 'one way of thinking about all this [about space – time as non-binary oppositional terms] is integral to the production of history, and thus to the possibility of politics, just as the temporal is to geography. Another way is to insist on the inseparability of time and space, on their joint constitution through the interrelations between phenomena'. From Lefebvre and the link between war, accumulation, and history to Massey's point that space and time are intertwined in the production of history, this thesis, paradoxically, approaches space and time in two different chapters yet not as two oppositional terms. The latter, occurs because I want, first, to discuss the spatial temporality of the hotspot of Moria and what the role of therapy is within it, and second, to move to a discussion of time and symptom so as to show how history and specifically colonialism (as another way to make space, a space of war and conflict) perform 'a symptomatic reading of refuge'. To do so, Lacan (1973/2018) and Fanon (1952/2008; 1961/2004; 1964/1967; 1959/1965), as key figures within relevant psychoanalysis and postcolonial literature, offer crucial theoretical perspectives because they both raise the question of politics within the status-quo of knowledge production and understanding. Nevertheless, this thesis is neither Lacanian nor Fanonian. As will be discussed in the next chapter, I use theory as a method to approach my analysis and substantiate claims. In this way, Lacan and Fanon are part of the *theory as method*, however, do not define it.

Time is a concept central to the psychoanalytic understanding of symptom. By 'symptom', I argue for a fluctuating signifier which cannot be circumscribed or traced in a single event. Beneduce (2016, p.266) suggests that '"symptoms" even

when they definitely look like symptoms, should always be considered allegories or "ghosts"'. Following Benjamin's (1928/1998) work, Beneduce and myself (see analysis Chapter Six) argue that time and symptom cannot be grasped in a linear time framed set. Benjamin's reversal of dominant conceptions of historical time (Benjamin, 1955/2007) within a Lacanian and Fanonian framework offer a conceptualisation of 'symptom' as a carrier form of political and postcolonial meaning. Although, trauma, as a manifestation of what took place in the past, is presented in humanitarian and psychological discourse as a series of symptoms ready to be tackled, interpreted, and cured (see the critique of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) by Summerfield, 2001; 1998), Lacanian psychoanalysis addresses 'symptom' as a message from the unconscious that encapsulates radical and political possibilities (Parker, 2011).

The psychosocial aspect-programmes of humanitarian operations has a well-established history of defining war by its traumatogenic nature (see Sköld, 2021; Terre des hommes, 2018; Louis, 2016). Ingleby (2005, p.9 his emphasis), along the same lines as Summerfield (1999), notes that 'the word "trauma" itself was used to describe *both* the situation causing disturbance, *and* the disturbance itself'. This overlap reinforced the notion that if a situation is considered 'traumatic', those experiencing it would be automatically considered 'traumatized' as well. Moreover, Ingleby proposes a rough taxonomy around the schools of thought that influence the service provision within the field of forced migration and mental health. Following Watters (2001), they come up with five 'emerging paradigms' in the care of refuges: mainstream health care approaches, multicultural mental health care, sociological approaches, 'managed care' and the role of users' movements (for further reading on these approaches see Ingleby, 2005). As indicated earlier and as you will see in the following chapters, this thesis does not work with any of these schools of thought as a close analytic strategy per se. Instead, trauma is presented along with time and symptom to critically discuss, first, the concept of 'traumatic present' (Kapsali and Mentinis, 2018) as another way to underline the interweaving of space and time for both those who live and those who work in the refugee camps.

Trauma as a discourse is used in the thesis to make an intervention and critique of the way that programmes of psychosocial support in the humanitarian terrain and psychology as a discipline use and capitalise trauma to individualise, pathologise and depoliticise social and political conditions such as migration. This is apparent in both the case of PTSD as a framing of disorder and the framework of 'Post-Traumatic Stress/Growth'. At the same time, the use and emphasis on psychoanalysis is not to stress that trauma in the case of migration is linked with some pre- or Oedipal condition. On the contrary, it is to connect, as Oliver (2004) argues, with such concepts as the unconscious as necessary for a social theory of understanding. In this way, trauma as a discourse is not only linked with psychoanalysis but with feminist and postcolonial literature to make an intervention with the psychoanalytic categories of trauma. Or, to put it differently, to avoid 'psychoanalysing' trauma. Furthermore, this critical move is in line with some key and influential critiques of trauma, both in the critical psychology (i.e. Ingleby, 2005; Herman, 1997) and humanitarian fields (Summerfield, 2001; 1999).

Indicatively, as Summerfield (2001) and later De Vos (2011) have indicated the dominant psychiatric and psychologised discourse of trauma, especially in the manifestation of PTSD is very problematic. Framing and approaching suffering as a disorder, despite depolitisicing war and history, it also constructs a certain form of subjectivity. This is another reason that I refer to trauma throughout my analysis and empirical material; so, to make the connections with the politics and subject formation amid a capitalist and neoliberal era in which humanitarian aid becomes yet another industry equally responsible for the erasure of history and the reproduction of the system.

Second, using Benjamin's reversal of dominant conceptions of historical time (Benjamin, 1955/2007; Khatib, 2017), Lacan's (1973/2018) psychoanalytic approach on the notion of symptom and Fanon's (1961/2004) work on violence, colonialism, and mental health, I critically discuss, through the notions and examples of 'activation' and 'psychosomatic symptoms', how psychology works within camps and what are the politics and problematics of a western framework of meaning. The notions of 'activation' and 'psychosomatic symptoms' perform

quite centrally in the configuration of trauma, time and symptom because they comprise the normative understanding that lie underneath the discourse of the humanitarian and psychological. Situating trauma, time, and symptom within a western psychological-normative understanding, it is argued, that the latter may end up restrain the radical and political possibilities of symptom.

Although, programmes of psychosocial support do not have an official common agenda to 'making refugees active' deliberately, as my fieldwork conducted from 2018-2019 suggests, the way they structure their own 'routine'[9] in camps show an organisational call for a specific daily and weekly schedule. This schedule is usually justified on the premise of trauma, to help refugees regain some level of autonomy as well as to build a daily life within the new territorial space. At the same time, an International Migration Outlook (OECD, 2014 my emphasis) report, as part of its migration analysis, published a chapter on 'Labour market integration of immigrants and their children' which focuses on how to '*develop, activate and use their skills'*. Here, the concept of 'activation' arises from a call for routine within the 'field of support' in the refugee camps, a call which not only attempts to tackle trauma, but it also introduces 'elements of integration' (for instance the role of language in the process of integration which relies upon the attempt to get a job or the group activities on making CVs). In this way, 'activation' moves also in to the 'field' of migration and labour and conceptualises work as skill performance that calls repetitively for development. This precisely reflects De Vos' argument (2011 p.ibid) that subjectivity has become 'the *ultimate* commodity with psychology as the other side of money'.

---

[9] For example, consider 'local NGOs', NGOs that emerged and operate in Greece reserving funding by UNHCR, UNICEF (i.e. Solidarity Now, Praxis) or international NGOs (i.e. Terre des Hommes, MSF, IOM), which both share a quite similar approach to mental health. One to one session, group work, sessions and activities, non-formal education (English and Greek courses) and recreational activities comprise the main axes of the psychosocial support programme even if these axes do not always take place via the work of one sole NGO. Usually the local/national NGOs deliver the programme of psychosocial support while international NGOs are responsible for the more 'serious/severe' cases of mental health.

Notwithstanding the radical arguments around the commodification of subjectivity within the convolution of psychology, migration and labour studies, Benjamin's (1955/2007) reading of past and history along with Lacan's notion of time (Lacan, 1966/2006a) and Fanon's humanism (Gibson, 2003), embrace the theorisation of subjectivity with a postcolonial perspective and understanding. Benjamin (Khatib, 2017, p.3) conceived history 'not as a progressive flow of "homogenous, empty time" but as an anachronic constellation of past and present'. This anti-evolutionary concept of history suggests that the past is never gone and, most importantly, it can never be historicised unless it is recalled in a revolutionary way. In other words, reading refugees' lives within a 'trauma discourse' which arises from a past that should be skilfully determined in the present so to have a chance of 'becoming developed' in the future (see Burman, 2017) means that past loses all its radical possibilities of existence and surrenders to a present's process of activation.

Schinkel's discussion (2015, p.38) on Benjamin and the notion of modernity explains that modernity becomes what it is also in Marx: 'an eternal recurrence of the same, of crisis [...] Modernity is speed, mobility, but until forever'.[10] Modernity becomes the endless recurring of 'now' and within it, life has become crisis. Benjamin related modernity's dream of progress to the concept of catastrophe. Progress is grounded in catastrophe because 'it is the modern vision of progress that turns the past into ruins and that, in its incessant striving for the new, mortifies what is new no longer' (ibid, p.41). Benjamin's (1955/2007) concepts on 'modernity and catastrophe' along with Fanon's (2018) postcolonial thought that explored how the subjects of colonies experienced their past being distorted as if it was that which signalled 'non-progress' expand the latter argument further. It shows, how the discourse on activation is a subversive call which psychologises their past and attempts to restore it to a present which, as will be shown in the last two analysis chapters (Six and Seven), is oscillating between modernity, as an eternal recurrence of crisis, and catastrophe, alongside and as part of the

---

[10] Note, here, that Fanon (2018) on 'Why we use violence' discussed how the violence of colonialism is in its control of time and history, making it seem eternal and endless.

(neo)colonial implications (re)produced in the name of progress in the current western milieu as well as in other parts of the world.

Psychosomatic symptoms, then, comprise the ultimate moment of 'catastrophe' as they are approached via a mainstream and normative understanding which misrecognises the historicity of symptoms; their ability to revolutionise the past, to 'historicise it', recalling it in a performance of the present. Fanon appraised both the value of temporality and history for clinical work. Gibson and Beneduce (2017, p.42), both commentators on Fanon, stress the fact that history for Fanon 'is embedded in and expressive of collective psychic life'. Given the fact that when we speak about 'psychosomatic symptoms' we speak about a psychic and bodily manifestation, Fanon's valuation of history along with the body as another form of knowledge, 'a posture' as Khalfa (2005) referred to it, navigates a particular relation to the world, a certain condition of revealing meaning in things.

Approaching 'the essence' of symptom with a postcolonial Fanonian framework, it is argued throughout this thesis (but see more specifically Chapter Six) that the existence of psychosomatic symptoms makes a specific subjective claim of living inscribed in the body and psyche. It tells us that, besides all the experiences refugees have lived so far, what makes refugee reality traumatic in psychoanalytic terms or catastrophic in Benjamin's terms is our own symptomatic and racialised reading. A symptomatic and racialised reading which blurs the 'symptom's own time'. A certain contextual period in which the self has been socially constituted. A time of war which is often approached as a 'crisis recovery' within a time in camps that is tackled as the aftermath of war, an aftermath towards 'an adjustment into recovery'. In that sense, a symptomatic and racialised reading may also lead to a certain material approach that is justified as immediate response – the camp.

But the war continues and is getting absorbed, if not rationalized, within psy-discourses that read, interpret, and put an effort to make some meaning. It continues inside the camps where the stagnation of the present colluded with the past attempts scarcely to break, and when it breaks is getting diffused into

different names, categories, and disorders. If Fanon succeeded in showing us one way to manage the constant divisions between politics and psychiatry, between the social and the subjective, between the unconscious and history, it is through the continual shifting between these domains, the constant flow between one or another (Gibson and Beneduce 2017). That is, at the end of the day, what is at stake: our ability to move, as a way of thinking, in-between these domains, corroding the parts of binary thinking, an action that calls us to put the present in definitive action, but not to accept it as a definitive present.

In *Black Skins White Masks,* Fanon (1952/2008, p.176) writes:

> 'The problem considered here is one of temporality. Those black people and white people will be disalienated who refuse to let themselves be sealed in the materialized Tower of the Past. For many black persons, in other ways, disalienation will come into being through their refusal to accept the present as definitive.'

Sekyi-Otu (2011) argues that Fanon associated freedom with temporality, with our openness towards the future, avoiding becoming slaves of any past. On this point it may be argued that this contradicts Benjamin's claim of the revolutionary force of the past or accordingly the desperate eternal recurrence of 'now' of the present, that signifies modernity and crisis. The key argument of Benjamin in regards with this contemplation was that: 'to articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it "the way it really was" (Ranke). It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up in a moment of danger' (Benjamin, 1955/2007, p.255). Respectively Fanon argues that the oppressed subjects should not be stuck in a past, which has constructed them as racialised subjects, but rather they need to act in 'here and now' so to intervene in their future which may be considered the future of humanity. Bernasconi (2011) notes that race for Fanon was always more about the future rather than the past. It was more about how to make people stop being exploited rather than getting drowned in combatting theories that were used to justify their exploitation. Fanon, he states (ibid, p.85-86), 'never lost sight of the fact that historically the discussion of race has always been under the sway

of racism and that if we continue to talk about race, it should only be because the struggle against racism is far from over and that the concept of race, employed properly, was a vital tool in combating racism'.

We should not additionally forget how Fanon, with his psychiatric approach named as *sociotherapy* (see Cherki, 2011 but note that Fanon with Tosquelles were also practicing the dominant psychiatry of their time, for this point see Burman, 2020, p.119) as well as his revolutionary politics, resisted and deconstructed the scientific racism of the School of Algiers represented by Antoine Porot (see Fanon, 1961/2004). With these thoughts in mind, race is another master signifier for the thesis, along with crisis, aid and psychologization (for a Lacanian analysis on race see George and Hook, 2021). And if the current project does not engage with that explicitly, with the ways that subjects (both aid workers and refugees) resist in their own exploitation, it is because for some of them, such as the aid workers, there is an excruciating hope that this space, the space of the camp, the space of therapy in the camp, the space of communicating aid, may at least bring some change.

Throughout my work as well as my fieldwork there were multiple and well-supported sites of resistance: protests outside of the hotspots and camps, demonstrations inside hotspots and camps, hunger strikes, feminist solidarity, LGBTQI+ solidarity networks among others. It is in these spaces that an eerie hope and beauty is flourishing. So, without diminishing at all (but also crucially not romanticising) the way refugees and aid workers inspired and created multiple ways of resistance, I still do believe that engaging in depth with the politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece, besides being a necessity and a crucial space of reflection, is in addition a vital way of returning again and again to Fanon's conclusion in *The Wretched of the Earth* that 'we must cast the slough and develop a new way of thinking' (as cited in Bernasconi, 2011, p.91).

This work is inspired from and addressed to those who still believe in the brutal beauty of the camp, in the brutal beauty of aid, in the brutal beauty of psychology. Not to disappoint them, but to make us recall these moments of brutality as a

desperate attempt to make space in/against the eternal procedure of the same, of crisis, of aid, of psychology.

If psychology and aid continue up until today, it is because they, in fact, work and they are extremely useful in the crisis' recovery. They made, even partially, peace with war. After all, they both were born in war. Crisis is co-constituted with war. Therefore, there is still perhaps a brutal hope that psychoanalysis together with a feminist postcolonial mentality can escape their forms of institutionalisation, in academia and the clinic respectively, and offer a radical critique and a way towards a theory of liberation. It is not to suggest that if refugees were in the clinic of the camp as analysands that would make any difference, because the latter would mean that psychoanalysis adapts in the spatiality of the camp. Nor it is to forget that psychoanalysis, as it is today, is blooming as a bourgeois theory of the subject, in its costly training, in the white privileged academia, and in its upper-class clinic. Psychoanalysis was born, like psychology and aid, in war (Freud, 1930/2002) and it is at war today. This tension between the radical possibilities of psychoanalysis with the mainstream tendency that seeks to restrain it into an expensive test tube is apparent. Nevertheless, we should not forget that while psychoanalysis may deal with symptomatic manifestations of the suffering subject -radically or not-, it is a symptom itself (Parker and Pavón-Cuéllar, 2021, p.19). Psychoanalysis adapts to and adapts the current capitalist society, but it still resists. It resists because it makes itself speak about oppression (ibid), about trauma and race (see George, 2016; Seshadri-Crooks, 2000), about gender and transgenderism (see Gherovici, 2017).

I take seriously into consideration two key arguments of Lacanian psychoanalysis in this thesis: the barred subject as well as the unconscious. Concerning the first, we are not united subjects. We are divided and we are not fully aware or conscious of all the different dimensions that our lives take. As Lacan (1998/2017, p.334) mentioned in his Seminar V we are 'split' (in the sense of divided), one of the translations he proposed for the German 'spaltung'. This division relates to the subordination of the subject in relation to the signifier and differentiates the ego from the subject, and consciousness from the unconscious. To put it differently, a

person does not speak about the subject – a signifier represents the subject. This is the reason I pay particular attention to the discourse.

The subject should not be approached, although he (non-binary) is in an eternal vicious circle of overcoming division, as if he is able to overcome that division or resolve the unconscious dimension of existence. Unconscious, second, is as ideological as conscious, but again these two are not in binary terms. It is what Pavón-Cuéllar (2010) calls as a move from the conscious interior which I treat as the master signifiers of crisis, aid, and race, to an exterior unconscious, a place that speaks of distress, of trauma, of the Real. However, we should be clear that when these are getting externalized without a critical elaboration, they could get prolonged and exacerbated in certain divisions of the subject, those that are highly apparent in life under capitalism: individual – social, psyche - body, life – death. Psychoanalysis as a theory and a practice should be allied with and informed by collective struggle that critically explores the ideological representation of subjectivity and does not treat the unconscious as a threatening source of the inside. And, undoubtedly, feminism and postcolonialism are both theories and praxes of the everyday.

Consequently, the task of the politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece, is not only to critically explore the role of psychology, but to underline - along with the concept of 'psychosocial' - the current formation of the subject in relation to language, space-time, time-trauma, and (his)-story in camps. In the same way that the subject of psychoanalysis is the subject of the unconscious, the subject that is formed and transformed in relation to the Other, the symbolic dimension of our lives -language, the subject of the politics of psychosocial support cannot be a solitary unit. What I approach as subject -or subjectivity, in the present research, is the dialectic relationship between aid workers and refugees that co-constitute each other. They are, to mobilise the actor network or Deleuzian inflection often deployed in migration studies (i.e. Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013) an assemblage always in tension. It is in-between that tension that aid, crisis, race and psychology as master signifiers intervene and construct certain forms of

subjectivities that are closely aligned with forms of neoliberalism, neo-colonialism, and capitalist accumulation.

Lacanian and Fanonian ideas, as resources within psychoanalysis and postcolonialism, co-exist in this thesis to break with psychology and the psychologization of the subject as well as his (non-binary) racialisation of which the field of psychology has so well constituted. For me, Lacan and Fanon go hand in-hand not necessarily because Lacan talked about race, or Fanon about psychoanalysis. Counter to that, Lacan (1991/2007) referred only very briefly about the non-existence of race in his seminar XVII *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis*, stressing therefore that race is socially constructed, and Fanon used only tactically psychoanalysis, and Lacan's theory in reference mainly to what in *Black Skins White Masks* he refers to as '*the mirror period*', or what is so called today as 'the mirror stage' (see Fanon, 1952/2008, p.124 footnote 25). Bringing these schools of thought together is a way to make psychoanalysis contribute to a theory and practice of liberation, a critical reflexive theory of the subject allied with the significant value of postcolonial theory as an eternal critique of imperialism, colonialism, and livelihood. Postcolonial theory is not getting *othered* in this thesis, rather it is presented as what it is – a compelling and decisive theory of the subject outside its constituted whiteness.

Psychoanalysis, postcolonial studies, critical feminism, and critical social theory comprise the theoretical material on which the analytic strategy of this research relies. It is to show that psychosocial support remains a (his)-story with all its contradictions and its wrong formats. A history of progress, a history of modernity, a history of crisis, a history of aid, a history of colonial interpellation, a story of *his* -narrative, 'a materialized Tower of the Past' in Fanon's (ibid, p.176) words. To flash up as a moment of danger, psychosocial support needs psychoanalysis, postcolonial studies, and critical feminism in a critical social theory and praxis of understanding. And of course, it needs to get rid of crisis, hotspots and camps, humanitarian aid and psychology. We need to revolutionize our subjects and with them, and not within them, the whole world.

2.3.1 'Postcolonialism' and its usage in the thesis

Postcolonial theory or postcolonialism emerged as a theoretical movement inspired and based on the ideas of Edward W Said, Homi K Bhabha[11] and Gayatri C Spivak. As Bhambra (2014, p.116) argues, while Said's Orientalism was not the first work which opened the question of knowledge production from a global perspective, 'his positioning of it in the context of interrogating the Orient/Occident divide was novel'. Orientalism for Said is a hegemonic discourse which substantiated essential assumptions of Western superiority over Eastern cultures.[12] In his work, Said further showed how history, western scholarship and discourse is neither universal nor an objective indication of facts. It is built on the imperial and colonial exploitation, representation, dismissal or/and exoticisation the 'other'.

In that sense, modernity -a concept that is discussed and I am referring to in the thesis- is first and foremost a construct of the West which is rooted in years of domination and exclusion of the 'other'. As Bhambra (ibid, p.116) critically comments about Said's work:

History became the product of the West in its actions upon others. At the same time, it displaced those actions in the idea that modernity was endogenous to the West and therefore removed the very question of the 'other' in History. In so doing, it also naturalized and justified the West's material domination of the 'other' and in this way suggested the complicity between Orientalism as scholarly discourse and as imperial institution.

To a similar extent, Spivak (1988) in 'Can the Subaltern Speak' critically reflects on a range of western writers (i.e., Marx, Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze) to show how the western poststructuralist tradition also constructed the subaltern as 'other', by dismissing and silencing him in this work. For Spivak, the French post-structural

---

[11] For a discussion and brief analysis on Bhabha's work and its differences with Said's see Chakrabarti (2012).

[12] For a critical reading of Said's work and its critiques see Parry (1993).

thought disavowed the problem of representation and failed to address imperialism in the discussions of power, ideology, and knowledge production.

Postcolonial theory, therefore, works more as a framework in the thesis rather than as a close engagement, discussion, and in-depth analysis of these theories along with the project's material. From that perspective, it does not 'apply' postcolonial theory and its concepts in the material but rather uses it to think with postcolonial theory to approach the material. And it does so, to put in the forefront, and discuss and critically analyse western and hegemonic discourses (inspired from the work of Said and Spivak) rooted and embedded in the provision of humanitarian aid and psychosocial support. Additionally, it situates postcolonial thought as a core epistemological insight along with psychoanalysis and feminism (see section 3.2.1). It is worth mentioning, however, that the use of the term 'postcolonial' does not by any means disregard work, perspectives and literature on decolonial and anticolonial/anti-racist theory and movements. On the contrary, I think and work with authors who have been associated with decolonial (Mignolo, 2007; Lugones, 2003; but also, Fanon 1952/2008; 1961/2004; 1964/1967; 1959/1965), anticolonial (Dei and Asgharzadeh, 2001) and antiracist thinking (Joseph-Salisbury and Conelly, 2021).

For instance, the modernity/coloniality school in Bhambra's words, or the decolonial school as I understand it, emerged from the work of Anibal Quijano, María Lugones and Walter D Mignolo or/and, for some, even earlier in the work of Frantz Fanon.[13] The coloniality of power, as an example, is a concept introduced by Quijano (2007) and used extensively in Latin America since 1970. However, this work has been available in English only from 2000 onwards. Quijano, inspired by Fanon's approach on the material, psychic and epistemological implications of colonialism, expanded the critique and understanding of the intellectual dimension of colonialism in the form of the coloniality of knowledge. In the same way, this work on coloniality, knowledge and power has been expanded in the

---

[13] It is interesting that the work of Frantz Fanon has been used in post-/de- and anti-colonial scholarship, without being classified in any of them.

field of gender formation (Lugones, 2010; 2003) as well as in the epistemic sphere (Mignolo, 2007) which are currently considered endemic components of the decolonial school of thought.

Anzaldúa's (1987) and Lugones' (2010; 2003) theorising establish my epistemological foundations and I closely engage with the work of Frantz Fanon to approach mental health and colonialism throughout the thesis. Similarly, anti-racist work and scholarship underpin my framework, in the same way that the concept of 'coloniality of power and knowledge' (Quijano, 2007) motivated me to think through my material.

In other words, the fact that I name a part of my approach as postcolonial, is not to reiterate the politics of this naming and representation. Several authors have critically discussed the terms 'postcolonial and postcolonialism' and their pitfalls (see McClintock, 1992 but also Parry, 2004 for a materialist critique). Mufti and Shohat (2004) have expressed concerns that the postcolonial is limited in the academic scene. McClintock (1992, p.93) had previously argued that postcolonialism became appealing due to its 'academic marketability'. Nevertheless, she had also argued that there is a need for some work that will rethink the global situation 'as a multiplicity of powers and histories which cannot be marshalled obediently under the flag of a single theoretical term, be that feminism, Marxism and post-colonialism' (ibid, p.97).

It is on that ground that I combine theories and standpoints which may be 'named' as post-/ de-/ or/and anti-colonial. In that sense, the engagement with the term postcolonial is neither to boost and support the capital of the university nor to differentiate myself as a researcher from decolonial or/and anticolonial research and writing. Hence, I mobilise the term 'postcolonial' to locate my arguments within a school and tradition from which I first started understanding these ontological and political standpoints.

Despite the alignments, minute differences and intricacies between the post- vs. de-colonial terms and approaches (Ruíz, 2021), there is a common ground albeit that post- and de-colonial thought emerged in different geographical locations;

with postcolonial approach usually contextualised in Middle East and South Asia whereas the decolonial approach in Latin America. Recently, there has been a tendency to link and situate decolonial, anti-colonial thought and anti-racist scholarship with an action-oriented approach vs. the intellectualism of the postcolonial approach located at the elite of academia. Although, there is no space in the thesis to provide an in-depth analysis of the context, history, similarities, differences, and alliances of these traditions, I think that such critiques do not engage with or give nuances to the historiographies of both traditions. Thence, I think, as Bhambra suggested, that post- and de-colonial approaches should be approached productively as 'connected sociologies' (p.115) which are both inherently anti-colonial.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the literature review and the theoretical framework underpinning the thesis. It showed how crisis as a concept links psychology and humanitarianism and depicted how the term and concept of 'psychologization' emerges and works within the humanitarian landscape. It, also, discussed critical literature of psychology and contextualised it within important literature on migration and current debates about camps and hotspots. It critically discussed how psychoanalysis and postcolonialism are situated next to each other along critical feminism, and critical social theory, for a rich and in depth understanding of the subject and the politics of psychology and aid within refugee camps. In this way, it set the scene of my research problem, that is the politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece. The next chapter will present the research aims, how the theoretical allies with the methodological foundations of this project and describe step-by-step the conceptualisation, design and elaboration of the material collected as part of the thesis.

Chapter Three

Putting theory to work: A methodological approach

3.1 Introduction

While the previous chapter introduced the conceptual framework of the thesis, this chapter discusses the methodological approach of this study. The first section describes the research problem, the research aims, and the philosophy that spans the theoretical and methodological conceptualisation of this project. I present briefly the critical ontology informing this thesis as well as its epistemological underpinnings. Then I move to outline the theoretical-methodological foundations of this project, and I discuss how my qualitative research and analysis unfolded. Specifically, I present the spaces in which my fieldwork took place, the methods I mobilised and the rationale under which the material was collected. I also present my methods for analysis, which I name as 'theory as method'. The chapter ends by elaborating on the ethical questions of this research.

3.1.1 Background and context

To begin with, the politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece emerged as a research problem during my work in a refugee camp in the north-western Greece. From October 2016 until September 2017, I worked as an aid worker and specifically as a psychologist in different humanitarian operations[14] and settings. During this time the state, along with the humanitarian sector, accommodated refugees in so-called 'hotspots', camps, hotels, and apartments and allocated accommodation depending on their point of arrival, their asylum procedure, nationality, and vulnerabilities. In this period, as a worker in a humanitarian operation the context of my work changed every three to four months. In the beginning I was working for three months as a psychologist in an operation based in a hotel, then another three months as a psychologist and team leader in a refugee camp, Filippiada, while for the last four months I was a team

---

[14] I deliberately use the terminology of the humanitarian sector (i.e. 'operation') to stress later how this terminology as a discourse interferes with the way humanitarian organisations approach not only refugees, but also aid workers.

leader in the urban accommodation project at Ioannina, which provided apartments to refugees recognised as 'beneficiaries' with high needs and vulnerabilities.

In this way, I experienced what it means to be part of a humanitarian operation, both as a psychologist and a team leader in the last five months of my work.[15] Having been exposed to and informed by the field of critical social psychology during my undergraduate and postgraduate studies (Burman, 2017; Ahmed, 2010; Parker, 2007; Fox et al., 1997; Martín-Baró, 1994, on Bassaglia see Scheper-Hughes and Lovell, 1987; Cooper, 1972; 1967), I witnessed during my work not only the Marxist concept of the alienation of work, but also the polemics of humanitarianism and the politics of psychology in migration studies. For myself, the experience of being an aid worker, and specifically of being an aid worker in a refugee camp, struck my curiosity to explore further work, aid and crisis, and space, psychology and subject amid these conditions. It is important to outline here the interplay between my previous work and my current engagement with the field of migration as a researcher. The latter is essential to locate and signify the complexities of exploring the politics of psychosocial support whilst I have been one of its subjects in the past.

The idea of this research had already started from my experiences as an aid worker in Greece during the year of 2016-2017, although it unfolded materially as an integral part of my doctoral research between October 2018 and April 2019 in five

---

[15] From the second month of my work as a psychologist in the refugee camp of Filippiada, a small town one hour away from the city of Ioannina, I was promoted to team leader while working simultaneously as a psychologist in this camp. The humanitarian organisation I worked with in the region of Epirus, which is the administrative region in north-western Greece, was providing psychosocial support in the camp of Filippiada. The organisation was also running the programme of PSS in three additional camps and hotels as part of its operation at Ioannina. In March 2017, however, the operation closed because the funding was not renewed and from then, the programme of PSS was run by another organisation that succeeded in securing this funding. In this way, the staff working in these camps and hotels were dismissed and the organisation suggested that I should stay and start working from May 2017 as a team leader in the urban accommodation project at Ioannina.

different sites in Greece. The first space[16] I encountered as part of my research is the camp of Filippiada. The second space was the camp of Katsikas, based outside of the city of Ioannina, while the third space was the camp of Doliana, an hour away from Ioannina. The fourth space was the unaccompanied minors structure named Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni in the city of Ioannina, while the hotspot of Moria in the island of Lesvos was the last space I went to as part of the current research. My observations in these spaces, the interviews I carried out with 34 aid workers, the maps I unexpectedly came to use in the hotspot of Moria, and the photographs I started taking as an attempt to make sense of myself as a researcher in the spatial temporality of the camps, comprise the collected material that inform the analysis presented in this thesis.

Before I unpack the methodological complexity of my thesis, it is therefore important to note that I discuss different contexts, and each chapter deals with material from the different spaces I have been involved in as part of my research. This choice was made deliberately to show that first, the politics of psychosocial support is not a theme nor an accidental occurrence situated in a specific camp or context, but rather is a discourse, a mentality, a conceptual framework, a context on its own that traverses the way the state and the humanitarian sector tend to approach refugees. It is embedded and entangled in the way knowledge is produced within humanitarianism, becomes infused in its practice, and is also reproduced in the academic discourse of mainstream migration and refugee studies or what Lacan (1991/2007; see also Pavón-Cuéllar, 2010) called the Discourse of the University.[17] It is this way of constituting knowledge that is usually

---

[16] I use the term of space, here, as I would like to avoid interpolating the problematic discursive nature of words like 'site', 'field', 'fieldwork'. I also avoid using the word and verb 'visit' as it reiterates the academic polemics of *doing research* within these spaces.

[17] Universities and research institutes (such as HCRI) promote the collaboration with 'the outside world'. The latter is often interpreted as the collaboration with humanitarian organisations or other organisations in the charity sector to justify a production of knowledge based on 'reality', inclusion of 'other voices' and an award of making a difference in the outside world from the niche of the university. In this way, there is always a form of representation and a production of knowledge based on this representative mediation between the university and those who run organisations in the humanitarian sector. It is as if this collaboration sustains a certain way of

an obstacle for a different understanding of humanitarian protocols which sustain themselves in the name of help, support and action, or academic blinkers that push research to be carried out in a certain structure, format and understanding. It is this process of constituting knowledge that I aim to document and critically understand in this thesis. Second, I went both to the hotspot of Moria and to different refugee camps in mainland Greece because it resonated with my attempt to additionally make sense of the route refugees were obliged to take when they entered Europe and Greece by crossing the Mediterranean Sea.

As is presented in the second analysis chapter, Moria is not a camp but a *hotspot*, a space in the island of Lesvos from which refugees cannot leave if they are not authorised to move to the mainland of Greece. The same occurs with the hotspots situated in the islands of Samos and Chios. The hotspot, as the European and state's form of action, has a particular claim to make for those who crossed the Sea and entered what European politics often represented as excessive 'flows' crossing the European territory. As Neocleous and Kastrinou (2016, p.3) argue 'since 23 March 2016, the day when the EU-Turkey agreement went into effect, the "hotspot approach" or "hotspot system" has become the main EU mechanism for controlling and regulating migration and thereby manage the crisis'.

In the next section, I start by discussing my research aims before I move to the theoretical and methodological foundations of *doing* research. This is an interdisciplinary study because it draws upon philosophy, social theory, political theory, critical psychology, feminist theory, psychoanalysis and postcolonialism that, together, form a complex understanding of the politics of psychology and the performance of subjectivity in the field of migration.

3.2 Theoretical and methodological foundations: Theory as method in the *doing* of fieldwork and research

As indicated earlier, my experience of working in the humanitarian sector in Greece, was the driving force to formulate this project. My initial proposal was

---

presenting knowledge so to be easily reproduced and digested in the discourse of the university and the humanitarian sector.

focused on the deconstruction of community psychology in the refugee camps of Greece, with proposed participants of not only aid workers but also refugees. However, when I started this thesis and I started engaging with the theoretical material and literature review presented in the previous chapter, I decided to focus specifically on the politics of psychosocial support and the subjectification of the modern aid worker. The reason for this was to stress the dialectic relationship between politics and psychology, aid and work, aid workers and refugees. It is of prior importance to elaborate on the politics of psychosocial support as enacted in and by the dialectic relationship between aid workers and refugees. This is to present how politics are interwoven in the way knowledge is produced amid the humanitarian sector, which often hypervisualises refugees or represents work in these spaces as the ethical and humane entanglement with the injustice of the 'third world'. In this way, my research problem and aims formulated as follows:

Research Problem: The politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece

Research aims:

> *Aim 1*: To critically document, explore, and analyse accounts from aid workers concerning the discourse of aid, the discourse of professionalism, and the discourse of psychology in the refugee camps of Greece.

> *Aim 2*: To critically explore the way that space and time act in and within the performance of psychosocial support in the hotspot of Moria and the refugee camps of Greece.

> *Aim 3*: To critically discuss how the discourse of aid and psychosocial support construct the *orientalised other* through the conceptualisation and delivery of aid, work, and psychology in the refugee camps of Greece.

> *Aim 4*: To critically explore and discuss how the discourses of humanitarian aid and psychology produce the aid worker subjectivities

Each of these aims are tackled in the following four analysis chapters. Chapter one entitled *On language*, relates to aim 1, while chapter two, *Spatial temporalities:*

An insight from the 'hotspot' of Moria in Lesvos, and chapter three, *Time, symptom, trauma: Making meaning to signify connections*, reflect aim 2. Chapter four, *Psychosocial support and the oriental Other: A postcolonial (his)-story*, respond to aim 3, while all analysis chapters relate to aim 4.

All of the aims have been raised and approached within a qualitative study design (Banister et al., 2011), which used several methods to collect the material discussed above. However, before I describe my qualitative methods, I briefly refer to some of my core epistemological underpinnings and how they are linked with what I call 'theory as method'. Thus, I begin from this thesis' theoretical and methodological foundations before I explicitly analyse the methods mobilised in this study, and show how the material is discussed and how 'theory as method' has been used in the conceptual manifestation of this research.

3.2.1 Epistemological underpinnings: Shifting in-between three levels of signification

Anzaldúa (1987) and Lugones (2003) have shown in their work that borders may be oppressive, as they are crystalised in a form of understanding subjects and selves from a mainstream, white and male perspective, but they can also become a radical hybrid figure, a space, which pushes us to understand existence *in-between* gender, identity, race, and colonialism. Anzaldúa (ibid) challenges the notion of border as a divide and raises a call to the majority, especially those who identify themselves with the Western worlds, to nurture active interest in the oppressed of this world as well as changing these attitudes that foster the growth of borders. In the same line, Lugones (ibid, but see also Lugones, 2010) argues for inhabiting the borderlands or *limen*, the space between social structures. By treading the border, she claims that it 'is fundamental to keep all of her selves alive, but *not* integrated (Bendfeld, 2000, p.90 her emphasis). As hooks (1990/2015, p.235) critically articulates, 'I am located in the margin', distinguishing between the marginality imposed by oppressive structures and the marginality one chooses 'as a site of resistance – as location of radical openness and possibility'.

Taking the above into consideration, along with the work of Nayak (2015) who calls us to be 'in the borderland of the self', and the work of Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) on 'border as method' or Chen (2010) on 'Asia as method', I shift in-between epistemologies, I locate myself in the margin of academic and epistemological (or epistemic) hegemony[18] (Said, 1978/2003) so as to reach for a different form of understanding.

First, I draw my epistemological underpinnings from a feminist viewpoint on the philosophy of knowledge. The latter means that the knowing subject could not be considered as external to the social relations, but on the contrary is constituted by them. Moreover, the political values of a project discussed are not excluded from knowledge and its production but are epistemologically significant. Knowledge, therefore, is not an objective mirror of the external world, because social practices construct it (for these points see Campbell, 2004, p.14 but also Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002; Haraway, 1998; Burman, 1992; Butler, 1990). Second, situating myself in a feminist epistemological framework, I also elicit a psychoanalytic alliance to move beyond the strict scientific epistemological narrative into the radical epistemology of what Lacan called 'ex -sistence'. With this neologism, Lacan, wanted to emphasise the idea that our being is *radically Other*. By that he meant that the subject is *decentred,* that his centre is outside of himself and thence is *ex-centric*. Campbell (ibid, p.26) brings together Jacques Lacan with feminist epistemology. She argues that several works which emerged first in the 1970s, during the second feminist wave and onwards and work that has been taken up in the 1990s in the postcolonial and queer theories (like Bhabha, 1994, but also Butler 1997, and Seshadri- Crooks, 2000), characterize the bridge between Lacanian theory and feminism as a 'productive appropriation'.

Inspired by her epistemological revolt towards a 'productive appropriation' bridge between feminism and Lacanian theory, I use Lacanian theory as a second

---

[18] I recall here particularly Said's (1978/2003) *Orientalism* and how he depicted the concept of 'orientalism' as an academic tradition, a worldview, and a representation based upon an ontological and epistemological point of view, and as a powerful political instrument of domination.

epistemological position and level of signification to challenge the neoliberal psychological artefact and datum of the 'conscious mind'. The notion of the unconscious is a discovery, as Campbell (2004) argues, because it radicalises the classic epistemological framework of the 'conscious mind' that is taken for granted even today. Furthermore, for Lacan the question of 'how do I know?' encapsulates the question, 'who am I?'. If epistemology is a theory of knowing and ontology a theory of being, Lacan radicalises also the classic academic division between ontology – epistemology. *Subjectivity* and *knowing* are linked, and the *excentricity* of the subject (see also Pavón-Cuéllar, 2010) is highlighted to stress the fact that knowledge is not a question of knowing the self, but rather the subject.

In other words, the subject cannot be reduced to the 'I' of the consciousness and, thus, even from its very beginning the Lacanian theory of the subject questions the epistemological substructure of academia and psychology. It is important to note here that for Lacan, *the subject* is a speaking subject that is produced in language (see Lacan, 1973/2018). *Subjectivity* marks a temporal structure which language produces, and *the knowing subject* represents a position of signification, not an ontological state or an experience of knowing. Subject and subjectivity are divided between the conscious and unconscious. The subject is ex-centric and radically othered to its conscious self and identity. The Lacanian subject 'is not a substance or an essence (unlike the philosophical subject). Rather, it emerges from the relationship between the symbolic elements, or signifiers, which comprise language' (Campbell, 2004, p.33).

This structure of signifiers, in which the subject is produced, produces the subject's relationship to reality. Hence, *the knowing subject* cannot be approached as separate from its knowledge. '"Knowledge" is understood as a representation of the known object' (ibid, p.34) and because of that, there is no possibility of a neutral representation. It is exactly because to describe an object, this presupposes representing it in language and this representation is always overdetermined and caught up in the structure or what Lacan called 'chains of signifiers', such that representation can never be neutral and knowledge production a separated, balanced, objective, and neutral procedure.

Nevertheless, if psychoanalysis is a radical theory of the subject, it should always be in a state of critical reflection along with feminism and postcolonial theory. Taking into consideration the argument of the previous chapter that psychoanalysis could be radical because it is itself a symptom (Parker and Pavón-Cuéllar, 2021, p.19), I argue that psychoanalysis would not be able to call the 'subject of conscious self' into radical question without allying with feminist and postcolonial theories and debates. Lacan had characterized the state of the conscious knower as a state of error. The latter, along with the issue of representation in Lacanian theory and the constitution of knowledge in the colonial and then capitalist and neoliberal eras, underlines the critical necessity of thinking with feminist and postcolonial theories.

Minh-ha's (1989) argues that women of colour should critique theory and create new ways of knowing that are different to standard academic knowledge (such as the oral tradition in her work). With this in mind, I use postcolonial theory, despite (or perhaps precisely because of) my whiteness, as a third level of epistemological signification to question the western male hegemonic ideology of humanitarianism and psychology that attempts to create a discourse of human truth in the refugee camps of Greece. Taking into consideration the call of Anzaldúa (1987) to those who identify with the Western world to raise active interest with the oppressed and challenge the attitudes that reinforce the growth of borders, I locate myself in the margins of my whiteness (hooks, 1990/2015), in the borderland of myself (Nayak, 2015), to challenge what the white, male humanitarian and psychological perspective represents as truth in the level of discourse in these spaces.

'Theory as a method', then, already starts from the very first epistemological underpinnings of this project. It shows that I am working, bringing together, and shifting not only in-between different epistemological positions but I am also working at the margin of theory and method, in the borderland of two basic binary oppositional cornerstones of academic research.

Theory as method brings together a multiplicity of viewpoints in theory and method, refusing thus any categorisation. It is inspired by and is situated within the context of other work on the '…as method'. Such works are Burman (2019) on *Fanon, Education, Action: Child as Method*, Siddiqui's (2017) elaboration on 'Ghost as Method', Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) on *Border as Method* and Chen (2010) on *Asia as Method: Towards Deimperialization*.

3.2.2 Qualitative methods

i) Contacting the organisations and starting fieldwork

Having presented my core epistemological positioning and having considered the importance of my previous work experience in the refugee camps to this study, I discuss in this section how my qualitative research took place. I start with the way I contacted the organisations to gain access in the refugee camps; I briefly describe the five different sites of my 'fieldwork' and I critically discuss how critical observation depends on the political reflexivity of the researcher. Then, I present an account of my methods that are: a) critical observation, b) interviews/group interviews, c) maps and d) photographs.

To begin, in September 2018, I started contacting the Association for the Social Support of Youth (ARSIS) which was then running the programme of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Epirus. Epirus is a region *(περιφέρεια)* in north-western Greece. ARSIS had its offices in the city of Ioannina, the capital and largest city of Epirus, and had a psychosocial support team for each site in Epirus. Each team would leave daily from Ioannina and travel with the van of the organisation to each site. I collaborated with the organisation between October 2018 and March 2019 in the camps of Filippiada, Katsika and Doliana but the organisation was also running the Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni at Ioannina and some other structures named as Safe Zones around the city of Ioannina. Solidarity Now, the organisation with which I worked in the refugee camp of Filippiada between January and March 2017, also ran the programme of psychosocial support in these spaces the year of 2016-2017. However, as indicated earlier, the funding overall, but also in this specific programme, used to be renewed every 6 to 12 months.

Each time the funding renewed a new organisation became responsible for running the programme of psychosocial support in these camps and Safe Zones. Between March 2017 and October 2018, ARSIS was the second organisation after Solidarity Now that became the lead organisation for running this programme. In December 2017, ARSIS fulfilled its activity in the camps of Filippiada, Katsika and Doliana and a new organisation which succeeded in securing the funding, would take over this programme from the year of 2019.

ARSIS was very approachable as an organisation and quickly approved my access in the refugee camps of Filippiada, Katsika and Doliana. Notwithstanding the fact that the head of the organisation was encouraging and keen on carrying out research in the field of psychosocial support, my previous work in this region and my existing connections with the head of the organisation played an important role in my being accepted as a researcher in this organisation. It took approximately one month, from September 2018 to October 2018, to make my collaboration official with the organisation and move from Manchester to Ioannina to start my fieldwork. Yet as soon as I arrived, they told me that the 'operation', as they used to call their intervention and programme of psychosocial support in these three camps, would come to an end by December 2018. In this way, we agreed that every two weeks I would change the field of my research, meaning that every two weeks (approximately) I would go to a different camp and I would collaborate with a different team based on each camp. As part of this collaboration, I reached each of these three camps with the organisation's van that also transported the corresponding team. In the next section, I describe each camp briefly, then discuss how the method of critical observation within a context of political reflexivity[19] (Abdelnour and Abu Moghli, 2021) is crucial to make sense of the space as a researcher.

With ARSIS' operation coming to an end, the head of the organisation also changed, and the new head of the organisation told me that they would be

---

[19] By the latter, I not only refer to the broader socio-political context in which the research unfolds, but also the way the researcher can attend to their politically situatedness in their field of research.

probably happy to collaborate in this research on the Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni, which was at the city of Ioannina. ARSIS may have stopped delivering the programme of psychosocial support in these spaces, but they continued running the Safe Zones in the region of Epirus. I should mention here the fact that my initial plan after concluding the field research in the camp of Filippiada, Katsika and Doliana was to go to the hotspot of Moria in the island of Lesvos. However, the contact with the organisation of MSF in the hotspot of Moria was very time consuming and very bureaucratic. Thus, while I was waiting to get either approval or rejection of my research involvement there, I decided to visit one more site, the structure of Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni at Ioannina.

The Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni was a male minors' structure of accommodation inside the camp. It was in the city of Ioannina, so I could only reach it by taking a local bus, which left me outside of the camp in 20 minutes. I stayed there for one month, between February 2019 and March 2019 and I went into the zone almost every day. Between the end of December 2018 and March 2019, I was in continuous communication with MSF so to see whether I would be able to collaborate with them in Moria. I contacted and met the previous head of the MSF's Greek operation in Athens, and they put me in contact with the head of Moria's mission who was based in Athens. I had a meeting with him to explain my research, why I would like to do this research in Moria and how I would be potentially useful to the organisation. He told me that they would have to speak with the manager of the programme of psychosocial support in the clinic of Mytilene in Lesvos and the clinic outside the hotspot of Moria in Lesvos. He also requested a summary of my research, the aims and the questions that drive my field of research, the participation information sheet, participant consent forms, as well as the interview schedule. Thus, after sending these documents, he said that the final approval would come from the psychosocial support team based in the hotspot of Moria. The latter was a very time-consuming process because the manager of psychosocial support in Lesvos also asked me to meet with him before they sought approval for my involvement, both from the field coordinator in Lesvos and Lesvos's psychosocial team.

In the end, the final response and approval did not come before the end of February 2019. I was later informed that the reason the team approved my involvement as a researcher was because two psychologists working there were ex-classmates of mine during my undergraduate studies. Besides my gratitude to them for their help and support, the fact that I have been granted access in this way makes a point of who can and cannot be granted access in these spaces and equally, how this could be done. In Lesvos, I remained until the end of April, where I informed my supervisors that the complexity of this field within and along with the politics of the organisation there made quite difficult for me to remain for more than a month. Notwithstanding my difficulty, the organisation also made explicit that it wouldn't be possible to remain for more than a month there.

ii) Sites, critical observation, and political reflexivity

In this section I will briefly present the five sites[20] which comprise the field of this research and I discuss how the method of critical observation depends on the political reflexivity of the researcher (see Abdelnour and Abu Moghli, 2021). I used the method of critical observation not as a 'monitoring technique' or technique of participant objectivation (Bourdieu, 2003) within my research, but as a complex political and reflexive surface (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2004; Scheper-Hughes, 1995) in which I critically discuss the role of psychology and the formation of subjectivity within space. My political positionality in this field of research has been informed by critical psychology along with my prior experience as a worker. My political stance and personal reflection (or guilt) on my role as an aid worker informed my conceptualisation around work and refuge within camps as well as the intricacies of being a researcher there. By the latter I mean, the power imbalances interwoven in the field of research (see Parker, 2005a; Gitlin, 1994).

---

[20] For a presentation of the sites with the refugee population and the timescale of my research, please see Appendix 1. You will also find, in Appendix 2, a visual representation of each site with its correspondent distance from the city in a map's visualisation.

The camp of Filippiada, the first site, was approximately one hour away from the city of Ioannina. Research in migration and refugee studies has vastly indicated that access in these spaces is a significant issue not only for research and researchers but most importantly for the politics of living in the refugee camps (see Rozakou, 2017b). Returning to the camp of Filippiada as a researcher put me in a completely different, as well as liberating positioning, from my job role as a psychologist and team leader. Having agreed with the organisation and the team leader to participate in the group work organised as part of the psychosocial support (for instance women's group meetings for recreational activities, attending the English and Greek language classes as part of the educational team and help, perhaps if needed, social workers in their outreach),[21] my involvement as a researcher and volunteer kept me in a constant state of observation and reflection. The latter would not have been possible without a clear political reflexivity attending to the alignments and tensions between work and refuge.

Coming back to one of my previous spaces of work helped me to realise that with the acceleration of work in the humanitarian sector in Greece, aid workers were increasingly stressed not only from the overload of work but also from the nature of work and the bureaucratic dead ends. This was more apparent for those who were sharing a leftist – anarchist political stance, as the management of migration within hotspots and camps was an ideological confrontation with their values (i.e. open borders, immediate rights to refugees, closure of hotspots and camps etc.). Yet, for me, being a researcher was to some extent a reversed situation. In the Filippiada camp, I experienced for the first time what it means to have nothing to do because I was an outsider from the beginning and could not share any burden of work. This experience of time in its reversed way -of literally being at point zero- pushed me to conceptualise the role of time both in the experience of work there as well as the experience of trauma and its conceptual manifestation from the humanitarian and psychological point of view (see Chapter Six).

---

[21] By 'outreach', humanitarian organisations refer to the procedure of informing or/and reaching refugees in the camp.

When I went to the camp of Katsikas, which was the second camp and close to the city of Ioannina, I continued by noticing the military spatiality of the camp and how this interfered with the provision of aid, work, and psychology there. For instance, there was a security force at the entrance of the camp. The military that usually checked who entered the camp, identified immediately my presence as new and the organisation had to confirm that I was collaborating with them. Nevertheless, it was not only the security at the entrance of the camp, but also it was how the camp was organised spatially in its everyday life. For example, the routine of aid workers, the workload, the stress, the contradictions that arose between what aid as work can do in these spaces and what is the 'professional' limit so to protect yourself; the constant narrative of pain, trauma and torture and the fact that most workers would like to help but there was a certain level of no meaning, of resistance to articulate what is going on to all of us. The spatiality of the camp also encompassed the division of different zones into sections. Section A, as such, was the space where families and the 'old population' were based, whereas the new arrivals, mostly single men who arrived by the hotspots of Lesvos and Chios, were accommodated in section B. It was this organisation of the spatiality and the everyday life of the camp that pushed me to think of space and psychology together (see Chapter Five on the hotspot of Moria and Chapter Seven) and rethink what the role of the discourse of professionalism is in these spaces (see Chapter Four).

Doliana, was the third refugee camp that I went to in Epirus. It was a former music school, an hour away by car from the city of Ioannina without a public transportation system. Almost on the top of a mountain, each refugee family lived in an old classroom from which they could only reach the city of Ioannina at certain times depending on the transportation and timetable system organised by the International Organisation of Migration (IOM).[22] In Doliana, it was shocking to see how remote the structure was, how rarely you could see adult refugees walking in the building, and how often the argument of being in a building as a 'safe space'

---

[22] Back then IOM was organising the transportation of refugees from the camp of Doliana to the city of Ioannina to have access in the supermarkets of the city.

emerged in the discourse of workers. Although UNHCR considered Doliana a camp, the workers of the national organisation, working there by that time, were occasionally saying that this structure, given it was a physical building, was 'safer' than the other camps in the region. These contradictions in the everyday discourse of work mobilised me to rethink the dead ends between aid and work and explore whether a clear political stance amid these conditions may pose different arguments in between work and refuge (see Chapter Seven).

It is worth noting that even when someone who works there has a clear political stance, the alienation of work may also interfere with the way they make sense of the situation. Nevertheless, as psychosocial support was so crucial for the humanitarian sector, both to survive itself there and to reproduce the arguments of aid, support, and help, it was quite contradictory how support was being offered and understood amid these conditions. I deploy the latter argument across all my analysis chapters, as I believe that this was a major observation throughout my research and study.

The subjectification of aid worker, as a procedure or technology of the self, in Foucault's (1988a) words, amid the provision of aid, help and support started becoming further crystalised in my mind in the Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni in the city of Ioannina. In my one month stay there, the discourse of professionalism and what a 'safe space' is, were constantly encountered within my discussion with aid workers (see Chapter Four and Seven). Given the fact that the Safe Zone was an independent building inside the camp, and that the camp did not consist of containers or tents, but had stone buildings to accommodate refugees close to the city, it was a repetitive argument in the way both the structure and the camp were perceived. For instance, UNHCR acknowledge it as 'an urban accommodation facility' and not a camp. In the same line, NGOs and some workers compared this space to other spaces (such as the hotspot of Moria) and by focusing on its improved facilities, disregarded the fact that the Safe Zone was still based within a camp. The way, therefore, that space was perceived and discussed, along with the way aid and psychology were performed and conceptualised, mobilised me to discuss psychology from a different point of view

(see Chapter Seven). I discuss psychology as a mechanism of storytelling within the politics of space, to show that the discourse of psychology started becoming a technique of self-development and social adjustment within the broader spatial politics of Greece.

In the last site, the hotspot of Moria in Lesvos, the contradictions of work, aid, psychology, and refuge literally surpassed my ability to cope within this space. The difficulties lie not only in the politics of space and psychology (see Chapter Five), the fact that Moria is a prison (see V.H., 2018) or 'hell' according to refugees narratives, but also in how my presence as a researcher was constantly challenged there. For instance, the way that some members of the organisation challenged research as 'a real job' (they suggested to me that I work for their organisation instead); they did not let me commute with their vans as the policy only allows a staff member to get on their minivan; some workers complained to the manager for me being friendly with the minors and commented the latter as not being culturally appropriate. All the above as indicative challenges along with the feeling that thousands of people were trapped in the island as a decision of national and European asylum policies, led me to devote my second analysis chapter on the hotspot of Moria as well as start from a personal experience there.

iii) Obtaining consent and the research interview
At the first research space, the camp of Filippiada, I had the chance to meet some members of the psychosocial team in the organisation's office in the city of Ioannina and introduce myself and my research. In all other sites I met the team while being in the camp. In this way, while being at the camp, I tried to introduce myself to the workers, inform them about the research, and share with them, first, the Participant Information Sheet (PIS), in case they were interested in participating (Appendix 3). Then if they were happy to be involved, an interview appointment was arranged at a time and location convenient to them. On two occasions, two group interviews were formed as it was difficult to arrange interviews with these participants separately. All participants were asked to sign a written consent form prior to commencing the interview (Appendix 4).

Before commencing the interview, it was made clear that aid workers were under no obligation to take part, and they had the right to stop the interview and withdraw from the research altogether at any point. In addition, before the closure of the interview aid workers were reminded that they could inform me if they wished to add or withdraw anything they shared during the interview from the transcription process. Two participants specified that they did not want some instances and details to be included in the research. In these cases, these details were not transcribed.

Upon reflection and while re-reading Parker's (2005a) book on *Qualitative Psychology: Introducing Radical Research*, I identified several mistakes during this process. First, it was crucial for gatekeepers, such as the non-governmental organisations, to agree with my study so to gain access, the signifier of 'politics' from the research title was removed from the PIS as well as from the way I informed participants. In this way, the role of psychosocial support was introduced as the research plan and aim. I believe that if politics had been introduced explicitly as part of this study, I could have formed my research design differently, in a way that participants would have become co-researchers and questions against ideology, power and resistance could have opened during the interview (see ibid, p.60-64).[23] Also, given the fact that some of the participants approached the process of the interview as 'therapeutic', forming the design of the study as militant research rather than as simply 'research' could have provoked a more political understanding and may have empowered some of them to get involved further with the correspondent union. The use of the word 'therapeutic', on the one hand, is a challenge to the very aim of this research as well as my positionality because it transforms the interview into a therapeutic process. On the other hand, it may show how the discourse of therapy is infused even in the very notion of an interview, precisely because psychology is a major everyday discourse.

---

[23] Another way, perhaps, to do it, would have been to discuss with workers their reflections on their experiences, not as an artifact of the self, but rather as an in-dept co-constitution of certain historical and institutional procedures (see Woolgar, 1988).

As one of the participants mentioned:

> '...I really liked the interview...it had a flow, and with the team leader that I discussed it, I told them that besides the opportunity that it gave me to make a step back...it helped me to make a step back [...] no one so far had not asked you the obvious...'.

This extract comes from participant who is not a psychologist, but an educator and expressed to me directly that the interview was *'therapeutic'*. The latter, reinforces my idea that the discourse of psychology is infused in the everyday conceptualisation and praxis. Nonetheless, I believe that some of the aid workers, by approaching the interview as 'therapeutic', expressed their gratitude for the interview for three reasons. First, it was one of the few times that the focus was devoted to them. Second, they may have felt that the interview was a space that was not judgemental, despite the fact that there were many times that I disagreed with what they were saying. Thus, I was also reproducing the psychological discourse because I was becoming angry and agitated inside[24] without being able to respond in a fruitful way to provoke an insightful discussion as Parker (ibid) suggested, or what Bakhtin (1981) calls 'dialogic'. Third, aid workers come from a usually job-related, stressful environment, in which they have no time to think and reflect either due to time constraints or without being interrupted. In this way, being in an interview may have proved fruitful, or interpreted as 'therapeutic' because they could speak confidentially and without being usually interrupted.

Concerning the technicalities of the research interview, individual face-to-face interviews were conducted in Greek, or in English when the first language of the participant was not in Greek. In total, I carried out 30 interviews from which only 2 were in English and 2 group interviews comprised of two aid workers, which were both facilitated in Greek. From the 30 interviews, one interview was interrupted and could not be continued. In this way, it was neither transcribed nor

---

[24] I also acknowledge the approach of my reaction as a performance of psychological discourse, which supposes that anger should be treated delicately and introvertly.

included in the material of analysis. A summary of my research participants could

be found below in Table XX:

Aid workers	Sites	Interview/ Group Interviews	Job Title
1.	Epirus	1	Asked not to be disclosed
2.	Camp of Filippiada	2	Psychologist
3.		3	Team Leader
4.		4	Social Worker
5.	Camp of Filippiada, Katsika & Doliana	5ab	Protection Officer
6.	Camp of Filippiada	6	Psychologist
7.	Camp of Filippiada	7	Case Worker
8.	Camp of Filippiada	8	Case Worker
9.	Camp of Katsika	9GI	Educator
10.	Camp of Katsika	9GI	Educator
11.		10	Case Worker
12.	Urban accommodation project	11ab	Social Worker
13.	Camp of Katsika	12	Educator
14.	Camp of Katsika	13	Psychologist
15.	Camp of Katsika	14ab	Psychologist
16.	Camp of Filippiada/ Service Center	15	Job position is not disclosed to ensure anonymity
17.	Camp of Filippiada, Katsika & Doliana	16	Job position is not disclosed to ensure anonymity
18.	Camp of Katsika	17GI	Educator

19.	Camp of Katsika	17GI	Educator
20.		Interview interrupted and could not be continued	Case Worker
21.		18ab	Educator
22.		19	Team Leader
23.		20	Lawyer
24.		21	Lawyer
25.	Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni	22ab	Child Protection Officer
26.	Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni	23abcde	Child Protection Officer
27.	Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni	25abcSZ	Interpreter
28.	Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni	26SZ	Child Protection Officer
29.	Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni	24SZ	Carer
30.	Hotspot of Moria	27M	Psychologist
31.	Hotspot of Moria	28M	Psychologist
32.	Hotspot of Moria	29Mab	Psychologist
33.	Hotspot of Moria	31Mabcd	Psychologist
34.	Hotspot of Moria	30Mabcde	Psychologist

As can be seen from the table above, I have purposely not presented here the kind of demographic information that readers might expect to see about the participants, such as gender, to maintain their anonymity. In certain cases, I also do not specify the site because this could likewise reveal the identity of

participant, given for instance that per site there was only one lawyer, or one team leader. Wherever in thesis I use the job position of participants, I do not specify the site to assure anonymity. A consideration of these specificities, did, however inform the analytic process. In the same way, I use occasionally 'they', 'their', 'them' and 'themself' in the analysis to ensure anonymity.

Concerning gender, the majority of those interviewed were female. Students at university degrees such as psychology and social work are predominantly female, and this reflects why most of this study's participants, especially those who are in positions related to psychology and social work, are mostly women. Gender, and the role of gender in both aid work and the way that interplays with the subjectification of aid worker was one of my four aims in the initial proposal, submitted in my first annual review. Unfortunately, due to the limit of words in this thesis, I was unable to develop it.[25]

Each interview length ranged from an hour to two hours approximately. Only three interviews lasted about two hours and in the first two cases this happened because participants were elaborating each question and point in depth, and I did not want to interrupt or put any pressure on them. On the second occasion with the third participant, the interview was interrupted many times due to work emergencies in camp. In all of them, a break was suggested. The interview location took into consideration the availability and preference of the participant. Most often took place in cafes whereas some interviews and a focus group were held in the organisations' offices or in their containers in the camps. Often, these was a small room in a container which run as the organisation's office in the camp, or a small office in the organisation' offices in the city of Ioannina and Mytilene in Lesvos.

---

[25] I have already written and submitted a proposal for my postdoctoral research which seeks to critically explore the role of torture in populations often identified as 'victims of torture' from a feminist and postcolonial point of view. It also seeks to understand how torture or forms of torture are discussed, situated, and analysed in migrants' countries of arrival, such as the United Kingdom (UK) amid the current Brexit and neoliberal era.

Interviews were audio recorded on a University of Manchester encrypted voice recorder. As soon as each interview would come to an end, the audio recording was transferred to my personal, password-protected and locked laptop and was deleted from the voice recorder. I developed an interview topic guide after exploring the literature review on psychology, aid and work on migration, and was usually adapted depending on the discussion I had each time with the workers (Appendix 5). For my own use as a researcher, the guide was focused on six thematic areas which were: a) role and training, b) the space of camp, c) psychosocial support and practicalities, d) issues and reporting system, and e) notions around 'refugee crisis' and agency and psychosocial support. Interviews were semi-structured, allowing participants to share their thoughts and experiences. Upon reflection, I believe that the interview guide should have been shorter so to provoke a more in-depth 'dialogic' discussion and communication.

I offered no payment for participating in the research, but I would offer every time an interview was held in a cafe to pay as a matter of respect for participants' time. Most aid workers seemed positive about their experience of being involved in this project, and some others, as pointed out earlier, found the interview 'therapeutic'. Nevertheless, there were times that participants shared emotionally heavy stories and described with detail how life in the camps worked as if they were 'animal farms' (see Chapter Five). At these moments, although I suggested having a break, aid workers wanted to continue. In these moments, I did not feel uncomfortable, on the contrary I felt that something important took place.

At all times, I kept a reflexive diary, detailing my experiences from the everyday encounters in the camps, in the Safe Zone, and in the hotspot, throughout the period of material collection. In ethnographic research, it is very common to keep a diary as the researcher 'does not simply report "facts" or "truths" but actively constructs interpretations of her experiences' (Hertz, 1996, p.5). The researcher is 'a producer of partial and located knowledges' (Harvey, 2011, p.673). However, it should be noted that although my supervisors indicated the need to document my emotions in a separate diary, and thus have a second emotional-reflexive diary, after the first couple of weeks in the refugee camps of Greece I was unable to do

so. This was partially because it was very time consuming; for instance, I could not find time after having spent between 5 and 8 hours in the camps, usually having done an interview after that, and having written my field notes in the first diary in the end of the day, to be consistent and document on top of everything else my emotional experiences. Notwithstanding how time consuming this could have been, I was also very emotionally tired in the end of the day, and I could not express it in a written format. In this way, as shown in the next section, I decided to take photographs and use them as a self-reflexive (emotional perhaps) diary of the everyday (for a methodological discussion on visual ethnography see Pink, 2007), committing to myself that every day I would take at least one picture that would attempt to visually reflect my experience and positionality. In the hotspot of Moria, though, taking pictures became the expression of the everyday because many times what I experienced, could not be expressed, or articulated in words. One of these moments is described in the introduction of chapter five.

iv) Visual material: Maps and photographs

Although neither the use of photographs (see Appendix 6) nor maps (see Appendix 7) were in my initial methodological plan, they both emerged during my fieldwork.

Susan Sontag (1973/2005, p.128) has written in her book entitled '*On photography*' that '*to possess the world in the form of images is, precisely, to reexperience the unreality and remoteness of the real*'. Although Sontag (ibid) with this phrase criticised photography for its inability or failure to intervene and transform an affect into political action, I came close to photography or photography came closer to me when I felt that I was unable to symbolise experience with words. Undoubtedly the latter is a quite Lacanian interpretation, but this is how I read Sontag's phrase. Butler (2005b, p.826) commenting on Sontag's work (1973/2005; 2003) argues that 'our inability to see what we see [in a photograph capturing grief, war and outrage] is also of critical concern. To learn to see the frame that blinds us to what we see is no easy matter'. In this way, photography indeed has the power to shock or leave us cold if we get used to the visual pornography of violence (Oliver, 2007), however, the 'affective transitivity' of photograph has still its political uses.

In their closing statement, Butler (ibid, p.827) writes: 'Grief, rage, and outrage may be born precisely in what we see, since what we come to see is a frame, an interpretation of reality, that, with her [Sontag], we refuse'. Resisting articulating in words what I refused to see in my work, is one way of approaching my technique to capture what I saw and experienced during my work (both as work and research) in the refugee camps of Greece. Barthes (2000, p.5) in *Camera Lucida* points out that 'it is not possible to perceive the photographic signifier, but it requires a secondary action of knowledge or of reflection'. As will be shown in Chapter Five I use photographs (and maps) selectively in my analysis, and usually to complement the analysis of interview material. Therefore, they are presented in the analysis chapters as part of the text and process of reflection and analysis. For me, photographs were a distinct way to 'capture' what I believe I was (not) able to see during the time of my field study. To make sense of it, then, in a way required me thinking retrospectively, keeping the memory alive. Reflecting, therefore, on a photograph leaves open diverse ways of interpretation which are far from singular. A photograph, like a text can open diverse 'ways of seeing' (Berger, 1972).

Berger (2013, p.59) argue that 'normally photographs are used in a very unilinear way – they are used to illustrate an argument, or to demonstrate a thought that goes like this: --------->. Very frequently also they are used tautologically so that the photograph merely repeats what being said with words'. For Berger (ibid, his emphasis), photographs are related to memory, which is not unilinear at all. Rather, it works radially, and as they say 'we have to situate the printed photograph so that it acquires something of the surprising conclusiveness of that which *was* and *is*. […] But any photograph may become such a "Now" if an adequate context is created for it […] Such a context re-places the photograph in time -not its original time for that is impossible-but in narrated time.' Almost recalling what Benjamin (1955/2007) referred to as *history* Berger (ibid, p.60) concludes that 'narrated time becomes historic time when it is assumed by social memory and social action. The constructed narrated time needs to respect the process of memory it hopes to stimulate. […] A radial system has to be constructed

around the photograph so that it may be seen in terms which are simultaneously personal, political, economic, dramatic, everyday and historic'.

Reflecting on Berger's points, the photographs below present a moment or part of the living history of Moria, which was burned to the ground in September 2020. They invoke, at least to me among others (who attempted to use photography as a method working with asylum seekers see Hagan, 2018) the living history of fortress Europe and every time I look on them, they pose the question of 'who we are' and 'what do we do' in these spaces. At the same time, they ask also who are the 'we' the question poses itself, and I configure the 'we' each time I look on them.
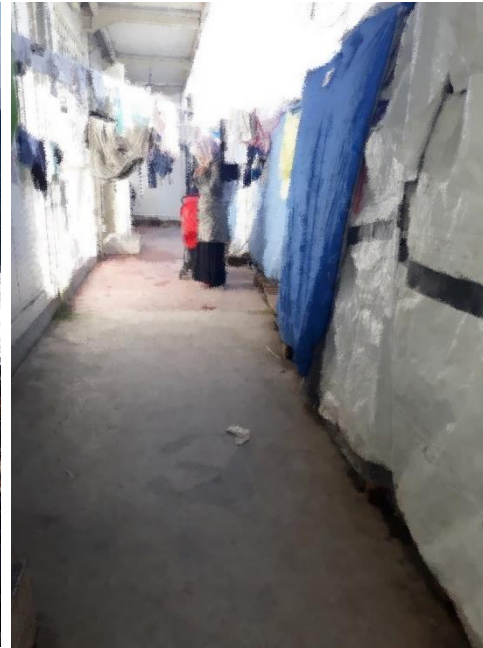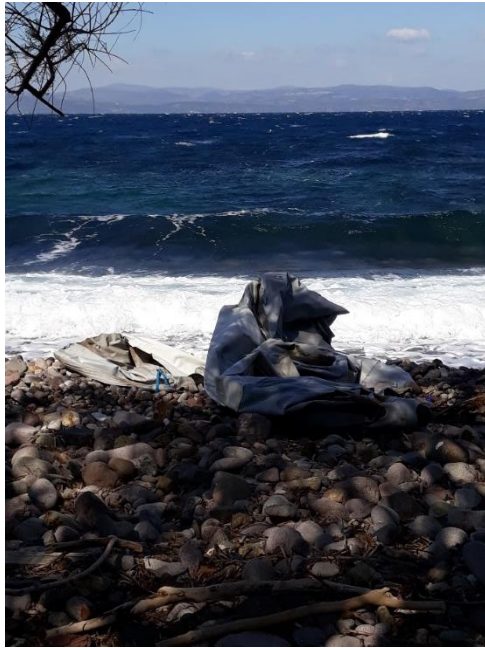
In this way, besides using photographs as part of my analysis chapters, I have also used them in my teaching to reflect and narrate their time and thus transform them into a historic time which may help others formulate their own questions. Social memory, to remember what 'Europe' has claimed and is still claiming so far in these spaces, I believe is crucial to move into social action, irrespective of our geographical position in the world.

Without eliminating or forgetting the privileges which gave me access in these spaces to be able 'to take a picture', photographs do have memory. In Barthes (2000, p.4 his emphasis) words:

> 'What the Photograph reproduces to infinity has occurred only once: the Photograph mechanically repeats what could never be repeated existentially [...] it is the absolute Particular, the sovereign Contingency, matte and somehow stupid, the This (this photograph, and not Photography), in sort, what Lacan calls the *Tuchè*, the Occasion, the Encounter, the Real, in its indefatigable expression'.

Along with photographs, versions of Moria's map(ping) emerged as part of my field study. In Chapter Five, I discuss specifically how maps emerged in the hotspot of Moria and how they became a tool of embodying space and movement. For example, aid workers were using maps, issued by the administrative organisation that oversaw Moria, to find refugees' container, tent or rubb hall[26] in the hotspot and inform them of an appointment they had. Maps as a photographic or cartographic representation of the space of Moria gave me the opportunity to reflect at a later stage of my study how the disciplinary power is structured in spaces like camps and 'hotspots'. Hannah (1997, p.174) discussed the space and the structuring of disciplinary power in compound boundaries which includes refugee camps, and he argued that 'it becomes more logistically difficult in compounds to keep everyone continuously visible and identifiable; anonymity becomes the norm, and authorities must expend some effort to identify individuals'. The latter reflects my earlier point on maps and the disciplinary spatiality of Moria, which is further discussed in Chapter Five.

Hyndman and Giles (2017) and Hyndman (2000) have also used maps to indicate how displacement is managed and what the politics of humanitarianism is amid protracted and extended exile. In addition, Hyndman and Giles (2011) portrayed the feminization of asylum in protracted situations. By *feminization* (ibid, p.363)

---

[26] A 'rubb hall' is a commercial name for a usually large, relocatable, tent-like structure that is used quite often in situations of emergency.

they refer to 'certain programmes, practices and identities [which are attributed] as passive, helpless, static' but they also 'signal gendering of law market segmentation and the production of inequalities'. One distinct example of that is the way 'womenandchildren' (see Burman, 2008 but also Sylvester, 1998) run quite often as a single entity in state and humanitarian discourse when it comes to 'a disaster' predicating on an assumed victim position. Hyndman and Giles (2011) have further pointed out that this also reflects upon the way refugees, overall, are feminized as a space of 'womenandchildren' (see also Enloe, 1993 as cited in ibid), as voiceless and passive subjectivities. In Moria, single women were in a specific compound in the hotspot and unaccompanied minors alike. Both, and I believe not accidentally, are reflected in the pictures I took while I was trying to make sense of my space and movement in Moria.

3.2.3 Material processing and discourse analysis: Theory as method

Discourse, Parker (2002, p.123) argues, 'comprises the many ways that meaning is relayed through culture, and it includes speech and writing, non-verbal and pictorial communication, and artistic and poetic imagery'. Discourse analysis, then, is the study of the way texts (i.e. as in the form of speech, documents, images, and films) are constructed, the functions that language serves and the contradictions that run through it. Psychology, however, is a discourse itself in the way it represents us symbolically, as objects of its enquiry. It organises its discourse through patterns and structures which we, as researchers and discourse analysts, we need to unpick and show how they work (see Foucault's[27] work, for instance, on *Discipline and Punish* (1975/1995), the technologies of the self (1988a), on madness and civilisation (1961/1988b) and confession (1976/1978)).

I am referring to psychology as a discourse, in the forefront, because most aid workers who are psychologists like myself, have been trained in psychology's traditional format, which presents stories about the mind and behaviour as if they were actual factual accounts. In this way, it locates mental health phenomena inside individual heads who need a 'quick fix' (see Parker et al., 1995). Additionally,

---

[27] Ordered by the publication date of each version and not by the originally published date.

traditional psychology as an educational informative praxis has been born in academia and flourished amid our neoliberal era outside of it, in many aspects of our social constitution (see De Vos, 2013 discussion on *Homo Psychologicus*). Social work and education have been informed, if not structured, for example with psychological discourses (see, for example, Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009) up to a certain extent. The latter signals why psychology should be studied both as a discourse and a discipline (with the Foucauldian sense, as a form of discipline) embedded in a certain culture which, although usually abstracts its western positionality, is historically and politically situated, and constituted.

Undoubtedly, psychology in the context of migration does not work alone. On the contrary, is situated along with other discourses, such as the discourse of humanitarianism and aid, and the discourse of state(s) in relation to migration and refugees. Hence, albeit the fact that this study's primary aim is the role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece, psychology as a form of psychosocial support is approached, understood, and analysed within the contextualised discourses of aid, humanitarianism, and state's responses amid migration. Given the fact that discourse analysis encompasses three main principles (as discussed in Parker, 2013, p.223-224), which are: i) the phenomena we study are historically constituted, ii) we must relate, flesh and enrich the phenomenon with a theoretical understanding and iii) we should attest to the kinds of subjectivity that enter into the research process. My analysis is always informed by and discusses psychology and migration in relation to history, within a cluster of competing theories, and in a reflection to the way subjectivities perform.

However, I do not follow a single or specific approach to discourse analysis, as theory as method does not follow a certain approach, rather relies on multiplicity of viewpoints, here, in this thesis is comprised by Foucauldian (see Foucault, 1971/1981; 1969/1972; Hook, 2007), critical (Fairclough, 1995; 1989; van Dijk, 2003; 1993) and Lacanian (Hook, 2013a; Pavón-Cuéllar, 2010; Parker, 2010; 2005b) approaches to discourse. In discourse analysis overall, we come to ask as discourse researchers 'how has this phenomenon come to be like this'?

Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA), would approach this question by seeking to explore those representations or 'orders of discourse' that comment, elaborate on the phenomenon and make it seem natural and thus been taken for granted (see Parker, 2002, p.125-126). The criminalisation of migrants in state's discourse (Burnett and Chebe, 2020; Bosworth and Turnbull, 2015; Welch and Schuster, 2005) (i.e. presenting them as 'terrorists' and 'threat'), the 'feminization' (Hyndman and Giles, 2011) of refugees in humanitarian discourse (i.e. presenting them as victims in need of aid and protection), or the performative character of psychology and trauma in the psychiatric category of PTSD (Christinaki, 2020b; Summerfield, 2001) belong to these 'orders of discourse' which elaborate, comment, and constitute how migration and refugees are perceived and how some of these representations are taken for granted. These enquiries are all addressed in the four analysis chapters that follow.

The notion and work on the 'psy-complex' (see Rose, 1999; 1985), for example, which was provoked by Foucault but has been extended and has formed a wider perspective on researching psychology, subjectivity, and mental health, has likewise been a valuable source in the way I conceptualise how psychology works as a 'regime of truth' in modern Western culture. With this in mind, and along with the fact that refugees far from being a homogenised group, which could be understood via western psychological theories and in dialogue with other works focusing on psychology, subjectivity, and race (see De Genova, 2018; 2016; Hook, 2005; Mama, 1995), I challenge the mainstream conceptualisation of self, refuge and race as emerge in humanitarian and psychological discourses across all my analysis chapters.

Critical work on discourse analysis, then, needs to address: 'i) how psychological facts are socially constructed, ii) how subjectivity is discursively reproduced, and iii) how the underlying historical conditions emerged that gave rise to the 'psy-complex'' (Parker, 2002, p.139). A critical discursive reading of texts will not look for consistency of response but rather for contradictions which will deconstruct dominant forms of knowledge, as well as the notions of a 'unified self' and will construct a different account while deconstructing a text. This is the way I was

reading my transcripts, as texts of contradictions in the level of humanitarian and psychological discourse. Yet, we should not approach discourse as providing a transparent pathway into the minds of individuals or into the world. Language is organised through discourse and *does* things (see Parker, 2002).[28] Paying attention to the functions of discourse means paying attention to the way power is bound up with knowledge and how different subjectivities are produced in discourse. It might be argued here, that discourse interpellate (Althusser, 2004) us; discourse calls its readers to take subject positions by calling them to construct forms of identities that must experience so to make sense of the discourse (i.e. psychological explanations of war and the multiple positions of victimhood). In this way, I was interested in exploring, first, the functions of humanitarian and psychological discourse and, second, how these discourses call for or interpellate different subjective positions, specifically that of aid worker and refugee, which must be experienced as identities (i.e. being a psychologist-offering support and understanding 'the self' and refuge through psychology) to make sense of the discourse.

It is important to note here, nevertheless, that the narrative of analysis presented does not imply or suppose a deliberate intentionality in the actions and words of the participants. The purpose is to critically approach and analyse, on the one hand, the discourses and practices that constitute humanitarian psychological interventions and on the other hand, to critically examine the subjectivities arise from these discourses and practices. To put it differently, the aim is not to examine or interpret participants' words and forms of actions so to reveal underlying thought processes and give another psychological explanation of migration. The enquiry of my study is to identify a range of discourses in which the language of psychology and humanitarianism is enacted and situate them in the wider landscape of psychologization and migration in Western culture.

---

[28] I approach the 'doing' of discourse in the power of language's performativity, inspired by the work of Butler (1993; 1990).

Hence the third element, to understand the historical conditions emerged and gave rise to the 'psy-complex', is of primary importance for this study. Foucault's 'archaeology of knowledge' (Foucault, 1969/1972) showed how concepts we take for granted in psychology have a long history and his later work on 'genealogy' (Foucault, 1980) portrayed how messy discourses are, and that our ideas are constituted in patterns of discourse that we may not be able to control. That means that we cannot make up the meaning of a symbol for instance, or that 'discourses may surpass actors' own understanding of their acts'[29] (Kelly, 2000 as cited in Rodríguez Mora, 2003, p.49) but as we participate in existing meanings which are produced in discourse, we are able to resist and construct new texts and contexts in which we come to relate to each other. Challenging, therefore, psychological discourse in migration as a coherent system of meaning which attempts to produce a unified self in a coherent story, I work together with psychoanalytic, feminist, and postcolonial theory to deconstruct some of its forms that are taken for granted and they present meaning related to work and refuge as unified, natural, coherent, psychologically embedded, and non-historically or materially constituted.

I also work together with these theories including social theory and critical psychology to discuss how humanitarian and psychological discourses produces certain identities and positions in which subjects are being approached and understood. The latter is not approached and analysed, as some might argue, in an abstractive format of subjective level but as being shaped, embedded, and discursively organised within material institutional practices. Camps or hotspots are such material institutional practices (see Agamben, 1998 for an analysis of the *camp*, or the work of Goffman, 1961 on asylums) in which I seek to understand how subjectivities perform via psychological and humanitarian discourses. Coward and Ellis (1977 as cited in Parker, 2015, p.25) pointed out that language is itself a material force and thus analysis 'could be thought as "materialist"'. Taking the

---

[29] It is specifically for that reason that the thesis focuses on participants' language, discourses and practices as constituted in this humanitarian intervention and programme of psychosocial support and not on their deliberate intention of their words and actions.

latter into account, I seek to understand how the discourse of psychology and aid produce certain 'subject positions' for workers and refugees within the space of camp and hotspot, where those positions reproduce or contest forms of western social organisation. As will be shown, analysis is structured around language, space, time and trauma, subject and colonialism to shed light in different aspects in which these discourses and subject positions emerge and produced. By no means does it treat any of these structural formats as separated from one another. Rather, they are approached as continuously intersecting and co-constituting each other.

Up to this point, I have established that theory is very important for critical work on discourse (see Parker, 2002). It helps us, as discourse researchers, to distance ourselves from the idea that language is just a mechanism of communication which simply enables thoughts to be conveyed or revealed from one head to another (Burman and Parker, 1993). As Parker (2015, p.18) highlights '"discourse" is not confined to language at all but includes all semiotically structured phenomena ranging from advertising images to the organization of space'. This is the reason I use *theory as a method*, to stress the importance and need of theory in the dislocations and restructures of discourse and the correspondent 'subject positions' as they produced within space, time and history.

In this work, psychoanalysis as a theory of 'the self' or 'subject' is crucial and fruitful. Without eliminating the political intricacies of psychoanalysis in the western terrain, its dubious history, and its ability to be situated as a 'regime of truth' in clinical therapeutic practice as well as in social research, psychoanalysis is used in this thesis as a theoretical resource of reading and understanding, speaking, and writing. Analysis is undertaken with Lacanian psychoanalysis to explore and mark how the 'discourse of the Other', by which I refer to the symbolic system, holds psychological and humanitarian culture in place, determining the location of each individual subject. While Lacan (1973/2018) argued that the unconscious is the discourse of the other, bridging critical discursive analysis with psychoanalysis, allows us to develop not only inconsistencies of sense in the level of language but also 'an account of tacit assumptions, unacknowledged conditions

and unintended consequences *and* account for the contradictory ways in which these mesh with structured of power are relayed through texts' (Parker, 2015, p.54). As will be shown in the first analysis chapter, I work with a metaphor of an aid worker to depict and offer an account of exactly the latter, of how tacit assumptions structure power in discourse.

Psychoanalysis is not used or treated as a 'correct' or 'true' standpoint theory to assess which aid workers' account are closer to reality. On the contrary, psychoanalysis informs the reading of these accounts to pay attention in the way these accounts may 'exclude different perspectives as a function of historical processes of cultural production and power' (ibid, p.55). It is for that reason, precisely, that psychoanalysis needs to be constantly allied with Feminism and Postcolonialism to be self-reflexive, avoiding 'surface readings' (Best and Marcus, 2009) and form a radical theory of the subject (as Parker and Pavón-Cuéllar, 2021). I use, therefore, a particular form of psychoanalysis, which is Lacanian although does not follow the suggested Lacanian Discourse Analysis (Parker, 2010; 2005b) format, to produce a yield of understanding in which I am positioned in relation to the text in a different way. Here is where *theory as method* is significant because by using a range of theories while reading the text in a particular form of psychoanalysis, I locate the text in a historical context and structures of power which may produce a different understanding of psychology and migration, aid and work, subject and colonialism.

3.3 Ethical questions

In addition to the discussed ethical reservations about the way the signifier of politics was missing from the PIS and the way I occasionally responded to aid workers' challenging discourses, ethical questions prevented me from approaching refugees for material-collection purposes. There are several research as well as non-governmental reports which include refugees as part of their study format to offer, for example, insights into the lived experience of migration, or discuss the effectiveness of non-governmental work and policies. However, my research interest lies, first, in the way the discourse of humanitarianism and

psychology interplay in the way refugees are constructed as subjectivities and, second, the way that this discourse also formulates the subjectification of the modern aid worker. Existing research, in the fields of psychology, migration and humanitarianism tend to approach aid workers as the constitutive, but mechanical, link which connects facilitates and executes humanitarian and states' organisational support provision (see De Lauri, 2016) without focusing on the dialectic relation between them and refugees.

Even though I had the chance to join one-to-one meetings between social workers and refugees, I refused to enter this space as I was aware that these meetings concerned serious issues such as asylum rejections, violence, and life-threatening stories. In this way, I could not see how my presence in this space would have any value and on the contrary, I think that it would devalue refugees' time to clarify, sort out and challenge whatever was going on at that time. Furthermore, given my own privileges as a researcher, and the fact that I have been in the position of the aid worker myself, I did not want to become once again complicit in this kind of truth extraction. Critical reflexivity in psychology, Parker (2015, p.26) argues, must consider 'how our objects of study are configured by us as subjects who are willing to speak to the experts'. Psychology within migration behaves as a dominant practice because it helps in reproducing refugees' representation via certain discourses which seek to present 'the self' in a certain way (for instance, by claiming vulnerability, telling a consistent story in the asylum service, and showing willing to 'integrate' in a society which excludes you in first place see Chapter Seven). For that reason, my research focused on the role and discourses of psychology within refugee camps and the subjectification of aid worker, and all my research aims seek specifically to destabilise and show the mainstream, and politically performative role of psychology in both aid workers' and refugees' subject formation.

As indicated in the section of *Qualitative methods,* I participated in group activities and spent a lot of time in the camps. The latter is also of an ethical question, especially, when my involvement in these spaces was blurred and not clear even to myself on what it means to 'observe'. For example, when I participated in these

group activities, I became a helper to the workers but at the same time, this was a chance to see closely how PSS is run and organised within these spaces. From a moral and political point of view, then, I wondered how my presence could legitimise these spaces and additionally raise them as 'a space of research'. This is not to say that research should be abandoned in the field of migration, but we need to be critically aware about our role and presence, and whether the knowledge production amid these spaces keep in place powerful discourses (such as the discourse of aid or the Discourse of University) structures (such as the camp) and dominant practices (such as versions of psychology as well as of humanitarianism). Another example is the fact that I offered debriefing sessions to workers, to offer back to the organisation and get access in the camps. Once again, it is of ethical concern how I also mobilised psychological discourses so to be granted access and facilitate my research.

Lastly, it becomes apparent from the above that refugees may not have taken part as participants in this study, but aid workers' discourse was based on their work with them. This is yet another ethical question because it may again reproduce a discourse about refuges without actively involve them. Nevertheless, it should be noted that my research enquiry and focus were precisely on how refugees are constituted in aid workers' discourse so to discuss what I approach as *the politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece.* This research was granted university ethical approval.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodological foundations of the thesis. Discussing how my epistemological underpinnings relate to the way I use 'theory as method', I discussed how the idea of this research emerged and carried out. Critically reflecting on my positionality at all stages of this research, I discussed the methods mobilised and the way the material has been processed within what I call 'theory as method'. The ethical considerations concluded, reflecting on the power relationships intricated within the current research.

Analysis chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven

Analysis overview

At the very beginning of her book *The Colonization of Psychic Space*, Kelly Oliver (2004, p.xiii) asks 'why to turn to psychoanalysis for a social theory of oppression?'. Quite provocatively, she responds that her aim is not to apply psychoanalysis to oppression but rather to transform psychoanalytic concepts into social concepts 'by developing a psychoanalytic theory based on a notion of the individual or psyche that is thoroughly social' (ibid, p.xiii). Although in my analysis I am not using specifically psychoanalytic concepts as Oliver does (i.e. alienation, melancholy, shame, sublimation, idealization, forgiveness, and affect), I nevertheless use a primary aspect of psychoanalysis, the notion of the unconscious, as this is crucial for a social theory of understanding. All our relationships and encounters are mediated by meaning; we are meaning-oriented beings. As such, our experiences are both bodily and psychically encountered, a claim that has been significantly divided in social theory, anthropological as well as psychological research. The unconscious, then, as a drive force, operates between soma and psyche and unites them. As Oliver (ibid, p.xvii, xix) puts it 'our being is brought into the realm of meaning through drive force and its affective representations'. Thus, speaking for an embodied psyche, rather than a body / psyche dualism, is a primary aim of this research and analysis.

'Diagnosing the colonization of psychic space demands a close analysis of the affects of oppression and how those affects are produced within particular social situations', Oliver continues (ibid, p.xx). Even though my analytic intentions go beyond 'diagnosing', my research aim for the following four analysis chapters is to make sense of whether and how the colonization of psychic spaces occurs between aid workers and refugees in the refugee camps of Greece. In this way, a close analysis of the affects of *language*, *space*, *time* and *trauma*, *story* and *history* come to the fore to show how these affective relationships could be produced as and within particular social situations. In this approach, psychoanalytic theory (Lacan, 1973/2018; Bistoen, 2016; Freud, 1914/2003a; 1920/2003b;) is

accompanied by philosophy (Žižek, 1989; Benjamin, 1955/2007), critical anthropological/social theory (Harvey, 2005; Lefebvre, 1961/2002), critical psychology (Burman, 2017; Parker, 2007; Fox and Prilleltensky, 1997), postcolonial theory and thought (Danewid, 2017; Fanon, 1952/2008; 1961/2004; 1959/1965; Said, 1978/2003) as well as feminist understandings (Burman, 2021a; 2017; Nayak, 2015; Mohanty, 2003). Psychoanalysis as a school of thought traverses my analysis chapters but is itself traversed by other significant schools such as postcolonialism and feminism to shed light in the different ways we *make meaning*. Each analysis chapter may, then, stand on its own in terms of theoretical as well as methodological format, but is being articulated with and in relation to the other chapters and theories. Each chapter offers an introduction where an outline and a theoretical, as well as methodological, approach is explained.

Setting the scene within the Lacanian concepts and orders (Lacan, 1975/1991a; 1978/1991b) of the *Imaginary*, *Symbolic* and *Real*, the first analysis chapter (Chapter Four) approaches the language of the aid worker under the above psychoanalytic terms and in relation to the language of organisation and refugees. The *language of the Imaginary* is spoken by national and international organisations in the way aid workers are trained in imaginary case scenarios before starting their work or during their practice in the humanitarian terrain. The latter is important because it is through training that workers come closer and closer to the image of the other as 'a professional aid worker' is supposed to be, and the image of the Other (the refugee) as is constructed to be. The organisation's discursive order teaches them how to speak with/for the o/Other (both themself and refugee) and instructs them - to some extent - how to perform their professional ego by identifying with the specular image of the organisation. Thus, the language of the organisation as the language of the Symbolic together with the language of psychology in this humanitarian landscape mediates between what is not spoken at the level of the unconscious and what needs to be articulated out loud by the master(s) of its discourse, that is the humanitarian and psychological apparatus. Aid workers, including psychologists, social workers, CPOs, and educational practitioners, having been raised in the Discourse of the

University (Lacan, 1991/2007), learnt how to speak for the other and, now being accommodated in the field of refugeeness (Kallio et al., 2019), they move linguistically from the Discourse of the University (treated in many cases as the language of their scientific training) towards the Discourse of the Master (inter/national organisations).

Language and similes, as one form of the language of the unconscious and *the language of the conscious* as performed in the language of professionalism, are parts of *the language of the Symbolic*. They both show not only what remains unspoken but also the way that speech unravels around help, aid, and practice. The first sub-section *Language and similes: Speaking the unconscious* is structured around a simile and depicts how an aid worker's metaphor could reveal the way aid workers, as subject positions, perform in the field of humanitarianism that is also a field of knowledge and power. It also discusses in more detail how Christianity is embedded in the semiotic structure of some aid organisations and the history of aid. *The language of the conscious*, as the second sub-section, highlights how the language of professionalism is neither neutral nor apolitically situated. On the contrary, I show that 'speaking professionally' is another performance of politics which, besides being helpful in the sense of keeping the organisational order going, depoliticises the personal and makes it difficult to perform as a strong political actor, in-between the encounters that unfold between aid workers and refugees.

This chapter ends with a substantive section titled *The Real is traumatic*, as an attempt to speak out loud the relationship between *psychology*, *language,* and *subject* formation. Linking Lacan's theory (1973/2018) with Fanon's (1952/2008; 1961/2004; 1964/1967) decolonial understanding, I discuss how psychology uses a meaning-making which does not make sense to refugees and ends up pathologising them by claiming that 'they are not ready to manage and process trauma'. The latter creates the conditions of what Lacan calls the Real, in which what is traumatic is what refugees experience in the everyday life of the camp, as well as the way that the language of psychology approaches them. Second, as they have a different way of processing trauma and loss, refugees are interpreted

through western eyes, and are racially (re)configured. As Fanon (1952/2008) has shown, this racially informed understanding could be vastly painful not only for the 'black' but also for the 'white' party – in this context, the aid workers. Third, the fact that aid workers and refugees do not share a mutual symbolic system pushes the aid worker, and specifically the psychologist, to reach into psychiatric forms of signification to make sense of the refugee. However, questioning how psychiatry works in the refugee terrain, psychologists become an Other themselves in the discourse of the psychiatry, opening a pathway for reflection on practice. As will be shown in the third analysis chapter (Chapter Six), to inscribe the *Real* in the S*ymbolic* requires an act of speaking out, an act in the political.

Politics and situated political understandings permeate my analytical underpinnings and claims. Thence, it is not only important to analyse how language situates the refugee terrain but also to seek the spatial intricacies in which it unfolds. The second analysis chapter (Chapter Five), focused on the spatial temporalities of the hotspot of Moria, starts from the genealogic understanding of the term '*hotspot'.* Neocleous and Katsrinou (2016) clarify that this term is not new. Its roots go back as far as World War II where the term took on a military meaning, and it has been transformed into a sign of warzone; a warzone, as I argue, in the body and psyche of every potential Other who crosses European borders and enters the western terrain. Therefore, to designate a space like Moria as a '*hotspot*' is by no means innocent, since as a signifier, it suggests that people who live there embody a threat of war by which they are becoming simultaneously othered. *Embodying space and movement* is the second sub-section of the first part of this chapter, where space and movement are situated in the performance of a map which I discuss as important to analyse and critically understand. Starting from my own embodied experience in Moria, designated in the bodily figurative localities of the organisation's vest on my own body, I discuss how maps and the procedure of mapping, as another embodied locality, create a cartographic consciousness (see Harvey, 2001) which unfolds in the embodiment of space for both aid workers and refugees. Given the large number of people who used to live in Moria (by February 2020, Moria was hosting 18,342, see Mahecic, 2020),

containers, tents, rubb halls as well as other structures of accommodation had a double or even triple numbering system. In this way, by elaborating on a specific example that I encountered during my field study, I show how maps are not only used as a structural representation of space, or a way to find your place in space, but rather that the procedure of mapping creates, on the one hand, different feelings of loss from the part of aid workers and, on the other hand, that it maps the bodies of refugees as another body of population, which (as argued earlier) automatically signify a sense of threat or/and loss.

Space and subject play a significant role in the way subjectivities perform. This section, as one of the three main sections of this chapter, relies primarily on Lefebvre's (1974/1991) and Harvey's (2006) theories of space. Based on an extract from a psychologist in Moria who compares the camp to an *animal farm* and linking it with the 3-dimensional dialectical model of Lefebvre and Harvey in the conceptualisation of space (see Schmid, 2008 and Harvey, 2005), I claim that the allegory of 'camp as farm', as an alternate form of metaphor at the level of language and the representation of space, reveals how the hotspot (and camps) become a living condition of oppression. Mirroring the phenomenological materiality of space for both those who live inside and those who live in-between Moria, the allegory made space for the aid worker to formulate a critical narrative of what they perceived, conceived, and lived there. Nevertheless, the camp and hotspot, as a condition of living, makes a significant difference in the way subjectivities are produced and reproduced as an intricate web of embodied relationships within that space.

Building upon the material production of space but also focusing on the 'camp as farm' as a condition whose materiality on the body creates the possibilities of 'making subjectivities' disciplined and docile (as the psychologist indicated), I discuss how refugees' bodies as a body of population embody and reflect the European body politics. Employing Harvey's (2000) theorisation of the body as an accumulation strategy, I argue that the labouring body, which includes both the bodies of the aid workers as well as the bodies of refugees, that are supposed to accept work paying them 1 euro per hour, becomes othered as it is lived and

alienated throughout the process of embodying that space of living. The labouring body as a body of (current and future) labour gets divided, first, in the actual space of Moria (i.e. inside/outside Moria), and then becomes embodied in the divisions of us/them, superior/inferior, normal/not normal which provoke different psychic trajectories as well as bodily localities. The body becomes a mirror reflecting both the spatial as well as the psychic/subjective divisions the labouring body experiences. Analysing these embodied politics and how they unfold at the level of the psyche, I conclude that the aid worker's reflection and allegory not only revealed the politics of that space but also performed an act of resistance in the power dynamics that constitute the forms of alienation between the aid worker and refugee.

The last section of this chapter, *Therapies of Space: Psychotopology in Emotional Geographies,* is structured in two sections, *'Therapies of space'* and *'Safe space'*, to critically discuss the politics of the therapeutic space, or what I call *therapeutic spatiality*. Situating this section in the topological understanding of the subject (Lacan, xxxx/Seminar XII; Pavón-Cuéllar, 2010), the concept of 'safe space' as an internal exclusion, and 'therapies of space' as an external inclusion, may be of help to conceptualise the emotional geographies (Burman and Chantler, 2004; Bondi and Fewell, 2003) of Moria, as a ritual passage from the embodied experience of space towards the subject's psychic spatiality. In the first section, I show how the external securitisation of space (i.e. with the presence of the army, security guards, police, and fences) is transformed into an internal psychic procedure which is negotiated amid the space of therapy. With the hope to help some refugees who, in the presence of the army, prefer to sleep outside of their container/tent and away from the hotspot, I critically discuss how the space of therapy is transformed into a therapeutic spatiality which attempts to adjust refugees' embodied reactions to the securitisation of space into a 'normal' presence; a presence that is justified once again at the level of protection, in the sense of being there for their own good.

Creating the space of therapy as a *safe space* itself, besides being a prerequisite in humanitarian discourse and action, also became a space of reflection upon aid

workers' narratives on the politics of the 'safe space', or, to put it differently, on what agendas the 'safe space' as a politics of space serves amidst this reality. For instance, while the space of therapy made room to navigate refugees' stories and create a space of psyche-commonality, at the same time, it made space to embody their stories and enunciate them into a psychic trajectory that, by admitting or confessing vulnerability, could give them access to better conditions of living.[30] Taking another example, I reflect on the case of women's rape inside Moria where, even if the therapeutic room attempted to offer a safe space to speak, psychologists had to let these women return to the same space that rapes took place, inside Moria. Mobilising critical race literature (Leonardo and Porter, 2010) on the notion of 'safe space', I conclude that there is no safe space for marginalised and oppressed groups. Thus, if we want to take a step towards safety, it means a step towards the dialectics of violence (Fanon, 1961/2004), and a step away from the forces of 'therapeutic happiness' and adjustment.

At this point, it should be noted that an analysis of the politics of space could not leave aside the notion of time. Both Lefebvre (1974/1991) and Harvey (1990) have highlighted that space is intertwined with time. In this vein, the third analysis chapter (Chapter Six) is centred around symptom, time, and trauma as an attempt to understand symptom and trauma as embodied spatial manifestations. The first section of this chapter, entitled *Traumatic Present* (Kapsali and Mentinis, 2018), discusses how the latter concept could be enlightening not only for the experiences of refugees but also for the experiences of aid workers in the refugee camps. Drawing on Bistoen's (2016) psychoanalytic theory on trauma, ethics and the political beyond PTSD, I elaborate on the notion of the traumatic in the present and how time is encapsulated in the psychoanalytic concept of *the act*. Locating the possibilities of the radical in the traumatic the next main section *Repetitiveness: Between time and symptom as a condition and method of meaning* seeks to focus on the concept of the traumatic in the everyday life of refugees in the camp. The sub-sections of *Activation* and *Psychosomatic symptoms* speak

---

[30] For example, a session with and a paper from a psychologist could be used in refugees' asylum-seeking procedure or speed their departure from the island based on vulnerability criteria.

directly about the mainstream as well as normative understanding of suffering. Linking time with Benjamin's (1955/2007) reversal of dominant conceptions of *historical time*, I argue that the call for activation reproduces a mainstream understanding of 'time and symptom' which prevents refugees from performing their own *subjective act*. 'To make refugees active' is a subversive call which psychologises their past and attempts to restore it in a present which, as will be shown in the last analysis chapter, is oscillating between modernity, as a deeply colonial temporal understanding, and catastrophe, as the (neo)-colonial implications (re)-produced in the current non-western milieu.

Psychosomatic symptoms, then, comprise the second half of this section to stress that the symptom carries a political and postcolonial meaning. Distortions in mainstream and normative discourses misrecognise the 'symptom's own time' (Fanon, 1952/2008, p.6), as a moment that is deeply historical and political. Approaching 'the essence' of symptom within a postcolonial Fanonian framework, it is argued that the existence of psychosomatic symptoms makes a specific subjective claim of living inscribed in the body and psyche. It reveals that, besides all the experiences refugees have lived so far, what makes refugee reality *traumatic* is our own symptomatic and racialised reading, because it blurs 'the everyday' possibilities of both aid worker and refugee to perform *a subjective act*. This chapter ends, then, with *Body as an accumulation of knowledge: Between rupture and a new beginning*, emphasizing the significance of the body in the subjective claim of existence. As shown before, according to Harvey (2000), the body performs as an *accumulation strategy*. In this section, I extend Harvey's conceptualisation and discuss how bodies could also perform as an accumulation strategy of *knowledge* which provokes the antinomies lying underneath the humanitarian discourse of the psychological. The latter, undoubtedly ruptured, mainstream, and normalised could also perform as a new beginning, as an act against pathologisation and racialisation. An act in the political.

Showing how language, space and time formulate the intricacies of psychosocial support in the refugee landscape and discussing how coloniality is embedded in the psychological discourse of support provision, the last analysis chapter (Chapter

Seven) *Psychosocial support and the oriental Other – A postcolonial (his)-story* focuses on the ways in which psychology and psychosocial support perform 'psycolonial' encounters with refugees. Following Danewid's (2017) work on *White innocence in the Black Mediterranean: Hospitality and the erasure of history* and bringing it into dialogue with Benjamin's (1955/2007) positioning on the concept of history, I claim that refugees' stories are becoming distorted into legal, medical, and psychological histories; a white-European framework of documentation, progress, and remembrance. As indicated earlier, despite the hopes that the latter signals for a successful asylum case, it disconnects an intertwined (his)-story of colonialism and remembrance.

Refugees' stories not only display how they function as a tool of their living-survival in the camp, but also work as a psy-performative technique which transforms refugees into the 'strangers' (Ahmed, 2000) of European history. *Psychosocial support as a technique of self-development and social adjustment: Erasing connected histories* is the second section of this chapter and highlights how the techniques of self-development and social adjustment transform refugees' into the 'strangers of modern history'. Distorting them into oriental others, they are approached by a logic of deficit - deviance which proclaims 'a saviour attitude' that is a psycolonial encounter within the white European arena. This attitude, encapsulated in the 'ethical', 'good' and 'innocent' domains of humanitarian aid, state agency and psychology, erases connected histories by disguising Europe's colonial past and transforming the story-teller migrant into a predetermined universalised figure in need of protection, help and hospitality.

Chapter Four

On language

4.1 Introduction

Vygotsky (1986) in *Thought and Language* treated language as a necessary complement of thought. This was not just another linguistic theoretical performance, but a valuable revolution in the theoretical appraisal of language, thought and Subject. The origin of reasoning, an integral part of language and thought, has more to do with our ability to communicate with the *o/Other(s)* than with a simple reaction in the discursive materiality of the world. Understanding the *o/Other* is a crucial part of the subject in Lacanian psychoanalysis. The symbolic Other refers to language and discourse as it structures and determines any relation a human can have to reality and others through an interpersonal figure. The other with a lower-case o, the imaginary other, 'is the image or picture of the other-equal in which the ego recognises itself' (Vanheule, 2011, p.2).

This chapter, resonating with my first and fourth research aim, situates language within a psychoanalytic framework and understanding to offer an analysis of how aid workers position and recognise themselves and refugees in the level of discourse. It discusses how the discursive relationship of the organisation with aid workers in relation to refugees mediates the acquisition of multiple discursive images (i.e. an image of war and threat, or vulnerability). For Lacan (see Vanheule, 2011, p.3), image is 'the representations and meanings people construct by using words, rather than impressions the visual system processes'. Thus, what it is at stake here is how the language of humanitarian organisations and psychology, with its training and its discourse on professionalism, determine to some extent the mental representations aid workers discern in relation to themselves (other) and refugees (Other) in Lacan's theory of the three registers, the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real.

Elaborating, in the first section of this chapter, on the relevance of Lacanian psychoanalysis in the exploration of aid workers' subject formation, this chapter is

structured in three main sections: the first is the position of language in the order of the Imaginary, the second is the position of language in the order of the Symbolic and the third is the position of language in the order of the Real. The second section, the language of the Symbolic, is structured in two sub-sections. The first critically discusses how we *speak of the unconscious* using a simile articulated by an aid worker as an example, while the second reflects on the language of the conscious as the latter manifests in the discourse of professionalism. These two sub-sections shed further light on how the subject is constituted at the (un)conscious level as well as depicting (con)textually how this mediation may take place in the level of text and its discourse.

The material discussed in this chapter comes from interviews, communications, and my own field work at the camp of Filippiada and the unaccompanied minors structure named as Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni in the mainland of Greece. As discussed in chapter three, occasionally I do not specify aid workers' position (for instance psychologist, social worker etc.) to assure their anonymity, or when I refer to their position, I do not specify the site correspondingly.

4.2 Lacan and psychoanalysis

Psychological theories can conceal and reveal what they want using language. As Parker (2020) argues language is intertwined with practice and it does have consequences. The psychologist or the psychiatrist, for example, has to offer a certain kind of discursive treatment which frames an experience in a certain way, using a specific language. A diagnosis is such a form of language bound up with power, and the organisation of language, what is called discourse, can raise many uncomfortable insights concerning the discourse of humanitarianism, psychology, and aid. I am interested in the connection between discourse and power, as the subject who has the right to speak up in a psychological session may not be the one who talks, but the one who listens, in the sense that the one who has the space, the 'safe space' to speak is reduced to an object where certain kinds of discourses are mobilised so as to make sense of him.

At this point, the position of refugees as it unfolds in the aid worker's humanitarian and psychological language is the broader and spatial-discursive landscape on which I focus, here, by shifting between the order of Imaginary, Symbolic and Real. This shift means that I look how the language of the organisation presents the Other in aid workers' imaginary position, what I name as 'the language of the Imaginary' (see section 4.3) as well as how and why the language of psychology could be traumatic in the level of the Real (see section 4.5).

While discourse has been closely linked with Foucault and the notion that 'where there is power, there is resistance' (Foucault, 1976/1978, p.95), Vighi and Feldner (2007, p.95) in their book *Žižek Beyond Foucault* refer to one of Žižek's crucial points on whether power and resistance 'are *simply* or *entirely* caught in a deadly mutual embrace'. Taking the latter into consideration and drawing upon Žižek's argument, they ask:

'…if we want to account for social discipline and subordination, can we entirely skirt the question of "how individuals ideologically subjectivise their predicament, how they relate to their conditions of existence"? Can the disciplinary techniques of bio-power really "constitute individuals *directly*, by penetrating individual bodies and *bypassing* the level of ''subjectivation''" (ibid, p.95 but see also Žižek, 2000a)?

In the same line:

'…is the deadlock of power and resistance our inescapable fate?' (ibid).

'Of course, no!', Žižek answers. 'We have to recast the Foucauldian account of power and resistance by moving *beyond Foucault*' (Vighi and Feldner, 2007, p.95). Even though Žižek acknowledges that Foucauldian analyses are significant to depict the way implicit systems of discourse imprison us and uncover the historical constitution of knowledge (Foucault, 1989/1996), the key question is 'how [to] conceive a political intervention which breaks free from the vicious circle where regimes of power reproduce themselves by continuously creating and obliterating their own excess' (Vighi and Feldner, 2007, p.97).

To answer the latter, Žižek (as cited in ibid) concludes that one has to move from Foucault and turn to Lacan. He suggests this because according to him, it is Lacan, and not Foucault who 'allow[s] us to conceptualise the distinction between imaginary resistance and actual symbolic re-articulation via the intervention of the Real of an act', that is a passage through 'symbolic death' (Žižek, 2000a, p.262). What Žižek's formulation of the act poses 'is how to conceive of the relationship between the symbolic "big Other" (the discursive field) and the Real mobilised by the act, insofar as this relationship is mediated by the subject (Vighi and Feldner, 2007, p.110). Since this was crucial to Lacan himself, an authentic act according to Lacan is 'to treat the real by the symbolic' (Lacan, 1973/2018, p.6). Hence, although the Symbolic alone guarantees our access to the Real, conversely only the Real allows us to re-signify the Symbolic.

Therefore, letting our language go beyond what we 'literally and linearly' see, letting it speak in its own way by drawing attention to some moments as the unconscious (see section 4.4.1), reflects this momentary act in which we try to make sense of the Real, by speaking out its traumatic moments of its own refugeeness. The act of speaking out (as will be shown in Chapter Six) not only allows us to enter into the land of *trauma and the Real* but will also help us rupture the Real by re-signifying the Symbolic, the way we make sense of the world, ourselves, and the o/Other(s).

4.3 The language of 'the Imaginary'

Lacan (1966/2006b) argued that the basis of the Imaginary order is the formation of the ego in the mirror stage. The ego is formed by identifying with the counterpart or specular image, forming what is called *identification*, an important aspect of the Imaginary. As Lacan states (1978/1991b, p.54) *'the body in pieces finds its unity in the image of the other…[or] its own specular image'*. Aid workers, before or while they unfold their professional ego in their everyday work[31]

---

[31] Trainings and workshops usually take place after the beginning of an aid worker's contract. However, in some cases, such as in, here, Safe Zone workers had the chance to attend a training beforehand, as they were the first to work in this operation which was entirely new in the region.

undergo training which assimilates them into the *specular image of the o/Other*. The latter is the way they learn to perform as professionals in relation to the organisation's order and discourse*.* As an aid worker at the Safe Zone shared:

> '…when I first started and I still believe it I think they had exaggerated in, in the fear that is to say they have over-scared us, to wit I remember the first days in the seminars I said "Oh, oh shall I quit? Where am I going to, where am I going to work?" […] They presented it like skirmishes, attempts umm the other will take out the knife…'.

Aid workers had to prepare for low-risk up to worst-case scenarios and learn beforehand how to manage their 'cases', setting up their limits quickly, violently, and efficiently. As another aid worker comments at the camp of Filippiada *'…we have had some case studies (with some laugh) to see umm how we would manage the cases, some pract umm practical examples to see how we would manage…'*. What follows is such a case study from a training I participated in myself when I used to work as an aid worker:[32]

> An adolescent boy has been referred to the psychologist of (name of the organisation) from another organisation after his behaviour became suddenly violent and irritating towards his classmates in the class. His father, who is with him, informs you that he does not sleep well neither eats well the last days. The boy does not have psychiatric history neither receives any other services of psychological support this period. The father tells you that the boy is withdrawn and worried after he became witness of the death of a close member of his family in his homeland. When you ask the boy, himself how is he, he tells you that he cannot sleep because he has nightmares. After discussion, the boy refers to you that he has suicidal thoughts. He also tells you that he plans to end his life in the following days and that he will use a

---

[32] This case scenario comes from a training I took part myself when I was working in the field as an aid worker. In this training, the managers of the organisation were trying to assimilate us in the way we will assess risks and refugees' vulnerabilities. It took place in the beginning of 2017, when the operation of the organisation on *Psychosocial Support* started running in the refugee camps in mainland Greece.

knife he found and kept in his tent for that reason (my translation from Greek).

The Other is performed in the aid worker's imagination sometimes as dangerous, other times as *a case* in need of protection, but always as a subject to manage and discipline.[33] Workers' imaginations are cultivated with incidents which provoke fear, the fear of the Other whose demands are interpreted beforehand within cases. In this way workers become familiar with case management under the imperative of (inter)national non-governmental law, as the law of the Symbolic order. Training them in these imaginary cases-scenarios is important because workers come closer and closer to the image of the other as 'a professional aid worker', the image of the Other as is supposed to be (refugee) and the language of the organisation. The organisation's discursive order teaches them how to speak with the o/Other (themself and the refugee) and helps them to (per)form their professional ego by identifying with the specular image of the organisation (other). In this sense, the other in its ab-sense has a dual signification. Paying attention to the way that the field is presented as a battlefield, according to the aid worker's account where everyone has to be prepared and ready to respond in the '...*skirmishes...',* the case-scenarios come to escort the Other in its imaginary form and introduce the Symbolic. As the aid worker from the camp of Filippiada comments:

'...the most powerful [cases] are these of the victims of torture, woman who was a sex slave [...] umm the intense and gloomy descriptions they make in these cases umm the fact that impresses me is that...the revival of the symptoms, for instance when they listen to a sound, is like they live again the tortures they had [...] all of these are a challenge, something new to me,

---

[33] Are there no exceptions? Does the refugee have to be always docile? No, of course not. Refugees resist in different ways. For instance, they organise themselves within as well as outside of hotspots and camps, in demonstrations. However, it is important to note here, that the Other in the aid worker's imagination is figured at this stage by the organisation's symbolic order, structuring and determining the relation aid worker can have with themself (other) and the refugee (Other). One way this happens is via the imaginary figures of the professional aid worker and refugee formulated in these case-scenarios.

and only in my imagination existed umm but what I told you is that I feel that what happened, is sadly happened to them, the issue is to empower them, to train them in skills which they can empower them and move their lives…'.

The aid worker had already conceived the Other in an imaginary formation. They were -somehow - there, even before they speak, as if the aid worker knew them and their stories already. While the woman unfolds her life path, the aid worker concludes that the only way to help is by training her in new skills. This imperative need of empowerment by teaching the refugee new skills almost recalls how the organisation trains the worker in new skills such as the management of different refugee cases. The Other has a dual signification in the worker's imagination. They come as the imaginary formation of the refugee via the order of the humanitarian law as well as the counterpart-specular image of the organisation in the way aid worker should talk, act, and perform (other).

4.4 The language of 'the Symbolic'

Lacan (1966/2006b; 1966/2006c; see also Fink, 1997) argued that the Imaginary is structured by the Symbolic order, that the Imaginary involves a linguistic dimension. The signifier, thus, is the foundation of the Symbolic and the signified or the signification belongs to the Imaginary. In this way, the structure of the Imaginary under the Symbolic order showed that language has both symbolic and imaginary aspects.

As Lacan (1966/2006c, p.248) stated:

'… words themselves can suffer symbolic lesions and accomplish imaginary acts whose victim is the subject.'
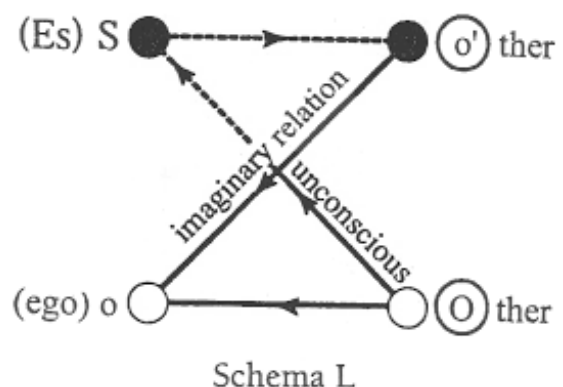

Figure 1: The L-Schema (Lacan, 1978/1991b)

'The entire analytic experience unfolds, at the joint of the imaginary and the symbolic' (Lacan, 1975/1991a, p.137). The schema L articulates the dual relationship between the Imaginary which is dualistic itself and the Symbolic which adds a third element. The main point of the schema

is to demonstrate that the symbolic relation between the Other and the Subject is always blocked to a certain extent by the imaginary axis, between the ego and the specular image, the other (o'). As Hook (2013b, p.11, his emphasis) notes 'the individual is viewed here as *a set of relations* rather than as a single, unified entity'. There is always a split between what an ego means to say, a conscious intention of an individual to communicate a message, and how they are heard, which is effectively the place of the Other. 'There is an initial moment of speaking which connects the Subject to an other, an alter ego which supplies the images and desires that will provide the basis for subject's ego', the functional basis of the rational individual (ibid, p.12).

Such an other may be performed by the organisation's desires and images that provide the basis of the aid worker's professional ego. Training helps and empowers the aid worker's ego, in the sense that they help them identify with an organisation's demand, an amalgamation of images and reflections which promise to lend a degree of bodily and psychological coherence in the field of refugeeness. Such 'an identity' always maintains an alienating destiny. 'It is by virtue of this outside-in nature of the ego's constitution that, for Lacan a form of alienation proves an inescapable condition of human subjectivity', says Hook (ibid, p.12). This is the reason also that the alter ego (other) comes first and before the ego. Because it is the originating source of the subject's identification. If we therefore adjust the schema L to the current discussion, we may see that the aid worker is considered as '...*a set of relations...*':

Id Organisation	Aid worker's alter ego (other)
worker's ego	Other / Refugee

Schema L
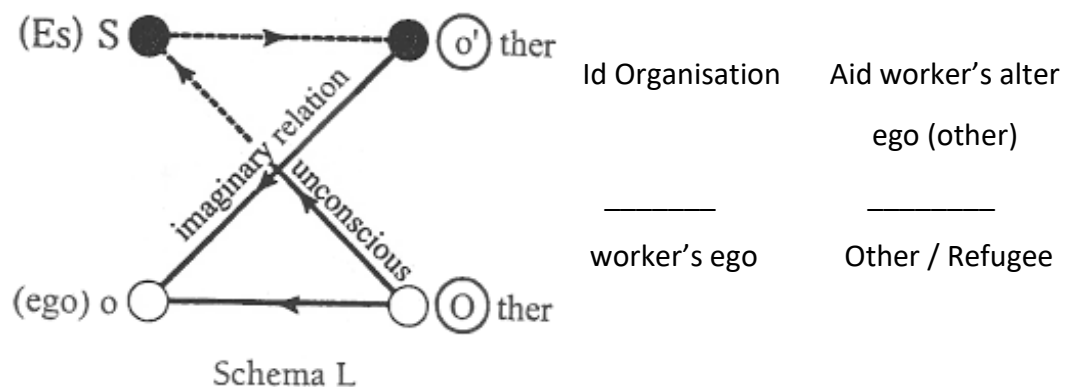
The imaginary content of the ego is derived from the other. 'This means that any attempt to assert the status of 'my' existence or desire as primary, necessitates the elimination of the other', Hooks (ibid, p.12-13) explains. However, eradicating the other also means 'that one loses the basis of one's own identifications, and along with it, the possibility of recognition that this other provides' (ibid, p.13). In the example of aid workers this might mean the possibility of recognition by the organisation in the sense of acquiring and/or maintaining a job.

The Subject is the barred speaking subject ([aid] workers) who communicates within a given socio-symbolic context, 'utilising codes, signifiers, and languages supplied by the Other [refugee] who constantly produces more in their communicative attempts than what they had meant' (ibid, p.12 but see also Lacan, 1966/2006c). Such a case will be described in the following extract in which, considering the schema L, the starting point would be as Hook (2013b) states, '…counter-intuitively as always…' at the bottom right, the position of the Other.

The Other is the source of the ego's constant attempt to understand its symbolic location, its social roles (O-o trajectory) and the precondition for any attempt to express oneself in symbolic terms (O-S trajectory). This is the reason one cannot speak for the aid worker, without referring to the Other, the refugee. What bridges them is the Symbolic order of the language of humanitarianism and psychology, which becomes an imperative order for both. As the aid worker in the camp of Filippiada states:

> '…the discovery of negative feelings, they don't want it, they avoid it, they avoid it and that means many things umm for them umm in terms of the psychological aspect when someone is, really needs and he acknowledges his need then, he commits and he follows umm the meetings, so it is apparent who is in real need, he seeks, seeks support…'.

Refugees need to convince their Other, in this case the aid worker, that they truly seek support. Or to put it differently, the aid worker needs to show the Other that their entity can be united only by intervening in the way the Other acts. The Other should act in line with the Subject so the subject believes that they can resolve any

contradictions and conflicts that a given act may rise to. Refugees need to prove that they are in real need, to give a meaning to the language of psychology. The Symbolic order of language lies in their linguistic psychological performance, commitment, and the consistency of their meetings. Refugees need to prove that they are in real need, in the same way that aid workers need to prove their consistency in the organisation's demand of behaving professionally - as per their training order. Without the Other, the Subject falls apart in their attempt to experience a fulfil entity and give meaning to the language of psychology. It is by virtue of this outside organisation's discourse and demand which produces workers' ego meanings that the Other – Subject trajectory line of transmission is continually disrupted, denied, or bypassed.

The language of psychology is setting the scene, mediating between the unspeakable and what needs to be spoken out loud, being heard by the master of its discourse, the discourse of humanitarianism and psychology. Aid workers, having been raised in the discourse of the university, learnt how to speak for the other, and now being accommodated into the landscape of refugeeness (Kallio et al., 2019), are moving linguistically around the discourse of the master (organisation) and the discourse of the university (language of psychology).

	Organisation S1	Aid-Worker S2
Discourse of the master	_____	_____
	Worker $	Refugee (O)
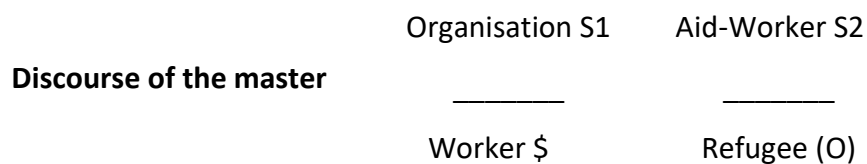
For this formula, see Lacan (1991/2007)

The following two sub-sections will attempt to depict how both the unconscious and conscious are structured like a language, employing two different discursive tools. The first is an aid worker's simile which indicates the semiotic performance and importance of the unconscious and the second is the language of professionalism which depicts how the worker is being constantly in-between the personal and the professional.

4.4.1 Language and similes: Speaking the unconscious

Sigmund Freud (1915/2008) has indicated that we may be fully aware of what is going on in the level of consciousness, or in the level of 'conscious mind' but the unconscious contains significant material which we need to keep out of awareness as it is very threatening and painful to raise into awareness. At that point in time, the unconscious was a very mystifying term which remained the most unknowable or at least the less theorisable element of human psychology and psychoanalytic thinking (Rahimi, 2009).

It was only a few decades later that Lacan made a step towards the theorisation of the unconscious, describing it as 'being structured like a language' (Lacan, 1973/2018, p.149/203), indicating that the unconscious links to the split of the human subject. One of the fruitful terms Lacan used in his attempt to present the linguistic/ semiotic performance of the unconscious was the distinction between *metaphor* and *metonymy*. According to him, metaphor functions to supress (or substitute) while metonymy's function is to combine (Rahimi, 2009). For Lacan 'it is in the word-to word connection that metonymy is based' whereas 'one word for another' is the formula of the metaphor (Stavrakakis, 2002, p.57).

Lacan was inspired by Saussure's and Jakobson's theories on language and, in the case of metaphor and metonymy, relied strongly on their basic descriptive models and distinctions between the two concepts. Jakobson had already raised two aspects of signs: *combination* and *selection*. The first occurs only in combination with other signs and the latter implies substitution, meaning that selection must be made between alternate choices. In that case signs, for instance, could replace each other. Similarly, Saussure argues that 'meaning is produced through a process of selection and combination of signs along two axes, the syntagmatic (e.g. a sentence) and the paradigmatic (e.g. synonyms), organized into a signifying system' (Barker, 2002, p.29). The syntagmatic axis comprises a sentence and the paradigmatic axis means a field of possible signs that can be replaced with one another.

In this way, when a speaker wants to produce meaning to communicate, he (non-binary) will employ the two modes of the linguistic system, *combination,* and *selection,* mobilising relationships between the two axes. As Rahimi (2009) explains, for Jacobson the notion of *selection* (substitution) coincides with the trope of metaphor, in the sense that one signifier can be used to refer to another. The notion of combination on the other hand, 'join[s] distinct meaning units by locating them within the same context, and as such it comes with the implication of difference, discrimination, contiguity and displacement' (ibid, online).

The notion of *selection* then is closely linked to metaphor, as is the notion of *combination* to metonymy, since it is the physical proximity and contextuality of the signifiers that makes meaning (in a sentence) rather than their 'similarity'. Lacan borrowed the concepts of metaphor/metonymy from Jakobson and introduced them not only to understand the semiotic function of the text but also the human subject and its *unconscious.* Based on these concepts, Lacan (1973/2018, p.149/203) stated -and not so paradoxically- that the 'unconscious is structured like a language'.

He therefore managed to juxtapose the concepts of metaphor and metonymy to the 'binary' set that Freud claimed to be the basic functions of the unconscious, *repression,* and *displacement*. 'Metaphor as long as it functions through similarities and substitutions, coincides with the psychic trope of repression, and metonymy insofar as it functions through contiguity and difference, coincides with the psychic trope of displacement' (Rahimi, 2009, online). The function of metaphor and metonymy, then, in the psychic realm is to render our thoughts, our feelings, and our signifiers unrecognizable from the gaze of our consciousness.

In the following example which comes from another aid worker from the Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni, we could see how this simile, as a type of metaphor, works to render a certain thought (or even identification) unrecognizable to consciousness.

Aid worker: '…the structure here is clearly…is something like, as someone had told me once for fun (laugh) like the Vatican in Italy…so it is…it has its autonomies…'

Me: '…weird comparison…(laugh)…'

Aid worker: '…yes, a very weird comparison indeed, I don't like it very much as a simile to tell you the truth…because this would make me a cardinal, and I hate these people (laugh)…'.

The aid worker, linguistically, employs a simile which creates a space of identification between themself and the cardinal. This material should be approached at two different levels, the unconscious, and the conscious, as they interplay before (unconscious) and after (conscious) the intervention drew attention to the simile in an inquisitive way.

The linguistic employment of the simile, as if the structure of Safe Zone is like the Vatican in the camp of Italy, signifies not only the topological dimension of the structure of the camp but also how relations of power and authority interplay within it and are spatially organised across different scales. The aid worker, in their attempt to situate the structure of Safe Zone in the camp, mobilises a simile which involves comparison in some way. Capturing the simile in the following way,

Safe Zone   Worker

_____   _____

V/vatican   cardinal

it may be argued that there is something stronger than comparison going on. In a first level of analysis there is an identification of the zone with the Vatican which unfolds an interesting spatial-relational connection.

The Vatican is not simply the centre of Catholicism, but a city-state surrounded by Rome in Italy. It is a distinct territory, under sovereign authority and jurisdiction of the Holy See. The latter is itself a sovereign entity of international law and maintains temporal, diplomatic, and spiritual independence of the city state. As governed by the Holy See, the Vatican City is an ecclesiastical and monarchical state, a type of theocracy, ruled by the Pope who is the head of the Catholic Church. The politics of the city therefore takes place in an absolute elective monarchy in which the head of the Catholic Church exercises executive and judicial power over the State of the Vatican City, an entity distinct from the Holy See. If the Holy See is the international humanitarian law, then the Vatican City and the Pope may lie in the power of the organisation which the aid worker works for. Since the Safe Zone is a distinct structure for unaccompanied minors inside the camp, it not only has a distinguishable territory with its own rules but also a distinct sovereign authority.

In this way, although the camp belongs in the Holy See of UNHCR, the Safe Zone is under a different administrative organisational territory, that of UNICEF and the organisation with which it has a married contract. The Pope therefore is the sovereign of the structure as comprised by the organisation which is running the zone. The legislative authority of the organisation is vested in the Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State, a body of seven cardinals who are appointed by the Pope for a certain period. The cardinals may be the aid workers, as the metaphor indicates, who are appointed by the Pope/organisation for a certain period, signified in the lifetime of their working contracts.

The Vatican City is considered a neutral state, as neutral as any humanitarian organisation present itself in the field of humanitarian law. Also, it is militarily protected, and the latter is provided by the Italian Armed Forces. Although it is considered having no armed forces of its own, Swiss Guards, a military corps of the Holy See, are responsible for the personal security and protection of the Pope and its residents in the state. In the Safe Zone, military defence is provided by the Greek army which resides in the entrance of the camp as well as the Greek state police which is called by the cardinals (aid workers) and the Pope (the

organisation) every time residents need protection. Sometimes *residents* are considered the cardinals, threatened by refugees, or refugees themselves threatened by other refugees.

At a second level of analysis, the identification of the Safe Zone with the Vatican, besides geospatial, also raises an important cultural signification. The Vatican has been the centre of Catholicism; Catholics follow the teaching of Jesus Christ through the church whom they consider as the path of the Jesus. They believe in the special authority of the Pope which other Christians may not believe in. Identifying the Safe Zone with the Vatican, the aid worker therefore identifies refugees as 'Catholics' who need to follow the teaching of 'Jesus' through the church, the organisation. The organisation in the name of the Pope, the head of the church, is the special authority to which they need to subject themselves voluntarily to receive the holy spirit of protection. In this way, the cultural significance of the Vatican, through Catholicism, unfolds a gap between the power of the church and its believers.

Believers, though, can be both refugees as well as aid workers. In the first case, taking into consideration that they come from different cultural and religious belief systems, their identification as Catholics raises an interesting signification. On the one hand it highlights their necessary voluntary subjection to the Pope, whereas on the other hand, it mobilises an initiation to a new cultural and religious system of beliefs, whose power may be at this time unknown. This initiation poses on its own a series of socio-cultural questions which should be considered; What would it mean for the refugees to become believers? What would it mean if they are not believers, and they belong to a different system of belief? In this case, how would they be treated and by whom? What is the role of the cardinal in this relational schema, between the Pope and its believers?

Significantly, the Vatican City does not have an official language, even though it uses Latin in its legislation and official communications. In the Safe Zone, there is also no official language, even though English is used in the official communication, as the humanitarian legislation ordains. The aid worker is the one

who, like the cardinal, is usually speaking the national language, in our case Greek, but in its 'official communication' with the refugee, unlike the Vatican City, mobilises the language of the Holy See, the language of the humanitarian law, English.

The aid worker is both the 'hinge' for a power/authority, speaking another's language that is almost as other as the refugee's, but also performs as a figure of power and superiority in-between the Pope and its believers. Embodying the socio-historical formulation of its performance as 'the cardo',[34] they may reveal unconsciously in this metaphorical schema an underlying identification. The aid worker identifies themself (un)consciously with the cardinal as a figure of power and superiority, a hinge between the organisation, as a system of power and the refugee.

However, as soon as my question intervenes into the aid worker's discourse, '…*weird comparison…(laugh)*,' they respond:

> '…yes, a very weird comparison indeed, I don't like it very much as a simile to tell you the truth…because this would make me a cardinal, and I hate these people (laugh)…'

The identification with the cardinal makes the aid worker's realisation (in some sense), or reflection, traumatic in the sense that they cannot stand being one of them, because they explicitly say that *'…I hate these people…'*. The only means to escape from that comparison is to attach to truth a lie. 'There is no truth that, in passing through awareness, does not lie' Lacan reminds us (1973/2018, p.vii). 'As if what counts as truth at this level (under the bar) can only appear as a lie in the upper part of the schema' (Miller, 1995, p.236). In that sense, the signifier 'Safe Zone' and 'Worker' lie in the signified ab-sense, performing a 'truth' which belies the power – knowledge dynamics of what constitutes communication between the aid worker and the refugee.

---

[34] The word cardinal comes from the word 'cardo' which originally means 'hinge' or 'pivot'.

Religion is embedded in the humanitarian and development sector. In fact, as Paras (2014, p.442) states 'the very foundations of contemporary development work were laid by the original NGOs of the nineteenth century; that is, the missionary agencies'. Barnett (2011), as indicated in chapter two, referred to the first phase of humanitarianism as 'The Age of Imperial Humanitarianism' and Bornstein (2003) discusses how in the colonial era, there was a rise of voluntary sending agencies which preached the gospel and collaborated with colonial administration to provide education, better infrastructure, and agricultural reform. According to her, these agencies were the precursor of the NGO development sector.

In the history of humanitarianism, it is argued that religious organisations dominated overseas prior to the Second World War, whereas during and after the war, a growing number of non-religious NGOs formed, promoting a 'secularised discourse of humanity' (Barnett, ibid, p.119). Although the latter is true, the material discussed in this section (and some additional material in the next chapter) is grounded on the Christian semiotic structure of aid organisations, such as OXFAM for example, which was founded on a religious basis that nowadays seems transformed into a secular humanitarianism. OXFAM was founded in 1942 as a religious organisation, specifically Quaker, to assist with the famine in Greece caused by the Nazi occupation in the 1940s. Hence, the material discussed in this section and the reference to the history of OXFAM is an example of the embedding of religious organisations in a country like Greece, that came some decades later to host refugees from other countries. It is, thence, also structured in the history of aid, that in this case, replicated the process of Christian charity as a frame.

4.4.2 The language of the conscious: In-between the personal and professional
Humanitarian interventions have their own discourse. They speak, in a sense, in their own way. It is not only the abbreviations they use, to make the communication between actors more efficient, but also how their language works as a space of action. One of its discursive actions and uniqueness lies in the way aid workers perform the language of the one who knows, the professional ('the

expert'), and offer an active support. This kind of support is not unlimited[35] although it can expand,[36] but it is moving in-between limits, orders and corrections which try to traverse and define the way support is given. In this section I work with material from three different interview extracts to discuss the language of professionalism and its politics in the humanitarian and psychological landscape.

Extract 1, Aid worker at the Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni

> '…we, as CPO, do something that no one else does here, so, the fact that we know everything for the child, it opens up to us, we know, we know everything right, and…there is a power of psychological…how can I say it, a psychological creation at that moment […] at that moment opens up a psychology in front of me and I see it all, do you get what happens? No one else does this, and when that thing opens, there, my limits are in danger of breaking, do you understand? There, it is dangerous for me to do a movement, like a human as it's said, and give expectations to the child also […] there, will be much worse for him, having created expectations to him, that is why I am telling you, when psychologies open, there is the part where you need to put limits, you, do you understand?, like a professional…'.

Extract 2, Aid worker in the camp of Doliana

> '…there is that connection etc., but it has to be at the same time, it has to be a distance, to manage your well-being you mentioned, and not to be so much emotionally involved.'

Extract 3, Aid worker at the Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni

> 'It is there, where they think that you can put yourself in their shoes, that you can be in their position…there it is. There it is the whole work because

[35] Each organisation, either national or international, has funding for a specific timescale, which consequently defines how long it will remain in the field and offer its services.
[36] It can expand, in the sense that funding may be renewed; if an operation closes, another 'actor'/organisation will take up and offer the services of the previous organisation.

they know from there that they can, they can open up, they can trust you, you can support them, and they will support you.'

What is striking in the field, where humanitarianism as a concept unfolds, is that no matter how close you could be in someone's else land, both physically (i.e. missions in Africa) or psychically (i.e. sessions),[37] there is 'distance'. Borders may be crossed physically, but not always relationally and psychically. Distancing from the Other helps to perform as if 'the' language of professionalism can unfold united, as if it is coming from a joined entity in the field of discourse, in the level of consciousness. This fictive united presence aims at the accomplishment of a temporal organisation satisfaction, that the organisational order keeps going. *Order*, in the sense that the organisation structures an intervention around the discourse of professionalism, and 'protects' its subjects, its workers from being emotionally disturbed. However, what is at stake is not only the protection of the workers, but the protection of the organisation. The more emotionally distanced workers are the more structured the intervention of the organisation will be without tensions and struggles. Workers are the barred subject ($) between the master signifier of the agent (S1), the organisation and its production/loss (a), the refugee.

	Organisation S1	Aid-Worker S2
Discourse of the master		
For this formula, see Lacan	————	————
(1991/2007)	Worker $	Refugee (a)
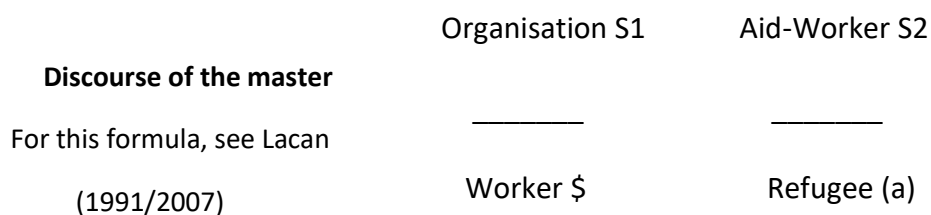
The receivers who participate in the discourse of the master are the aid workers as well as the refugees, producing knowledge, to understand themselves and the world amid the spatial temporality of camps in line with the organisation and its

---

[37] With 'sessions', I refer to one-to-one meetings with psychologists and the group activities, usually referred to as 'psychoeducational activities' (for instance women's groups) led mainly by psychologists.

discourse. What makes things complicated, however, is the fact that aid workers can become masters themselves to refugees by mobilising the language of psychology which pushes refugees to understand themselves and the world in line with it. As the first extract portrays, the language of professionalism protects the aid worker from breaking their (psychic) limits when the child-refugee unfolds himself and his story in front of them. For the aid worker, the danger of breaking the limits lurks in the possibility of providing expectations. Employing therefore the language of professionalism, the aid worker becomes the receiver of their own master, their organisation, and its discourse.

Professional work in the non-governmental sector runs on a discourse around work as not being attached and remaining distanced from the Other. A basic element of this discourse is the signifier of 'professionalism'. The latter denotes a lifelong project of developing and expressing oneself through distance. To be a professional as an aid worker presupposes that any exclusion from this positioning must be supressed. The split character of being a worker must be covered over. The adjective aid in front of the noun worker indicates that people who work in this field are called to know before the world of aid in ways consistent with the organisation's demand. They are called to view aid as a venue of distancing from the Other for their own self-protection and well-being, as the second extract ironically depicts.

But what if limits get crossed? What is at stake if the worker breaks the limits of professionalism? And most importantly, how did the aid worker learn to speak 'professionally'?

Concerning the last query is not only the training aid workers receive before or during their time in the field. It is not only the guidance they receive from their supervisors, team leaders and/or line managers. It is not only the way that organisations structure their interventions. It may be argued that it is in the very Symbolic order of the discourse as it is performed in the everyday interaction of its oral and written formation that people get used to elaborating on the language of professionalism. It is through training, meetings, sessions, reports, forms to be

filled in, referrals to be written and followed up all under the discursive imperative that 'we are in a mission here', 'there is an operation[38] that goes on', 'we offer aid', 'we need to protect ourselves first'.

If the simile with the Vatican and the cardinal in the previous section demonstrated something, it was mainly that organisations are indeed on a mission. An evangelical, administrative mission where psychic territories are pre-fixed and pre-scribed. As open as they may seem, there are certain territories that cannot be violated, almost like the Vatican City in the Holy See. Such a territory is the notion of professionalism within hotspots and camps and thus my question remains: *What is at stake if the worker breaks the limits of professionalism?*

Foucault (1975/1995, p.22) in *Discipline and Punish* explores how the birth of the 'new' penal system – the non-corporeal punishment in the beginning of the 20th century which placed the guillotine inside the prison walls - raised a question of truth and 'logic' inscribed in the course of the penal system. A whole set of questions around the crime and criminal turned the assertion of guilt into a strange scientific-juridical complex where 'psychiatric expertise was called upon to formulate "true" propositions as to the part that the liberty of the offender had played in the act he committed'. This inscription of truth to madness, that the other 'was not in-sane' but insane while he (non-binary) was acting, has also been used as a neoliberal agenda, to depict that you need to have 'a clear mind' when you act. Our logic in action should be restricted from emotionalisation to keep us distant from the 'object of knowledge' and let us perform in the most efficient way. Isn't this the logic also of science and positivism? An inscription of truth and reasoning in the object of study?

What the material from the third extract comes to remind us is that a mutual transformative language, a language of thought and affection, cannot be performed without being personal and therefore political. But there are two issues here. The first is that the language of professionalism is also political. It is political because it regulates the language inside the field, processing issues at different

---

[38] Note here how the word 'operation' reflects a military and medical signification.

levels. The second issue is that language can indeed become personal and therefore political, from a feminist (hooks, 1984/2000; Hanisch, 1970 but see also Hemmings, 2011) perspective. In the same way women's lives, as the second feminist wave highlighted, are not the outcome of individual choices but part of systematic patriarchal oppression, aid workers' experiences are not always individual choices but also part of a systemic global, national, inter/non-governmental but also spatial oppression. In this way, being in 'their shoes' discursively, in the sense of speaking more personally, can indeed make a difference, but it depends on whether it will be used to correct them, help them, or build up together a mutual struggle. And this is not always conscious.

It seems, therefore, that the language of professionalism at the level of the conscious works not only to keep the order going but also to depersonalise the inscription of the political into the personal. If therefore the personal is political, then the aid workers' experiences may reveal how difficult or even oppressive the system in which they work is, and rethink the psychic level in which they coincide with refugees. Having been presented in the order of discourse, as the one *who knows* as '*the professional*', every attempt of the aid worker to get closer to the Other may be looked upon with suspicion. It is the order of discourse as it unfolds in this territory that depoliticises the personal and makes it difficult to perform as a strong political arena. As an aid worker (the same as in extract 3) in the Safe Zone stated *'…as helpful as I try to be, I cannot help being state's representative. Umm, this is how I think they see me'*.

Having situated how language performs in the aid worker's subject formation at the level of conscious and unconscious, this chapter concludes with the 'the Real is traumatic', discussing language, psychology, and subject formation.

4.5 The Real is traumatic: Language, psychology, subject

Lacan (1973/2018; 1966/2006b) argues that following the mirror stage and the eventual entrance of the Imaginary and the Symbolic, the Real may only be experienced as an effect of gaps and inconsistencies, in the Symbolic order. Traumatic events, therefore, in the Lacanian sense (i.e. how the Real manifests

and presents itself in the form of trauma), break down the signification system of everyday life, and cause a rupture of something that cannot be recognised, that is unrecognizable. It is as if we do not have the usual grammar of the Symbolic to help us and make meaning of it.

In contrast with the psychological one-to-one sessions, in psychoanalysis the subject should not make effort to tell a linear story or shape the ideas that come to mind. On the contrary, psychoanalysis attempts to lay bare of the mechanisms that keep the unconscious, unconscious. For the humanitarian sector of the 90s (see Pupavac, 2004a) and onwards, psychosocial support became a major service being provided in one-to-one session among other activities in groups. There, refugees deploy a narrative to make sense of their thoughts and feelings, and in certain occasions to elaborate on a story-narrative that may lead them outside of the spatial temporality of the camp.

The following extract comes from an interview I had with an aid worker - interpreter, at the Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni, which is an unaccompanied minors structure. The aid worker shares the following conversation they had with a minor in the structure:

> Interpreter: '…tell it. Tell it to your CPO'.

> Unaccompanied minor: 'No, what to tell her? She will have a heart attack. This time I will describe her what I have passed? I won't tell it'.

> Interpreter: 'Because he [the refugee] knows that perception is somewhere else, it can't recognise, to have that image in front of him. So, to describe you something that he knows that…you [aid worker] don't appreciate, no you don't appreciate, you cannot acknowledge it, then it will come easier to you that 'all good'. Oh! Was at war!'

There is something interesting and crucial going on here, around language-trauma, psychology, and the subject. It is almost like two different languages meeting, and that even though they manage to communicate, through mediation or sharing some meaning in English, it feels like something constantly resists symbolisation

and remains unspoken. From the extract above, although the aid worker did not share what the story was about, it seems that the only one who knows is themselves, as the interpreter. Fanon (1952/2008) in *Black Skins White Masks* discusses the misrecognition of the skin and body, of racialisation, exploring the psycho-affective and psycho-political consequences of colonialism. His emphasis on embodiment and negro-phobia highlighted skin as a social signifier of racialisation (Burman, 2021b, p.191). The interpreter, sharing perhaps a common cultural background with the refugee, seems to be the only one who knows, because to know presupposes in this case the ability to acknowledge. However, the interpreter's double dictation *'…tell it. Tell it to your CPO'* highlights that their acknowledgment and assistance in the level of the organisation is inadequate. It is the aid worker/CPO that needs to assist.

Throughout my work and field study, war as a form of signification became repetitive in the way humanitarian organisations make meaning of refugees. War becomes a master signifier in the way refugees are psycho-affectively approached as 'traumatised' (Pupavac, 2004b; 2001; Summerfield, 2001; 1998; 1997). It is presented almost like 'a thing' from which the humanitarian governance and psychology make meaning. Fanon (as cited in Burman, 2021b, p.194) has written extensively on 'thingification', the rendering of colonised people into an object, forcing them into a 'zone of nonbeing', deprived of human freedoms. It may be argued, therefore, that war as a social/master signifier becomes a 'thing' because it 'thingifies' any experience and knowledge coming from war. The response of '*Oh! Was at war!'* is a form of thingification as it diminishes any possible encounter articulated by refugees themselves. It restrains from them the possibility to encounter their own forms of knowledge, how they come to articulate war and comprise a subjective actional scheme of *speaking out* (Bistoen, 2016; Herman, 1997 see also Chapter Six).

As another aid worker in the Safe Zone comments:

'The main thing is that…*you don't need to know* for someone that carries a psychological trauma, to treat it differently from the others, it is enough to

know from *his story* that…he has lost for example his family, all his family…'
(my emphasis).

The war and its corollaries like injury, death, loss, separation, displacement appears as a master signifier which unfolds its power under every signified meaning. Indeed, aid workers, especially psychologists and social workers, *'…don't need to know…',* they do not really have to encounter refugees' knowledge and experiences, as war and loss seem enough to make meaning and to articulate on behalf of them a traumatic interpretation of their experience. They convene one-to-one sessions, psycho-social and recreational activities to indicate to them the way they should deal with trauma, leading them away from their own interpretation and articulation. As the aid worker depicts, the way they may articulate their experiences is through a *story*[39] which encounters these experiences linearly (for instance, number of family losses). However, this story is the same narration which refugees in hotspots and camps may need to employ to claim a refugee status in the asylum service or occasionally to exit camps and hotspots (see Chapter Five). Since the definition of 'refugee'[40] lies in the deliberate *performance* of lived traumatic experiences (without to mean that people do have or have not experienced traumatic experiences),[41] it may be argued that is not entirely true that refugees do not articulate their experiences, but that the way these experiences are articulated is performed by the mediation of the non-

---

[39] Chapter six discusses in depth the role of story and the relationship between story and history in the humanitarian and psychological discourse.

[40] Article 1.A.2 of the United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention defined a 'refugee' as any person who: 'owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it'. As of 2011, the UNHCR itself, in addition to the 1951 definition, recognizes persons as refugees: 'who are outside their country of nationality or habitual residence and unable to return there owing to serious and indiscriminate threats to life, physical integrity or freedom resulting from generalized violence or events seriously disturbing public order'.

[41] What is important to notice and note here is how the war automatically becomes a traumatised event, category and context from which humanitarian and state policies make meaning with the help and discourse of psychology.

governmental sector, international policy and discourse on refugee status, national asylum procedures and the psychological discourse. Hence, the way that refugees' experiences are inscribed in the Symbolic actually changes their very meaning.

Refugees have experienced violence in their homeland, on their way to Greece and in Greece. There is an overall admission that aid workers in general, and psychologists, in particular, convene sessions and psychosocial activities to normalise feelings of violence and loss as an attempt, according to an aid worker in the refugee camp of Filippiada, to *'…normalise their life, to continue through activities…'*. A language of management dresses up their lives and experiences and attempts to make them adjust to the everyday life of the camp. The language of psychology approaches refugees with the aim to empower them and in fact teaches them how to better manage their lives within the camp, adjusting them smoothly in a condition that may ask for them to accept whatever is offered, such as living in camps in the first place.

Psychiatrists in Greece have called any psycho-affective resistance to adjust to the camp as *adjustment disorder*. As a psychologist in the refugee camps in mainland Greece noted *'…in most of them we can say that they have difficulties in adjustment, that is what psychiatrists sign them, as "adjustment disorder", ok…it is normal, it is not a psychiatric problem what they experience'*. The language of psychiatry plays a significant role in the way refugees are presented. In that sense, they play a significant role in the way they attempt to inscribe the Real in the Symbolic.

The fact that refugees' resistance to live or adjust in camps is transformed into a disorder (psychiatrisation), and their resistance to process what is understood from a western psychological perspective as trauma and loss interpreted as not being *'… ready to manage and process the trauma and loss',* creates a Real which is traumatic. I elaborate here on Lacan's concept of the Real not to 'psychoanalyse' refugees' experiences but to stress the way the order of psychology and aid could be traumatic in the way they approach and adjust refugees within camps.

For people, for instance, who are coming from Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, or Iraq, sharing a Muslim background as a religious system of belief, loss is approached as a collective process. As an aid worker mentioned *'…they may cook occasionally for the poor, for example, for their fellow men, and in this way, they express their grief…'*. Therefore, they have different ways to proceed with loss. Loss is processed collectively and is not always articulated in the way psychology tempts to 'make them aware' of what had happened or '*…to manage and process the trauma and loss*'. While the Other exists in the aid worker's fantasy as someone who is in need, the psycho-training of the refugee in the language of psychology makes the fantasy sustain the Symbolic order of the humanitarian discourse and keep the system going. In this way, refugees are called to elaborate on a language that does not make any sense to them, and this language, as will be shown in the following chapters, may push them to adjust in camps.

This moment of the Real, as I call it, however, may not be traumatic solely for them, but also for people who work in the field. As it is depicted in the crosstalk between the interpreter and the refugee, one reason that the refugee did not want to raise this issue with his CPO is because '*She will have a heart attack'*. What aid workers encounter in the field can also be traumatic, and there is still a question of how to make meaning of it. Speaking out what they encounter in the field is also missing, is lacking, and it may be itself another act in the political.

What is it therefore, if not a contradiction, the fact that the aid workers who were speaking about the need for support and adjustment of refugees to the life of the camp, were the same ones who claimed during the interview that *'…the whole issue has been psychiatrised, when it comes to mental health and it has been umm* (laugh) *a habit to, when we have, when we do the first assessment to refer* [them] *immediately to the psychiatrist or child psychiatrist…'*. *'Sometimes I feel that the psychological support at least is like a patch let's say, a bandage in the problem…umm but it does not help umm to solve the causes of the issue'.* Note, also, how the psychologist above resisted discursively in the psychiatric framing of adjustment (i.e. adjustment disorder) by saying that *'…it is not a psychiatric problem what they experience…'*.

It may be argued then, that when the aid worker makes a step away from the language of psychology, entering a psychiatric system of signification, the latter occasionally contradicts their own positionality. Even though psychiatrists are used constantly in the field, especially by psychologists who refer to them cases of refugees that cannot handle, epitomising therefore the medical and psychiatric discourse, they are depicted in interesting moments as the above, a structural failure. The psychiatrisation of refugees, as useful as it may be to psychologists (either to unburden them from cases they cannot handle or when they try to help refugees by writing reports and claiming a vulnerable status), in the aforementioned case and example offered a moment of reflection. The psychologists as an Other themselves in the discourse of psychiatry, had a moment to reflect and rethink what the system does to refugees.

4.6 Conclusion

The subject is never united in the Lacanian and Fanonian arena, it is divided. As has been shown the Other has a dual signification in worker's imagination. They come as the imaginary formation of the refugee via the order of the humanitarian law as well as the counterpart-specular image of the organisation in the way aid workers should talk, act, and perform (other). The (aid) worker in their attempt to speak as a professional, performs a simile-truth which discloses the spatial politics of camps as well as the way that aid workers' subjectivity performs. Showing how trauma works as a cornerstone in the discourse of humanitarianism and psychology so to make sense of the Other, I have argued that what is traumatic and therefore Real, is the way refugees are approached and asked to adjust within camps. Hence, speaking personally may be an act of speaking out, an act in the political to re-signify the Real in the Symbolic. A mutual, relational symbolic order, an order of race, class, gender, and struggle. In the next chapter, I discuss how psychology, subjectivity and space are intertwined, using as an example the hotspot of Moria, in Lesvos.

Chapter Five

Spatial temporalities: An insight from the hotspot of Moria in Lesvos

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to demonstrate the link between space, subject and psychology. It resonates with my second research aim on critically exploring how space acts in and within the performance of psychosocial support and with the fourth aim on how the discourses of humanitarian aid and psychology produce the aid worker subjectivities. Starting this exploration with a story, I show that space is relational in the sense that we 'do' space, but space 'does' us as well (see Massey 1994, Lefebvre, 1974/1991; Harvey, 1990). *Mapping the space* is the second section in which the genealogy of the term 'hotspot' is mapped but maps are also explored in-between their use as an official representation of space, and as a tool-mechanism of finding the embodied place in space. Linking maps, cartography, and colonialism, *Space and Subjectivity* depicts how the spatial trajectories in Moria are extended in body and psyche and infuse the way subjectivities perform. This chapter ends with *Therapies of Space: Emotional Geography and Psychotopology* to critically discuss the role of space within what I call and discuss as 'therapeutic spatiality'.

Feminist geographers (Hyndman and Giles, 2017; Massey, 2005; 1994) as well as Lefebvre and Harvey stressed in their work that space cannot be discussed separately from time. Spatial in this sense is also temporal and temporal is also spatial. Although, this chapter focuses primarily on space and the spatial, time and the temporal is embedded in it (and vice versa). In the same way, the next chapter focuses on time and trauma in the refugee camps to highlight how the temporal is also spatial. In this chapter, I work with material from the hotspot of Moria exclusively, and my material is comprised of a personal story that arose during my field study, maps, photographs, and interviews.

5.2 'You had to laugh'

Roland Barthes (2000) in *Camera Lucida* makes a distinction between two planes of image: or – *the studium* and *the punctum*. The first is the manifest subject, the meaning and context of the photograph. In Figure 1, the photograph was captured to reflect the way to the hotspot of Moria. In the hotspot, although, you can easily recognise the large number of people who live there, it is not so transparent the number of people who work there. In this way, the signifier of the photograph as the realistic depiction of cars parked on the road reflects the number of people who work daily in Moria. It may be, therefore, said that this is the *studium* of this photograph.

Figure 1: Vest

However, in photographs, there is a second category that skewers Barthe's sensibility; this is the *punctum*, the aspect of a photograph which quite often is a small detail that holds our gaze without condescending to mere meaning. In Figure 1 the punctum of the photograph is the aid worker's vest. The aid worker wears the vest on the way to the hotspot and clinic of Moria, before they enter, before they start working. It is in the embodiment of this figure that the vest marks not only certain territories (i.e. an aid worker from a certain organisation as the vest evinces) but also certain subjective formations (i.e. the way the subject has to be recognised there).

In the following part of this section, I draw on a dialogue - experience I had while I was in Moria.

-Aid Worker: *'You need a vest to come in.'*

-Me: *'Yes, I will go and ask if (name) can lend me her vest.'*

One participant told me that Moria comes from the Latin word *mors, mortis* which means death. Once they made that comment, there was only one question

triggering my mind. What does it mean to live in a deadly space? How do people live there and how do they make sense of it? Some, if not most, refugees call Moria the land of hell: *'Moria bad, Moria no good'*; but what does that hell look like? How many faces surround it and how many forms and appearances can the same space have to different eyes. For me, the name made sense. Moving from my previous space of fieldwork to Moria, I had encountered what it meant to live in-between 'life and death experiences'. My brother had just had a serious accident, his girlfriend was fighting to live in an intensive care unit, and I arrived in a place which raised a close to death experience solely by name. I used that space for distance, but it was the space of Moria that was an inevitable terrain of distancing. Living in-between multiple spatial temporalities, my personal psychic distancing and the call of my research to make sense of the spatial intricacies, on March 2019, I entered in a spatial terrain which did not make sense at all.

- Me: *'I found one.'*

- Aid Worker: *'Ok let us go.'*

The first gate was easy to get across. Now, they knew me, but it took a while to get to know me (if not to get used to me). I was an outsider, a researcher, whose presence could be recognised by any gaze simply because I did not have a vest; I was wearing my jacket and that was a quite indicative sign to raise the optical awareness from the aid workers who were carrying the MSF logo back and forth in their body. Moria's clinic was one of the two clinics that MSF ran on the island of Lesvos. The first one was 100 steps away from the hotspot of Moria and the second, Mytilene clinic, was 20-25 minutes by car/bus in the city centre of the island. After the signing of the 'EU-Turkey deal' in March 2016 which legitimised that all new 'irregular migrants' who cross from Turkey into Greek islands will be returned to Turkey (see European Council, 2016, online[42]), MSF took a political decision to suspend all their activities inside Moria.

---

[42] When I indicate 'online' in a reference, I do it because I cannot provide the exact page number given that the source is published online.

According to the organisation (MSF, 2016, online), 'the EU-Turkey deal has changed the objective of the centre. From a registration centre allowing people to leave the island and find protection somewhere in Europe, it has become a pre-removal centre offering insufficient guarantees for the respect of people's basic rights'. This means that there is a 'pre-removal centre', namely a detention centre, where people are detained on different grounds. These vary from: determining their identity/nationality; being considered a danger to the national threat or public order; their asylum application has been rejected; being signed up for voluntary return; or there is an assumption that the asylum application will be rejected based on the nationality.[43] New arrivals are, also, often detained on short term, during their registration procedure. In this way in late 2017, MSF decided to set up their clinic outside of the hotspot of Moria and offer their medical services to children under 16 years old, pregnant women and victims of sexual violence. It was there that my first engagement with the space of Moria began.

- Aid Worker: *'Just walk in-between us.'*

To enter the hotspot, I always had to wear a vest. Security guards had to see me wearing it to let me pass and avoid raising questions concerning 'who I am' and 'what I am doing there'. The vest as a symbol and indication of the organisation's territorial access on my own body, was powerful enough to let me enter in a space that I was struggling and negotiating for months to get in. As soon as we managed to enter, covered in vests, we walked for a few moments in the main entrance-road of the hotspot, and we turned on our right to enter the Sections A and B in which unaccompanied male minors stayed. Since the latter was a distinct section in the hotspot, there was another guard on the door-gate. When he confirmed that we came to deliver another weekly session of the selfcare course for children, an activity of 'psychoeducation' as the organisation called it, he let us in. This week's session would be the last of the course devoted to stress, its coping mechanisms, and the theory of trauma.

---

[43] In fact, many male migrants from national backgrounds such as Algeria, Tunis, Morocco, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka are often detained automatically upon arrival (see V.H., 2018).

- Aid Worker: *'We need to find the key...'*

The door was locked. A heavy piece of wrought iron was imposed in front of the door, restricting access to that space. A lock was padlocked on the right side of the iron, increasing the security from any unauthorised access. As soon as the lock was unlocked, you had to pull over the iron and the door was released. All you had to do now, is to turn the key gently and you were in a classroom. Surprisingly, although it looked like a classroom, the securitisation of that space continued inside the room. Chairs, heaped one upon the other, locked with a long chain which you had, again, to unfold and unlock. The sound of the chain as it was unfolding was so intense that it made it feel almost terrifying. It did not make any sense why someone had to lock pieces of wood. It was shocking enough that people were trapped, if not locked, in this space. Why on top of that were the facilities and their 'equipment' also chained? It was like someone was indicating that nothing belongs to you here, even that piece of wood that we call –'a chair'.

- Aid Worker: *'Welcome guys, come in.'*

Boys started coming in the classroom. We removed desks and chairs and we made a circle. The facilitator started laughing. He was laughing so much that young people were puzzled with his behaviour. They could not understand what was going on. The two facilitators had planned to do two exercises during that session, the exercise of deep breath and the laughter yoga. The activities, organised by the health promotion team of the organisation, aimed to provide boys with ways to relax and start feeling happier. As the organisation mentions in their handbook (Fieldnotes, 2019):

> Laughter Yoga is a unique technique, devised by a doctor from India, that combines laughter exercises with yogic breathing (pranayama). It increases the amount of oxygen in your body, making you feel more energized, and actually changes the physiology of your body so you start to feel happier.

The instructions encouraged them to laugh even if they did not feel like it. They did not have to know why they were laughing; it was enough to provoke it

themselves without knowing the reason. Some of the boys started laughing but they could not follow the hysteric laugh of the facilitators. Some others could not laugh at all. And I was one of them. The facilitators asked us to make a pair with the person sitting next to us in the circle and do something funny to each other to provoke the other's laugh. My partner happened to be one of the facilitators.

Being caught in this act of laughing, seeing me stay absolutely frozen during his violent act to make me laugh he said: *'You don't have to believe it, just laugh…if they don't see us laughing, they won't laugh either'*. The laugh between the pairs should be interchanged; one after the other had to laugh. The more they resisted, the more the facilitators were laughing harder and harder, louder, and louder. The intensity of laughing was so hard, that I was feeling like an emotional breakdown is the only plausible sequence of that pernicious act of intensity. Other boys from the section were opening the door, and started laughing, mocking us for being so loud in our call to make everyone burst out laughing. It was almost like you were encountering a parody of work in progress, in which laughing was transforming into a terrifying condition that overwhelmed you. A dictatorship of happiness (Kolokytha, 2012) was taking place, and you did not know what to do to stop it. You had to laugh. And I laughed.

- Aid Worker: *'Laughing relieves you from stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, it contributes to mental health, it helps the secretion of endorphins and reinforces the transfer of oxygen in the brain.'*

Žižek (2018, online) argues that 'truth and happiness don't go together. Truth hurts; it brings instability; it ruins the smooth flow of our daily lives.' And he continues, 'The choice is ours: do we want to be happily manipulated or expose ourselves to the risks of authentic creativity?' As a researcher that was the moment, I came to embody the politics of support within space. How can someone call you to laugh, to be happier within a space that restrains you, I wondered? What does the call for happiness (or support) serve within this space?

This chapter began the exploration and articulation of the space of Moria rather paradoxically. But this is intentional and quite important to me. Since everyone in

142

Moria had to tell and share a story to proceed with their case, this is my story from there, my own story of subjugation. A story which pushed me to think and write, as you will see in the following sections, about the embodiment of space, psyche, and subject. But before that, I start with the genealogy of the spatial term 'hotspot' to depict how space embodies a history that traverses the politics of both 'happiness' and 'support'.

5.3 Mapping the space

5.3.1 Hotspot: A genealogy and embodiment of 'war and terror'

The term 'hotspot' was officially adopted by the Council of the EU in September 2015 to signify the space and the name for the registration centres which were and are still used to identify, register, and fingerprint refugees and migrants (see Mentzelopoulou and Luyten, 2018). Although, the 'hotspot approach' started initially in the four ports of Italy (Pozzallo, Porto Empedocle, Trapani and Lampedusa), it was officially framed and implemented in Greece with the demarcation of spaces in the islands of Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Leros, and Kos; the same areas through which most refugees arrived in Europe. As soon as the EU-Turkey agreement came into effect on 23rd of March 2016, hotspots were introduced as the main mechanism of controlling and regulating migration in European terrain. For the European and national politics, they represented the way in which 'refugee crisis' is managed before introduced in the heart of Europe (Neocleous and Kastrinou, 2016).

In Greece, the Greek army is responsible for the territories of hotspots even though the space is jointly administered by the Greek police - the riot police *'MAT'*, Frontex and Europol. Mapping the genealogy of the term hotspot, Neocleous and Kastrinou (ibid, p.4) pose a critical and political question, they ask: 'what might the hotspot tell us about how the EU imagines the figure of the migrant in general?' Hotspot is not a new term. As they highlight, prior to World War II the term was used variously to refer to nightclubs from points on the skin stimulated by heat or metal, likely to tear, and areas of non-uniformity on photographs. It was during the war that hotspot took a military meaning, referring to an area of danger or

violence.[44] The latter connotation was introduced in 1941 as a reference to spaces of active engagement in the war, later reinforced by the ways in which military forces distinguished hotspots as an area of war and conflict from non-combat zones. 'Politically speaking, a hotspot is a space of conflict where the enemy will be confronted. The hotspot is a warzone', they highlight (ibid, p.4). A warzone, I would add, in the body and psyche of every potential Other who is managing to cross European borders and enter the western terrain.

To designate a space such as Moria a hotspot, has a certain political value. Besides the cultural signification of death in the discursive terrain, it depicts that people who register in this territory do not only come from war, but they also signify a threat of war. It defines ad hoc that the space is inhabited 'by the criminal, the rebellious and the disorderly' and thus that the space itself seeks for police intervention, security, and protection to restore the order (ibid, p.6). As if it needs a certain law enforcement to put things in place.

Neocleous and Kastrinou argue that given the problematic nature of the distinction between refugees and migrants, the presence of Frontex and European Union Agency for Asylum (EASO) as the border representative of territorial law enforcement lies in the a priori signification of people who arrive in Greece as refugees or *illegal migrants*. The first category signifies that people are legally in need of protection, whereas the second, 'the illegal migrants' are those from whom we need to protect 'ourselves',[45] they are 'a threat'. As they highlight, since refugees need to encounter the European personnel such as Frontex and EASO,[46] one might go further and suggest that after all, it is not only the illegal migrant who is being recognised as illegal or a 'threat'. On the contrary, every person who crosses the Mediterranean Sea is potentially illegal, and hence the previous declaration may go as 'an international police war against the migrant' (ibid, p.7).

---

[44] The Oxford English Dictionary defines *hotspot* primary as a place where fighting is common especially for political reasons. See: https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/hotspot

[45] I try to denote here the discourse of the West.

[46] See in the map that follows what space occupies EASO inside the hotspot of Moria.

Attending to the genealogy of the term 'hotspot' highlights how there is a political strategy in place, a spatial ideology which co-produces the subjects encompassed in its space. In 1966, Henri Lefebvre argued that 'spatial ideology as a system of meaning of spatial reality is a product of "political strategy" that would impose their representation, their needs and aspirations

Figure 2: FRONTEX ship in Mytilene's port

onto the dominated classes' (Busquet, 2012-13, p.4). Signalling both 'the war on crime and terror' and the need to protect 'vulnerable victims', the hotspot of Moria as a spatial system of polysemy produces a terrain, whose securitisation and militarisation is inscribed ad hoc in migrants' bodies and psyche. In the name of protection of those who inhabit that space as well as those who inhabit the national Greek/European terrain, the Greek police, riot police, the presence of EASO and Europol inside Moria and Frontex's permanent presence in the port of Mytilene state quite eloquently that 'space is political and ideological. It is a product literally populated with ideologies. There is an ideology of space' in place (Lefebvre, 2009, p.171).

5.3.2 Embodying space and movement

Since the identification of Moria as a hotspot signalled a frame of war, it does not come as a surprise that map-making and cartography have been central to the management of Moria. As David Harvey (2001, p.219-220) notes 'the exercise of military power and mapping went hand in hand'. Moving from the genealogical mapping of hotspot to how maps represent the space of Moria, this section aims to depict the embodiment of the map in the genealogical heritage of the hotspot. The Sections A and B, that I mentioned in the first section, were some of the few inner spaces in Moria where you could find your way easily. They were distinct areas which accommodated only young boys who were unaccompanied minors.[47] As may be seen from the map,[48] these sections were only two of the many places where refugees live.
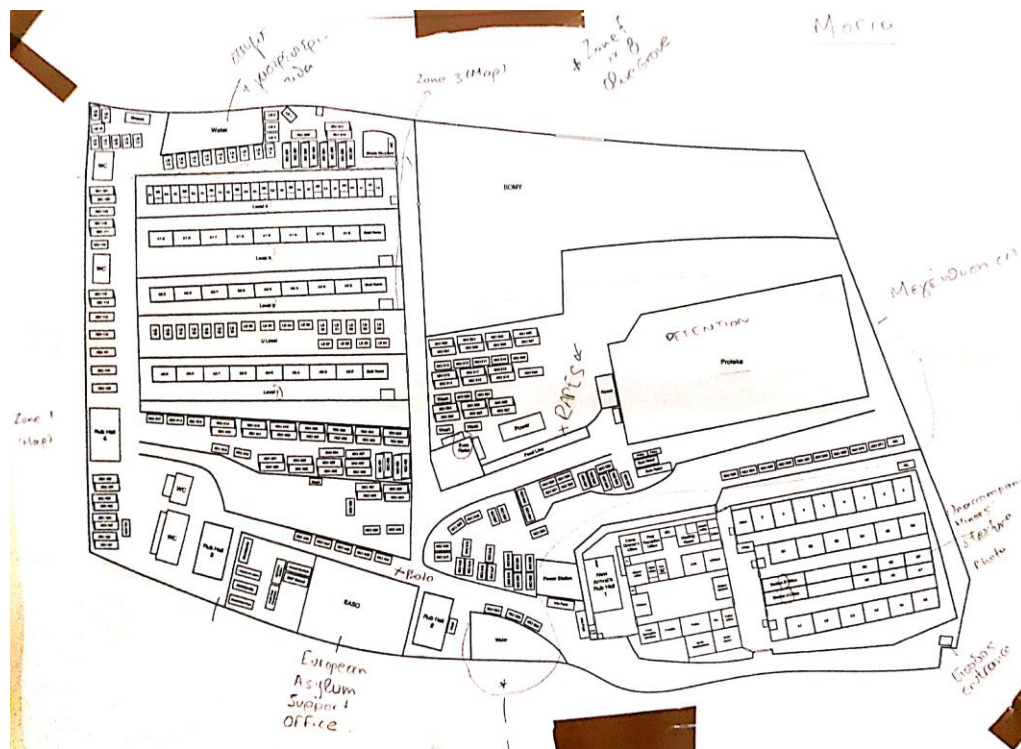
Figure 3: Map of the main part of the hotspot of Moria

Maps as a cartographic representation of space began from the administration of the site so to know who is living where, inside the hotspot. This map shows the

---

[47] In the mainland of Greece, the sites which accommodate unaccompanied minors are called 'Safe Zones'. Neocleous and Kastrinou (2006) have traced the concept of 'zone' as another term which flourished in International Relations to present 'hotspot' as a *zone* of conflict.

[48] For a clearer presentation of the map, see Appendix 7.

main part of the hotspot of Moria in a small scale. Cartography as the study and process of map making locate, identify, and bound phenomena. It also situates events, processes, and things within a coherent spatial frame. 'It imposes spatial order on phenomena' (Harvey, 2001, p.220). Moria 'opened' on October 16th, 2015. The European Council of Refugees and Exiles (2015, online) in its announcement on 29th October 2015 said that 'the "hotspot" system is part of the EU's action to assist frontline states who are facing disproportionate migratory pressures and aims to swiftly identify people in need of internal protection for relocation to other EU Member States'.

By 2015 and onwards, Moria would justify its meaning as a 'protective space' and would accommodate a disproportionate number of people, who would be called to live under inhumane conditions.[49] On 7th February 2020, UNHCR (Mahecic, 2020) announced that Moria was to host 18,342 inside a facility for 2,200 with other refugees staying in adjacent olive groves. Mapping became a continuous mechanism and tool of cartography to keep track of people living on the ground.

In this way, while maps worked as the architectural representation of space, mapping as a process and procedure became a necessary technique to overview the number of people in Moria. However, the continuous movement of people and the high number of arrivals created a situation in Moria where it was impossible to have a linear metric system. Accommodation meant tents, tents with flooring, 'rubb halls', containers, and refugee housing units.[50] Those who could not fit or stand the conditions of Moria moved outside the hotspot, in the space of the olive groves. Inside Moria, someone could see tents and containers having twice or even triple numbering systems. The more people were arriving in Moria the more difficult it was becoming to accommodate and find them. At this point, the way people are localised is an operation that plays a key role in the

---

[49] For this point see Observatory of the Refugee and Migration Crisis in the Aegean, 2020a; 2020b where refugees document and explain themselves the everyday reality in Moria.

[50] Refugee Housing Unit (RHU), according to UNHCR is 'a self-standing, sustainable and durable shelter, designed through a collaboration between UNHCR, the social enterprise Better Shelter *and the IKEA foundation*' (my emphasis). See: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/refugee-housing-unit.html

formation of space (see Hannah, 1997). The intersection of 'crowdedness' with formal mapping procedures and the way people are represented (refugees-victims, illegal migrants-threats) is, thus, far from innocent in the way space is (re)produced in Moria. Taking into consideration, that mapping informs a cartographic consciousness echoing from the imperial wars to the current neoliberal milieu, the way maps are produced and used reflect on the different positionalities that are at play in the world (see for instance Harley, 2001, a reference point for critical cartography and Pickles, 2004; Turnbull, 1993).

One day, the team of health promotion and education, the same team who ran the self-care course, invited me to go with them to Moria, so to inform some patients about their upcoming medical appointments in the MSF clinic outside Moria. As we entered the hotspot from the main entrance, we walked our way up to the space of Euro Relief, the main provider of housing and aid to refugees in Moria since late 2015. As we were approaching their office, people were queuing outside. We skipped the line, and we went straight to their door. The fact that we wore *vests* became once again an indicative reason to proceed accordingly and request immediate access to the organisation's office. After all, the vests foresaw our bodily presence and access to certain spaces. 'Space, like cartography, is as much a mental as a material construct' Harvey argues (2001, p.225). In this way, the vest as a mental representation of the organisation, authorised access in the materiality of the space.

As soon as we entered Euro Relief's offices, the aid worker asked one of the workers there to find where a refugee stayed and inform her for the arranged appointment. The woman who was sitting in one of the desks, searched quickly for a file on her laptop, she printed the document and handed us a map. She placed the map on her desk, and she circled the tent we were looking for with a coloured pen. Following the map route was not easy. We may have realised where that space was, but we were crossing tents after tents looking for the right number depicted on our map. Tents had different numbering systems, so we had to look carefully and see whether we could identify the number we were looking for.

Maps, indeed, work as a structural representation of space. In the case of Moria, European representatives including Euro Relief and UNHCR have the jurisdiction by making these 'demographics' officially represent the space (see UNHCR, 2018). Nevertheless, the fact that an aid worker had to look for a refugee, following a map, became a metaphor that created a political economy of space and a cartographic consciousness (see Harvey, 2001). 'Mapping your way' in Moria created a spatial ideology as a system of meaning which produced multiple realities of loss.

The sense of *loss* there, as a feeling of getting lost in the space, as an experience of losing someone and as a feeling of getting lost in what you were doing there (perhaps wondering 'who you are' and 'what you were doing over there') was creating different feelings of frustration. It was not only that the aid worker needed time and energy 'to find their space', but the map also created an additional procedure in the way that it would come physically closer to the refugee. The embodiment of the space was mediated by organisations (i.e. via a vest, a map, a form, or any institutional spatial mediation) which were offering another level of difficulty in a potential attempt to come closer to refugees, as if the space itself was indicating that all should get lost there to stay as far as possible from the political possibilities the space encapsulated.

Mapping refugees' bodies signalled a geographical, spatial, and political positioning. 'Body is not a closed and sealed entity, but a relational "thing" that is created, bounded, sustained, and ultimately dissolved in a spatiotemporal flux of multiple processes' (Harvey, 2000, p.98). The latter entails a dialectic-way in which the body 'speaks' with its environment, the processes which produce 'bodies' but in which bodies are also produced. In Moria's spatial reality, 'mapping the refugee body' as a body of population became a cartography not only of space but also a cartography of the different subjectivities that are being demonstrated by different levels of organisations. In the case of aid worker, the embodied performance of map reading to navigate the space of the camp, made a difference

to the way in which the spatiality of the camp became lived and experienced.[51] It is as if aid workers' aims are prioritised in the physical exploration of space rather than what space 'does' to them and the people they try to find there.

We are lost in a reality, in which *the Real* as a topology between the subject's psyche and their lost object becomes a vivid representation of the present, making it once again traumatic. In other words, there is a risk, as soon as you find your way there, to let the space work for you, in the sense that the feelings of frustration[52] become a psyche reality which navigates you in place and to exit, you will need to process them. The way these feelings will be processed, however, remains an open space of discussion both here, in this thesis (see section 5.5), as well as in the everyday reality of workers and refugees.

Tracing back the route of the map, the name of Euro Relief sparked interesting discussions; we were standing once again outside Euro Relief's offices to ask about where another refugee was staying. While we were waiting for one of the members of the team to exit Euro Relief's office, the rest of us started discussing this organisation. One of the cultural mediators referred to the claim that there are a lot of accusations about members of Euro Relief trying to convert people to Christianity. Euro Relief is part of a bigger organisation called Hellenic Ministries whose purpose is to 'reach communities holistically' (Observatory of the Refugee and Migration Crisis in the Aegean, 2018). On the front page of Hellenic Ministries' profile,[53] the organisation positions its existence in the name of evangelism as sharing the message of the gospel. Even though Euro Relief presents itself as a Greek Organisation, in fact their main office is in United States of America and consists mainly of volunteers who come every two weeks to help in Moria. Organising, at that time, the accommodation in Moria, the provision of the map raised once again a genealogical link between, map, cartography, and colonialism.

---

[51]Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey produced a 3-dimensional dialectic model in the conceptualisation of space, which will be discussed in the next section (see Schmid, 2008 and Harvey, 2005).

[52] It is quite indicative that most of the aid workers I spoke with, referred that they experience feelings of '*frustration (ματαίωση)*'.

[53] See https://hellenicministries.org/

This time it did not matter solely what the name of Lord would be, but to whom refugees would surrender their labour, their psyche, their work.

5.4 Space and subject: Performing subjectivity

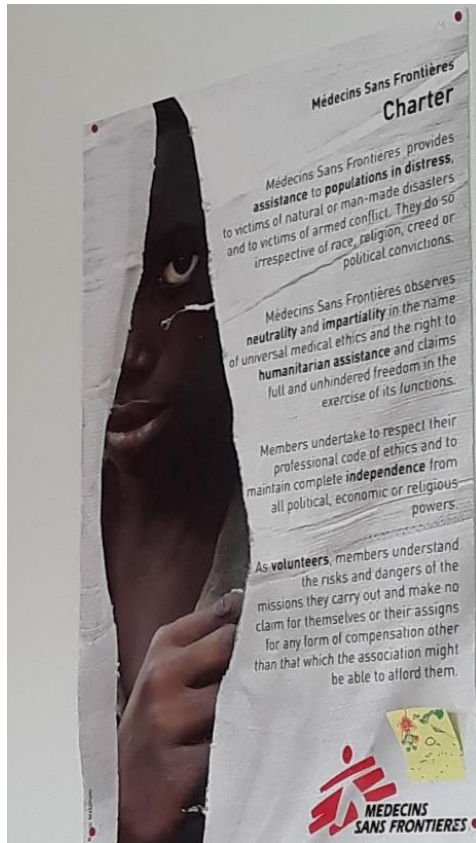Marc Augé (1995) in his book *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* uses the concept of supermodernity to signify the logic of late-capitalist phenomena which inform a mentality of excessive information and excessive space. Supermarkets, airports, hotels, motorways, even refugee camps are non-places as they result in an alternation of awareness in a partial and incoherent manner of excessive information and space. In contrast with the concept of *place* which is encrusted with historical monuments and a creative social network of life, in *non-places* people are connected in a uniform manner and an organic social life is no possible. It may be argued, then, that Figure 4 is such a non-place, in the sense of the way forms of representations take place in the embodied figure of refugees. The half-presence of the black child in the MSF's poster/charter is looking half-represented. His face covered up within a white background may signal that his full representation comes into life with the black utterances which sit next to him and situate him in relation to the organisation's axioms. The charter consists of him -without him up to a certain extent- as his figure covers almost one third of the white landscape but his presence is getting dissolved in the chartered representation of the organisation. His divided presence goes hand in hand with the way the white landscape speaks for him to the white background, reminding reminiscently that his gaze embodied in his black body creates a relationship in which the white othering not only covers him, but also uses black utterances to

Figure 4: Poster

151

represent his non-presence. Therefore, this figure may consist of a *non-place* because it extracts life from the bodies that captures as they speak to us without being able to listen what they say.

Throughout my field study, there was a continuous issue of how to linguistically represent refugee camps. In Greek, the word 'camp' signals a military space *'stratopedo'* as well as an outdoor lodging space, usually an outdoor summer program for children. During the interviews with the aid workers, sometimes I referred to space as *'stratopedo'* and other times as 'camp'. After all, camp (or site) is the English linguistic representation of space in state and humanitarian discourse, that constitutes what the space represents to state and humanitarian governance. Nevertheless, since most of the personnel in camps consists of people with a Greek background, the latter raised an issue of how they choose to represent the space in which they interact daily with refugees. The extract below was generated from my fieldwork and active interviewing disclosing my positionality on the hotspot of Moria as *'stratopedo'*. In this way, the aid worker provided this reflection on the term *'stratopedo'* as soon as I asked whether they would like to add anything else before we bring the interview into an end.

> -Aid Worker: '…basically, I think that what you said before let's say that it is a camp I don't know whether it could be compared, that is I don't know if it can be compared with the detent…with the camps let's say that existed during fascism let's say and Hitler etc., it is something completely…it is a very different system which simply tries to exit people from there very subjected, too much manageable and docile…'

> -Me: 'How would you translate [the term] refugee camp in Greek?'

> -Aid Worker: '(pause)…umm…umm I would put it as an animal farm, I think that this…is like… is not even like you let them free…is that you put them there heaped but with very restricted measures, showing which is their position, and you try to take out subjected and docile people where umm…in a situation where… is an interaction…they, inside, feel very much inferior to you but at the same time they also create an impression that I am superior

because at least I have something to eat and at least I have a job, irrespective the fact that this job might be umm…desperately exploited and abusive but at the same time you feel good you have it, whereas they would feel that… you put them also in a position to feel that even if I find a job and they exploit me with 1 euro per hour... (pause)…do you get what I mean?

That is a dipole. That you have…I bring you the shit, I put the population, the other, the one supposed to be normal to feel so nice that is not in this shit, and those who are in shit umm…to give them expectations to be able to reach the normal but with very specific terms such as that…you will come here, you will pay me to have shower, you will pay me to charge your phone, you will work as a sex worker or you will work washing dishes with 1 euro per hour umm…but you will feel good with that, because you have it whereas the other does not have it! And at the same time, I will feel very good that I am not in your position! I think they are farms.'

Lefebvre (see Schmid, 2008, p.36-37) proposes that activity in space establishes a system of words up to a certain point. Inspired by Nietzsche (1968), who linked meaning with values and knowledge with power, Lefebvre (Schmid, 2008; but see also Lefebvre, 1974/1991) uses his concepts of *metonymy* and *metaphor*[54] to establish a theory of language in three dimensions. The first, the *syntagmatic dimension* reflects to the metonymic process whose formal rules of combination determine the relationship between signs and in which one term can be substituted by another. In other words, the relationship between signs and their possible combinations forms the sentence structure and syntax. The second dimension is the *paradigmatic*, in which the classification of a sign corresponds to a metaphorical process and relates to a code, to a system of meaning. Lefebvre, in contrast with Nietzsche, adds a third dimension, *the symbolic dimension* in which the concept of the symbol is integral to the lived and living experience of language;

---

[54] Although in the previous chapter, I referred to metonymy and I used the concept of metaphor under the Lacanian psychoanalytic framework, here I use a different theory, that of Lefevre to highlight from a different angle the relationality of language, space and subject formation.

its ambiguities and complexities enters social structures and ideologies, serving 'as a pillar of allegory and fetish' (ibid, p.36). The application of this schema into space would be, therefore, transformed into *spatial practice, the representation of space* and *spaces of representation.*

In the extract above, the *spatial practice* is informed by the discursive networks of interaction and communication in aid worker's space of practice (i.e. hotspot of Moria, clinic of MSF outside the hotspot of Moria and in Mytilene) as well as in the spatial terrain of interview. The 'camp' and *'stratopedo'* as concepts and terms are related though, to the second dimension of spatial analysis and production, *the representation of space*. The way both myself and aid worker chose to represent the space defines the space of Moria itself, as Lefebvre (Schmid, 2008) would argue. The signifier 'camp' as a word/notion being used in English offered a neutralised interaction with(in) space, in which the signifiers of help and humanitarian assistance bypassed the relational co-existence of subject and space. On the contrary, the word *'stratopedo'* provoked, as the extract showed, reflections of what 'we' are doing in that space. None of us used the term 'hotspot' or '*KYT'* in Greek (Centre of Registration and Identification) which is the official representation of space in the linguistic performance of the state.

In the *representation of space,* Lefebvre counts also maps and plants, information in pictures and signs among representations of space. See for instance some of the details in Figure 5.[55] A walkie-talkie sits next to a map, at whose heart is written *Detention.* The military atmosphere echoes Neocleous and Katrinou's (2016) analysis not only in the genealogy of the term hotspot but also in the military mentality that the term hotspot encapsulates, which

Figure 5: A representation of the main part of the hotspot of Moria

---

[55] For a clearer presentation of the picture/map, see Appendix 6.

is infused in the way that organisations act and perform within space. Hence, it is by no means a 'discursive accident' the fact that MSF call their intervention in that space 'an operation'. They represent the space in the same way that the space represents itself.

The third dimension of Lefebvre's theory, *the symbolic,* is an inversion of the second *representation of space* to *spaces of representation*. The latter does not refer to space itself but to the process of signification that links it to a material symbol. The symbols could be taken according to Lefebvre (Schmid, 2008) from nature (i.e. topographical signification), they could be artifacts, buildings and monuments, or they could be a combination of both (i.e. a landscape). Hence, the comparison, the aid worker makes, of *camp as farm*, it creates a landscape of meaning, a material symbol which might recall George Orwell's (1945/2009) novel *Animal Farm*.

The book tells a story of a group of farm animals who rebel against their human farmer. They rebel with the hope to create a society where the animals can be equal and free. In the end the rebellion is betrayed, and the farm ends up in a state as bad as it was before, under the dictatorship of a pig named Napoleon. Although the book does not relate necessarily to the aid worker's use of 'farm', as an allegorical novella, it creates the concept of 'farm' as a symbol which is integral to the way the aid worker discursively reflects the lived and the living experiences of Moria. Thus, the 'farm', as an Orwellian symbol creates a space in the aid worker's narrative to position themself and several 'actors'[56] in-between lived space.

Lefebvre's theory of language is, however, only one source in his theory of the production of space. His second source is phenomenology. The phenomenological underpinnings of his theory could be depicted in the basic terms of *the perceived, the conceived and the lived*. Combining it with the spatial practice showed that perception is not located solely in mind/ or space but is based on a (re)produced

---

[56] I use, here, the word and concept of 'actor' to highlight the way humanitarian language represent organisations within the spaces of camps and hotspots. Humanitarian organisations often refer and call each other *actor* and not organisations within these spaces.

materiality. The material practice, when viewed from a social perspective, comes into existence because of thoughts, concepts, and feelings; what is called 'an experience'. Then, if *the perceived* is what we grasp with our senses, space cannot be perceived without being *conceived* in thought first. Accordingly, *the lived* cannot be understood historically without the conceived. Space needs to be understood as an actively complex web of relationships that is continuously produced and reproduced. This dialectical trinity on language and experience creates a spatial-temporal dimension of social reality which could be identified in three moments: *the material production, the production of knowledge and the production of meaning* (Schmid, 2008, p.27-45).

Mirroring the phenomenological materiality of space both for those who live inside Moria and those who live in-between that space, the allegory, as an alternate form of metaphor, made space for the aid worker to reflect and situate what perceived, conceived, and lived in-between Moria. It is as if the discursive space (or gap) in-between the camp-farm became a reflexive surface, a mirror, that made possible to reflect their inner thoughts, questions, and feelings. Living heaped, trapped, and detained is not only an inhumane and material condition of living. Many organisations which do research or work in Moria published extensively their objections regarding detention, overcrowded spatial conditions and how the latter impact the medical and mental health aspect of living (indicatively RSA, 2020; Barberio, 2018).

On the contrary, it is the camp/hotspot *as a condition of living* that makes a significant difference in the way subjectivities are (re)produced as an intricate web of relationships within space. 'The object of analysis is, consequently, the active processes of production that take place in [this] time' (Schmid, 2008, p.41). An analysis focusing alone on the material production of space would miss that even if refugees were not 'heaped' in Moria, it is the camp as 'farm', as a condition whose materiality on the body attempts to extract subjectivities disciplined and docile, as the aid worker before says (*'…it is a very different system which simply tries to exit people from there very subjected, too much manageable and docile…'*).

And another aid worker from Moria comments:

> '…these people continue to live in a war, it is of different type but again they strive to survive, that is to say they do not have access in basic commodities, they did not have electricity back then, they did not have water, they did have nothing, primary health services, nothing, the population was 12.000, the camp can accept 3000, it was crowded, it was repulsive in the camp…'.

Refugees' bodies have been placed in a material reality which is undoubtedly precarious and violent. Lefebvre (2009, p.229) reminds us that:

> '…the understanding of space cannot reduce the lived to the conceived, nor the body to a geometric or optical abstraction. On the contrary: this understanding must begin with the lived and the body, that is, from a space occupied by an organic, living and thinking being'.

The spatial reality of Moria is inscribed in a population whose bodies create body politics. Nyers (2006, p.x) states that 'the politics of moving bodies must be analysed as being completed implicated in-indeed, immanent to-the movement of body politics. […] it is not only the refugee's body that is moving but also the sovereign state -the body politic- that is in constant motion'. If we consider therefore that the 'national (or European) population's body' comes as a projection to the population of migrants' bodies as a body of population, then it may be argued that it is the former that creates the body politics of the latter. Living to survive, migrants' and refugees' bodies have disappeared in a space of paradoxes. Heaped, packed, detained, and misrepresented, they embody and show the European body politics.

Refugees have been exploited financially, psychologically, emotionally, and physically. The fact, for instance, that they had to pay 10 euros to charge their phones in local shops or pay to have a shower introduced a political economy which flourished both spatially, in terms of the local economy, but also bodily; it became embodied. Refugees' bodies became a space of exploitation, from which to get through psychically and physically, the less exploitative possibility seemed

very tempting. To work for 1 euro per hour, as the aid worker said in the first extract *'…you put them also in a position to feel that even if I find a job and they exploit me with 1 euro per hour…'*, is such a form of exploitation because the embodiment of refugeeness (Kallio et al., 2019) forms a spatial reality in which your body becomes an epidermal exploitation of your psyche and labour. Their physical presence with its psychic trajectory also signified a political economy of the spatial-temporal presence of aid workers.

The more refugees were coming, the more aid workers were needed. The presence of refugees evoked the presence of humanitarian assistance, and the presence of humanitarian assistance generated vacant positions to recruit the jobless national and young work force. While this relational spatiality has been built upon refugees' bodies as the epidermal terrain of assistance, for aid workers, to assist, to work meant to share their body in the embodiment of a contract. Moving from one area to another, from camp-to-camp aid workers became internal migrants in the Greek terrain, depending on where assistance was needed. The latter signified not only a chance to work, but that they were also becoming another object of humanitarian assistance; an 'object' which was yet another cheap labour force since their contracts within humanitarian organisations were adjusted to fit but exceed national financial (pay)scales. Hence, this work was more tempting than the contracts of the public sector, but they were cheaper than Geneva's international financial agreements.

The farm as an imaginary space can be also understood as an 'heterotopia' (Foucault and Miskowiec, 1986), a space that even if is *other*, it is yet another real space. By *othering* the space, the aid worker made themself an *Other* to give an insight into the internal spatial intricacies. Lefebvre (1961/2002) has linked *other* and *otherness* with the concepts of *'lived'* and *alienation.* As he states (ibid, p.215):

> '…to pass from the other to otherness is to discover something unknown, it
> is to discover something distant in what is near. What we knew and what we
> were familiar with moves away from us and makes us feel uneasy. It is an
> alienation which can also contains a certain disalienation. But should

158

otherness come to dominate the other, should we lose contact, should we become tightly embroiled in mistakes, misunderstanding and misinterpretations, should we lose all control, then alienation will take over, i.e. otherness will tear us from ourselves, otherness will make us lose both the other and our own selves. What is essential is the movement, the passing, the supersession […] In this sense, the concept of alienation could be brought closer to the "lived". The "lived" could clarify the concept of alienation and conversely, the concept of alienation could clarify the idea of the "lived", which is still a vague one'.

The aid worker moving linguistically from Moria to 'Moria as farm', embodies this passage to depict not only what is 'lived' or 'getting alienated' there but how 'the lived' - as the relational co-existence of aid workers and refugees - clarifies what is getting alienated and vice versa in-between a projection of labour at force.

To go even further Harvey (2000) discusses the body as an accumulation strategy by drawing on the theory of the bodily subject in Marx. As he argues, although Marx does not tell us everything we would like to know, he does propose a theory of the bodily subject under capitalism. In this way, since we still live within a world of capital circulation and accumulation, the latter cannot escape an argument in relation of the contemporary 'bodies of help and support' and 'bodies in need'. 'Part of what the creative history of capitalism has been about', Harvey (ibid, p.104) highlights 'is discovering new ways (and potentialities) in which the human body can be put to use as the bearer of the capacity to labour'. Gramsci (1971) had also stressed how capitalism is linked with the production of a new kind of labouring body.

It is, therefore, the labouring body that becomes *othered* as it is lived and alienated throughout the process of embodying the space of living. Consisting, here, of aid workers and refugees, the labouring body reveals a structural split in the way is constituted in the spatial reality of Moria. The labouring body as a body of (current and future) labour gets divided first in the actual space of Moria (i.e. inside/outside Moria) and then becomes embodied in the divisions of us/them, superior/inferior,

normal/not normal which provoke different psychic trajectories. The body becomes a mirror which reflects both the spatial as well as the psyche/subjective divisions the labour body experiences. It is a spatial mirroring of their relationship with the Other which as closer as they get to, demands an embodied positioning of truth (or happiness) in the level of the psyche. Hence, the 'farm' on top of everything is a signifier signifying the spatial-relational interactions between aid workers and refugees.

For the aid worker, who managed to get a job amid the fiscal crisis in Greece and avoided migrating themself, having a job, is powerful enough to provoke feelings of superiority and inferiority to both themself and refugee. As the aid worker said in the initial extract:

> '…*is an interaction*…they, inside, feel very much inferior to you but at the same time they also create an impression that I am superior because at least I have something to eat and at least I have a job, irrespective the fact that this job might be umm…*desperately exploited and abusive* but at the same time you *feel good* you have it, whereas they would feel that… you put them also in a position to feel that even if I find a job and they exploit me with 1 euro per hour... (pause)…do you get what I mean?' (my emphasis).

The latter does not mean that these feelings are consciously reproduced by each one of them. It is the representation of their presence in the mirroring image of the other that creates a surface where each one resists and attempts to be like the other. In other words, for the aid worker, to avoid becoming a migrant themself amid the crisis in Greece and therefore become potentially the object of their current professional assistance, *'…feel good…'* about their job was one way to engage with the painful truth of what the work is doing to both themself and refugee. It is there that feelings of superiority/inferiority are reproduced as refugees' epidermal representation in the national mirroring reflects a lower caste whose embodiment in the national society could be seen by devoting their cheap labour power.

Feeling good, in a job which, as the aid worker says, is *'…desperately exploitative and abusive…'* reveals, on the one hand, the abusing character of the work and on the other hand, the possibilities that are encapsulated as emotions of melancholy and happiness become interchanged in aid worker's embodiment with space. Flowing emotionally between them, the aid worker position themself in-between a psychic trajectory which encapsulates possibilities of *difference* and resistance. The articulation of what that spatial reality does to refugees as a future labour force, and themselves as workers, depicts how the system takes advantage of them and more importantly, how the system normalises feelings in subjectivities which are at work and a work in progress.

I remind here how the worker closed our interview:

> '…I bring you the shit, I put the population, the other, the one supposed to be normal to feel so nice that is not in this shit, and those who are in shit umm…to give them expectations to be able to reach the normal but with very specific terms such as that…you will come here, you will pay me to have shower, you will pay me to charge your phone, you will work as a sex worker or you will work washing dishes with 1 euro per hour umm…but you will feel good with that, because you have it whereas the other does not have it! And at the same time, I will feel very good that I am not in your position! I think they are farms.'

The 'camp as farm' becomes an experimental condition for the bodily subjectivities at play where for some *detention* as a form of living becomes a rule based on nationality,[57] *waiting* on a psychologised performance of resilience and *happiness*, a psychic dictatorship of appreciation of work's alienation. Indeed, space *'…is an interaction…'* as the aid worker indicated lively, it is an interaction which encloses different possibilities of existence in-between alienation and emancipation. It is in this terrain of *différance* (as per Derrida, Hepburn, 1999) that alienation and emancipation at work can bring closer refugees and aid workers. 'It is in this location of otherness -both a differing and deferring, or *différance*-' (ibid,

---

[57] See for example in *Figure2* that Detention covers a large part of the main part of the hotspot.

p.648, my emphasis) which allows alienation to work as a hope to constitute the future struggle of emancipation.

Lefebvre and Harvey were clear about *space*. 'The gap between what the laborer as person might desire and what is demanded of the commodity labor power extracted from his or her body is the nexus of alienation' (Harvey, 2000, p.106). Nevertheless, as Lefebvre and Harvey highlighted, we need to turn from ideology to utopia, so as to get to know the real better, pose our criticism, explore its possibilities and make potentially a proposition for another world (Busquet, 2012-13). We need to move towards a dialectical utopianism (Harvey, 2000). Agreeing therefore in principle with Harvey (2000, p.105) that Foucault is/could be complementary rather than antagonistic to Marx; the aid worker's reflection[58] is a form of resistance in the power dynamics that constitute the forms of alienation between the aid worker and refugee, between the heterotopic creation of space towards a utopic conceptualisation of co-existence in different forms of space.

5.5 Therapies of space: Psychotopology in emotional geographies

Since the 1990s, the spatiality of humanitarian assistance has not only provided a terrain in which help is offered physically (i.e. provision of shelter, medical help, food, and water), but also an emotional landscape which situates the psychological enunciation of traumatic experience as its primary focus (see Pupavac, 2004a; 2004b; 2001; Summerfield, 2002; 1997). Psychosocial support programmes started as concrete interventions in lands which suffered from war, natural disaster, and conflict. In this way *space* did not refer solely to the terrain which accommodates refugees or any other casualty of war, it is also referred to the psychic space where the intricacies of war have been inscribed. The embodied

---

[58] By stressing the importance of that reflection, I am aware that it may be appeared to be privileging reflection over action. As Burman and Chantler (2004, p.380) state, the latter not only fall into 'a classic enlightenment dualism but it also highlights how the "space to think" that is so valued by counsellors and therapists recapitulates that same privileging of thinking over doing that not only bolsters traditional structures of academic privilege but also pathologises political activism'. As a feminist researcher and political activist, I believe that *reflection – action* is a cyclic process whose end and beginning can only be assimilated in what Lacan's describe as the Möbius strip. It is an interior-exterior and an exterior-interior (See the following section for further analysis on Lacan's topology).

experience of space, as depicted in the previous section, became a passage to access subject's psychic territories. In the case of Moria, *therapies of space* and *space for therapy* seemed a major and significant part of the role of the organisation. The way, for instance, they made space for therapy as a creation of a 'safe space' and the way they used therapeutic narratives to remedy the problems of space, is an important interplay between the communication of the psyche's interior-exterior and exterior-interior in a topological understanding of subject. Lacan has demonstrated in figures such as the torus, the cross-cap and the Möbius strip, how the subject is formed through *internal exclusions* and *external inclusions*. The concept of 'safe space' as an internal exclusion and 'therapies of space' as an external inclusion, may be of help to conceptualise the emotional geographies of Moria, as a ritual passage from embodied experience of space towards subject's psychic spatiality.

For Lacan, the difference between a topographical and topological reading relies on the way someone understands structure. Instead of understanding structure as a 'theoretical model' he suggested to understand it as 'the original machine [*met en scene*] that directs the subject' (Lacan, 1966/2006d, p.544, my emphasis). Topology therefore allows him to express structure without restraining himself in a reading that is limited to surfaces (Blum and Secor, 2011). Similarly, positioning space as 'the original machine' that directs subject, topology as a term represens the spatial phenomena associated with the psychical apparatus. As Blum and Secor (2011, p.1045) put it 'it is because the subject is a topological figure that space as we live it is also more-than-topographical'.

Bringing the Lacanian notion of 'topology' in dialogue with the work on *emotional geography* (see Burman and Chantler, 2004; Bondi and Fewell, 2003), space works as a metaphor of travelling into therapeutic space. Bondi and Fewell (2003) demonstrate that metaphors of travel and in general mobility figure in counsellor's accounts of their work with clients. These metaphors illustrate an attempt to exteriorise what is supposed to be interior while the inner experiences are represented by imaginary external worlds. As, it will be shown in the following two and last sections, a rich spatial vocabulary is to be found not only in texts

around space but also in texts around counselling. The exterior space, as the latter situated in the territory of Moria, should not be treated as the only in which exteriority takes place. The space of therapy as a 'therapy of space' is also such a form of exteriority whose metaphor invokes ideas about the interiority of human experience through the images of exterior spaces, as well as images of the interior unconscious.

5.5.1 'Therapies of space'

Moria is a very chaotic place. It is not a protective environment where people can live without being constantly alert that something may happen. Refugees fight to survive; they do not have access to what is broadly considered as human rights. In the beginning, when the hotspot opened, refugees did not have electricity, they did not have water, they did not have access to what is considered basic amenities. Besides the high population density, their living conditions situate a form of living where you have to wait in the food line for 3 to 4 hours to get food. There are many power cuts, even if electricity is considered a commodity there now, they often do not have heating for days, and they do not have a way to communicate with their families because there is no internet. Often, more than 20-24 people live in tents, they do not have adequate quality of food and there are many incidents of violence, either sexual or any other form of violence, based on ethnicity and race.[59]

While Moria's inhumane environment is well known publicly, through organisational reports, news reports and statements from volunteers, it is an open question what aid workers 'do' within this spatial reality. In other words, since it is commonly accepted that Moria is such an inhumane environment, how does space interplay within therapeutic discussions and how do psychologists situate space within the supportive environment they offer? To put it differently, topologically speaking, what is the role of therapeutic narrations of space within the psyche's apparatus?

---

[59] All these descriptions are coming from the discussions I had with interviewees during our interview, discussing their experiences of working in Moria.

The following extract comes from a long discussion I had with an aid worker psychologist reflecting on refugees' life and experiences in Moria.

'…I was very impressed by the fact that for these…these people that come from Africa…this is an example, umm….it does not take place in some countries in Africa, not to all of them but in many of them, the concept that "I coexist with a military, we are next to each other, and nothing happens [in terms of violence/attacks/arrests]". So, for these people this is something very new, to be with a military [person], to be distanced only 2 meters away from him…this military in Africa has pulled a gun to menace/threaten you, this is a very new experience [….] a very new concept, of how to be in a space with police and army and my life not being threatened. *So, you place that in context like that and you say to him "look here, it won't happen to you something like that, they are here because they are, because they exist as presences"*…but this needs time [in Greek the participant uses a word which means work, i.e. that it needs time and work to process it], *because it is not actually like that*, for instance there are people, they were people who would prefer…umm…to go and sleep alone umm…in November…in the cold outside [their container/tent], in a place which was safer for him umm…rather than being somewhere where the army and the police are…because there he was more safe…' (my emphasis).

The presence of army, security guards, and police in Moria is more than apparent.

It is almost like securitisation is a prerequisite to live and work there. Despite the multiple fences, or the fences in perspective (see Figure 4), so to 'create' safe spaces for specific groups such as the 'women and children' (Burman, 2008), the sense of security in the subjective presence of police and army transforms the external securitisation of place into an internal psychic procedure. Refugees live under 'security', as if Moria is officially and legally a prison in which they always need

Figure 6: In the hotspot

to be monitored and 'protected'. For populations such as refugees who are coming from Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, fear of prosecution, torture and other violent incidents are often the main reasons of migration. It is worth mentioning that during the 'refugee crisis', people whose origin is West Africa (among others, like Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran etc.), they are not granted asylum as easy as people coming from Syria. Therefore, Moria is becoming a space of semi-temporal living, in the sense that refugees must perform their life-story to convince, in legal terms, the asylum authorities that there is a fear of persecution and that they cannot return to their countries, and proceed with their asylum claim, exit the island, and move into mainland. As indicated earlier, refugees whose asylums claims are rejected may be detained as well as those whose asylum application is assumed to be rejected based on their nationality (see V.H., 2018).

Fleeing from any fear of prosecution, which may also include escape from police, army or security guards and living within a space which uses the same subjective securitisation in the name of protection, signifies a reality that must be continuously distorted to be endured. In this way, police reflect a topology in which the external presence of security became an internal procedure of

discomfort, as well as a warning that self should be protected, to escape any future possibility of pain.

For Žižek, as well as for Lacan, an individual 'is always, to a greater or lesser extent, trans-individual (see Johnston, 2009, p.86). In the same way, Bondi (2003) situates the emotional geography of the self through the feminist philosopher Susan J. Brison (see also Brison, 1997) in a profoundly relational understanding of self. I stress here the relationality of the self, because to approach and understand the fear of police, means to not only analyse why someone left Moria and went somewhere outside to sleep. It means to situate the fear of police both in these people's histories as well as in the living history of fortress Europe and of the hotspot of Moria.

In this way, adjusting their topological existence within this spatial reality, the discourse of psychology asks them to reconcile themselves not only with their current (dis)comfort but also asks them, unconsciously, to make peace with the pain that may have forced them to flee. Promising, as the psychologist said above, that *'...it won't happen to you something like that...'* is ambiguous because it may not only distort their previous experiences, but also the everyday accounts of violence they experience in Moria.

Far away from being *'...here because they are, because they exist as presences...'*, as the psychologist said in the extract above, the therapeutic space is transformed into a mediatory terrain which attempts to soothe the violence these people experienced, and still do, in Moria. Furthermore, it normalises the presence of police, army, and security. It reproduces the state's main and mainstream argument that police are there as a matter of 'protection' (Immigration Act, 2019; see also UNHCR, 2006) and it also disregards the reasons Greek police, riot police, Frontex and Europol co-administer this space. Hence, the space of therapy by attempting to help, support or even discursively justify the presence of military within Moria, distorts refugees experiences in relation to police brutality and attempts to emerge a narrated self which makes peace with what police and army

signify within Moria, 'the police war against the migrant' (Neocleous and Kastrinou, 2016), but also against war and terror.

Throughout our interview, the aid worker was critically reflecting on the role of therapy in Moria. This could be also seen, from the phrase and contradiction *'…because it is not actually like that…'*. After the psychologist shared how some of the refugees cannot understand how it is possible to co-exist with police and their life not being threatened, the psychologist changed the narrative and said how this may not actually be like that when there were other refugees who would *'…prefer…umm…to go and sleep alone umm…in November…in the cold outside* [their container/tent], *in a place which was safer for him umm…rather than being somewhere where the army and the police…'*. The participant rethinking how dependent the relationship is of aid workers with the suffering of migrants, in terms of being able and have a job themselves to survive, embodying the identity of psychologist revealed up to some extent how the space of therapy works within these spaces.

We do, then, need to consider whether and how the space of therapy, besides attempting to help and support, may also end up reinforcing the therapy of the space and normalising in this way the space, the pain, and the experience of being in Moria.

5.5.2 'Safe space'

Working in an environment like Moria, the creation and provision of a 'safe space' became a prerequisite, if not a necessity, in humanitarian discourse and action. To make room for more sessions, the creation of therapeutic groups for children, adolescents and adults was the main target of MSF's mental health programme when I was in the field. Besides Moria, the notion of 'safe space' which could assure peoples' safety on a physical and psychic space, became an intervention which other organisations run in other refugee camps in the mainland, targeting especially 'women and children'. In Moria, the notion of safe space was coming up constantly within psychologists' discourse, and it was created in-between therapeutic space. The latter signifies not only the spatial territory of the

therapeutic discourse, but also the psychic space that therapy opens, and in which it is placed. It signified, above all, the topology of the subject as the original machine in which emotional geography is put in place. As one psychologist commented:

> '…because truly I was trying to understand what exactly did they expect when they came to groups and what groups are, it was very interesting that when you asked them "what are your expectations when you were told that we will have a group" and it is true that the majority said that we wanted *a safe space* where we know that no one was going to hurt us, that I will…I want to talk about who I am and I want you to know *who I am and my story* and share my *story* with others, umm…with the expectation that there will be people that will have the same experiences and they could have…to have a meaningful empathy…' (my emphasis).

Refugees fled from their country of origin to find a safer space to live. In this way, I understand safety as what relates to protection from physical and emotional life threats, and space as a dignified accommodation (i.e. house but also citizenship, social respect, work) which will help them continue their lives. In that sense, the notion of having a safe space is embedded and embodied in their presence.

Given the power intricacies the latter encapsulates, in the sense of how refugees are constantly represented as vulnerable (especially the 'women and children') and in need of western protection, the focus here lies on therapy as a 'safe space' itself. The therapeutic environment, having been well-established as a place in which safety is taken for granted, transforms the space of therapy into a psychic-material place in which refugees can unfold their experiences and stories as another way of embodying their subjectivity. See, for example, in the extract above how the refugee immediately narrated himself as an 'I' whose position is followed by a *story*. As if a moment of connection between safety, space and protection is established in the psychic material space of embodying a storytelling. This form of performing safety-therapy situates in different spatial realities such as inside Moria (i.e. in the courses of health promotion and education) and outside

Moria in MSF's Moria clinic, and in Mytilene's clinic. Nevertheless, as the same psychologist pointed out:

> '…whatever we do we know that umm…when the other comes out, that he can, is just exposed to experience, to retraumatised, with a similar incident let us say, with violence or whatever. So, mainly, in children what they do is how…either they, themselves, to be able through tools such as painting or free speech either through other *stories* to identify themselves and externalise their experience and see it either as observers or as something who can, so to say, to normalise it according to the rest of the population…' (my emphasis).

Safe space, in topological meaning, works as an internal exclusion in the sense that refugees exteriorize the violence, they have already experienced or still experience daily in Moria, and they are called to perform in between a psychic-material space. The notion of exclusion lies in the normalisation of their feelings, as a procedure which will help them connect and relate with other people who experienced similar incidents or lies in the actual violent incidents that take place in Moria and the way therapeutic environment is produced as a safe space to share them. Hence, there are two issues at stake here; the first is how therapy promotes itself as a safe space to unfold refugees' experiences and stories, and the second is how therapy is constructed as a safe space to escape from the everyday violence of Moria. In both cases the role of therapy as a therapeutic environment is crucial to understand what the politics of safe space are.

In terms of the first, although the signifier of normalisation indicates a very individualised procedure of commonality, the psychologist clarified that when refugees are in a group and they narrate their story, the latter reflects an attempt to make connections and find commonalities with each other *'…it gives them a sense of either solidarity or that someone will understand them much better even from the psychologist…'*. However, the role of story also foregrounds in the one-to-one sessions with a psychologist. There, the psychic space of therapy proceeds with refugees' stories as a topological understanding of subject. The narration of

the self through a story situates the subject as the 'original machine' whose embodiment of the story opens two major psycho-spatial paradoxes. As a psychologist mentions:

> '…many of them they do not know at all what a psychologist is…[…]…but many times their motivation would be that they will come to us, because they know that they will benefit also by taking the *paper* which is not deterring to continue the therapeutic process…[…] because one way or another you put him in a process to renegotiate with many things…[…]and really it has been proved that many of them might not continue [with the therapeutic process], but my job is how [this process] is going to continue…[…]and our organisation has the policy which [says] that after the 3 [first] sessions, if the person asks for the paper, you give it…' (my emphasis).

The story, or the narration of the self in relation to 'what happened' in the country of origin performs in a twofold direction. One the one hand, it subjects the refugee to a potential diagnosis which provide a certain subjective understanding of meaning and, on the other hand, it may offer a better space in place. Concerning the former, meaning comes from the enunciation of subject through the embodiment of the story, whereas the latter signifies as another aid worker highlighted that *'…each one who comes to us can in the end or during the sessions to ask for a certificate which may give to him, which can…be used to UNHCR so to make easier the process, the legal process to go'*. Although, one psychologist argued that *'…the paper in this condition we are now does not have a strong effect […] because it is given now very easily…'*, the therapeutic environment becomes an interim terrain in which the embodiment of their story in a psychic trajectory may give the subject access in a better condition of living.

To go even further, it may be argued that while the narration of the self through a story reflects the subjective spatiality of refugee, the narration of the self through a diagnosis reflects accordingly the subjective intricacies of the aid worker. Diagnosis as the written manifestation-enunciation of the internal procedure that

took place in the therapeutic room, indeed, may offer a better chance to get asylum or move towards mainland, especially in the beginning of the 'refugee crisis'. Despite, though, the efficiency of diagnosis in the embodiment of a declaration, of a paper, diagnosis as the embodiment of the 'psyche in place' lies about the traumatic conditions that refugees experience in Moria. As another aid worker and psychologist stresses:

> '…even the diagnosis because you will see here they give constantly diagnoses where we say let's say…they have PTSD, you cannot do this diagnosis because already in Moria this war is still ongoing, it is not the war that is in Syria or Afghanistan but is a war with the army, with the security guys, with the people who are there so I think that think that these people continue to live in a war'.

As argued before, reality without the Real is not complete, the Real in its Lacanian sense appears via its symptoms (Žižek, 1989; Yang, 2012). If war, as a condition of living in Moria, is reality then Real appears via the manifestation of its symptoms. *'…So, to say, when we see a person and we know that the previous day was raped in Moria, and we send him back is like we do nothing'* a psychologist said. Identifying trauma with the Real, it may be argued then, that the therapeutic spatiality is Real, in the sense that it is also traumatic under these circumstances.

One issue in Moria is the number of rapes that take place[60]. As another psychologist emphasised:

> '… in the section where they are only women, which is so easily accessible for someone to get in and to…all rapes happen there, usually of women or children and the thing is that because…it is so complicated because to make a report about it, you have to…the person who has suffered this abuse has

---

[60] The incident of rapes within Moria was shared during the interviews with two participants. Also, see Kathimerini, 2018a; Kathimerini, 2018b where the MSF's medical coordinator for Greece, Dr Declan Barry said that one rape a week takes place at Moria refugee camp. MSF has also mentioned that the abuse of migrant children is often in Moria and that Moria clinic has treated 21 victims of rape and sexual abuse, of which 9 cases were children, see ICJ and ECRE v. Greece, 2018, p.45.

to make the report to the manager of Moria's camp, which is the police now and the army…'.

Reaching a psychologist or a doctor to report such an incident, indeed, may create space to share it and seek for assistance but having no other place to go rather than the same space that the incident took place does not guarantee any safety, or dignity of living. The environment of Moria generates structural injustices, both in the way it accommodates refugees as well as in ways they can structurally fight the injustices that the structure of Moria generates itself. The fact, for example, the same psychologist shares, that *'…there are so many rapes that take place in the food line by volunteers, by refugees' volunteers which they rape children and women umm…and rapes by police officers and distribution of drugs through police services'* restrains the space to fight structurally against Moria's injustices. To report, therefore, these incidents to the army and the police, which sometimes are themselves the offenders, as the psychologist highlights (but see also UNHCR, 2006, p.41), reveals that therapy cannot guarantee a safe space and that the space of Moria generates a structural violent paradox which calls 'you' to live in-between death and life experiences.

In this way constructing therapy as a safe space to escape from Moria could be itself traumatic for both refugees and aid workers since the structural predicaments of space cannot be resolved in the therapeutic environment. I would like to conclude this section with two extracts from two psychologists, which indicate how they reflect upon their work in Moria:

> '…many times, I feel like I am in a very dark room, and I think this is what refugees imagine and share with me…and I feel also that I am in the same room with them and we try to find a window …but there is no window (laugh), so...you are called to break slightly the wall and make something…umm and sometimes you cannot make anything. Hence, you are in the closed room.'

> '...I think that simply every day when I am in Moria, I simply experience umm is a situation where…I doubt constantly my identity as a human and my

values and how I would like to approach this specific population but also as a professional how we implement some different approaches or what we call let's say therapeutic approaches in this specific population…and also I feel that I am in a very privileged position and at the same time I feel very bad for myself that I cannot help with a more…interventional way.'

Taking into consideration Žižek's (2008) insight that violence is infused in the daily functioning of social life, where symbolic and systemic violence passes as natural (see also Spivak, 1999 for a discussion on epistemic violence and Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992 for symbolic violence), the feelings of frustration aid workers experience in-between therapy poses a critical Fanonian question (Leonardo and Porter 2010, p.147): 'if dialogue seeks to undo the [violence] of the space, then we must ask if notions of safe dialogue legitimise an oppressive system or if they engage in a process that is creative enough to produce a new social consciousness'. One of the main premises of therapy as a safe space in refugee camps is that it provides a space for refugees and aid workers to come together and discuss issues of violence in a way that is not dangerous. Thus, the conventional guidelines for the sessions in camps (i.e. mindful of not focusing very much on trauma, confidentiality, boundaries) are supposed to create an environment where issues can be broached, and no one will be retraumatised.

Nevertheless, considering the last two sections as well as the last two extracts, it is argued that therapy could never fully be a safe space for people who live in Moria. Therapy as an institutional 'safe space' within these premises creates a white racial frame, a white imaginary (Leonardo, 2009) which is a collective unconscious that tolerates violence dialogues in small amounts. If Fanon once said, critiquing Sartre, that 'whites turn racism into an intellectual problem, rather than a lived one' (as cited in Leonardo and Porter 2010, p.149), then it is argued that turning the experience of war or/ and the experience of violence in Moria into a therapeutic discourse turns spaces intricacies into a psychologised performance rather than a daily lived one. To put it another way, therapy as a 'safe space' maintains above all a status of whiteness and violence as being both natural and unchanging.

174

Hence, what the reflections of aid workers above show is that if we want to truly understand the space of Moria as well as the meaning and functions of therapies in that space then we must become comfortable with the idea that, for refugees as well as for marginalised and oppressed groups, there is no 'safe' place. We may go as far as to ask whether this space in the embodiment of the psychic 'safe space' becomes a positive reinforcement of the violence and security the space encapsulates? Discussions on safety, once again, speak to race, class, gender, and struggle. If we want to move a step towards safety, this requires a step towards the dialectics of violence, a step away from the forces of 'therapeutic happiness' and its therapeutic spatiality towards a mutual struggle within and outside of this space.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented the space of the hotspot of Moria along with psychology to highlight how the different subject formations emerge within the psycho-politics of this space. Beginning with my own story of subjugation, I discussed the power of vest in the bodily localities in Moria, the genealogy of the term hotspot and the way that maps, space, and movement intersect within the space of Moria and colonial mentalities. Situating my material within a sociological, economic geographical and anthropological framework, I critically discussed the performance of subjectivity within the hotspot of Moria and its spatial politics, and I showed how the subjectivities of aid worker and refugee are dialectically performed. In the last section, I brought to the fore the emotional geographies of the hotspot of Moria, as an example of the way psychological discourses come to approach the space of Moria as well as notions of 'safe space'. Linking them with the psychoanalytic notion of topology and discussions on violence I argued that the institutional space of therapy within these spaces could not only be traumatic for both refugees and aid workers, but it may also maintain a status of whiteness and violence as being both natural and unchanging within the spaces of camp and hotspot. The next and third analysis chapter will discuss time, symptom, and trauma within a psychoanalytic and postcolonial framework to shed further light in the politics of psychology in the refugee camps of Greece.

Chapter Six

Time, symptom, trauma: Making meaning to signify connections

'We divided the day in moments of cadavers,

in killed hours we bury inside us,

inside the caves of our beingness,

in the caves where freedom of desire is born

and we bury it with all different shits

and rubbish they pitch us as "values",

as "ethos", as "civilisation" …'

(Missios,[61] 1988).

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the focus was on the spatial reality as the latter unfolded between space, subject and psychology. It concerned the relationality of space, in the sense of 'doing space', how the space is structured and produced. It is also concerned with how space (the space of the camp, the space of therapy, the notion of 'safe space') 'does us', in the sense of how subjectivities relate and emerge within space. This last notion, though, involves an important element which has not yet been fully addressed, the notion of time. Lefebvre (1974/1991) and later Harvey (1990) have highlighted that space is intertwined with time. The spatial characteristics of temporality, therefore, cannot be discussed without shedding light on time and the different ways time is infused in the spatial realities of living and working in a refugee camp. This is what I address in this chapter drawing on material from interviews with psychologists and social workers as well as my own experience of working and researching in the refugee camps in mainland Greece. In this way, this chapter resonates with my second research aim on critically exploring how time act in and within the performance of psychosocial

---

[61] Chronis Missios besides an important Greek author was a major left-wing activist imprisoned and tortured for the most part of his life, due to his political beliefs, during the dictatorship of Metaksas.

support, as well as with the fourth research which aims to demonstrate how the discourses of humanitarian aid and psychology produce the subjectivities of aid workers.

The first section of this chapter begins with the way time is inscribed in the *traumatic present* (Kapsali and Mentinis, 2018) of aid workers as they move psychically to the traumatic reality of refugees. The traumatic present, as a concept, is fruitful not only to depict that traumatic reality could also be a component of the aid worker's experience, but also to highlight the psychoanalytic relationship between time and trauma in the manifestation of *the act* (Bistoen, 2016). Bistoen (2016) argues that a Lacanian understanding of trauma can introduce *the political* into a psychoanalytic understanding of trauma. Moving away from traditional biomedical as well as sociological reductionist approaches to it, the navigation of Lacan in *the political* (Stavrakakis, 2002) leads to the investigation of what a *radical act* would mean amid a traumatic present. This section aims to elaborate on the notion of the traumatic present and how time is encapsulated in the psychoanalytic concept of *the act* (what also Badiou calls *an event*).

Having located the possibilities of the radical in the traumatic, the second section, *Repetitiveness: Between time and symptom as a condition and method of meaning*, seeks to reverse the concept of 'traumatic' in the everyday life of refugees. It discusses the role of normative understandings of suffering in the elaboration of *activation* and *psychosomatic symptoms*. Linking time (past-present-future) with Benjamin's (1955/2007) reversal of dominant conceptions of *historical time*, it is argued that the call for activation reproduces a mainstream understanding of 'time and symptom' which prevents refugees from performing their own *subjective act*. 'To make refugees active' is a subversive call which psychologises their past and attempts to restore it in a present pending, in Benjamin's (Schinkel, 2015) terms, between 'modernity and catastrophe'.

In psychoanalysis, the symptom is a message from the unconscious that we try to decipher. In Freudian terms (1920/2003b) it signals an unconscious conflict which

rises when something is against the laws (or morals) of the society (as internalised by the suffering/conflicted subject). Thus, time is enclosed in the repetitiveness of the symptom to indicate an unconscious meaning which has not yet been spoken. *Psychosomatic symptoms* comprise the second half of this section to stress that the symptom carries a political and postcolonial meaning. Mainstream discourses distort and misrecognise the 'symptom's own time' (Fanon, 1952/2008), as a moment that is historical and political. Approaching 'the essence' of symptom with a postcolonial Fanonian (see the collective volume of Turner and Neville, 2020, but also Fanon, 2018) framework, it is argued that the existence of psychosomatic symptoms makes a specific subjective claim of living inscribed in the body. It tells that what makes refugee reality traumatic is our own symptomatic and racial reading, because it blurs 'in the everyday' the possibilities of both the aid worker and the refugee to perform a subjective act.

In this way, the chapter arrives at *Body as an accumulation of knowledge: Between rupture and a new beginning* as its last section, which emphasizes the significance of the body in the subjective claim of existence. Body functions as an accumulation strategy of knowledge (Harvey, 2000) which provokes the antinomies that lie underneath the humanitarian discourse of the psychological. The latter, undoubtedly ruptured, could also perform as a new beginning, as an act against pathologisation and racialisation. An act in the political.

6.2 Traumatic present

Traumatic present was first introduced as a concept in the book *Psychologies of Compliance: Notes on the Psychopolitical Control of Migration* (Kapsali and Mentinis, 2018, in Greek). The authors, being aid workers themselves in hotspots and refugee camps in Greece, describe quite vividly what constitutes the traumatic reality of the present. As they argue (ibid, p.79-80 my translation):

> 'With the term "traumatic present" we refer to the experience of the material-psychopolitical management of the Registration and Identification Centre (RIC) in the so-called entrance gates (for example in Moria, Mytilene, in Vathy, Samos etc.). Even though many critical scholars tend to describe

this specific populations' management model with the term "camp",[62] actually we need to acknowledge that it is a much more complicated condition which brings elements and characteristics of a camp, open prison and deprived multinational favella/slum. In these spaces, in which managers are the military, the police, FRONTEX, the Greek state, big international organisations like the UNHCR and the IOM, KEELPNO and many NGO, thousand migrants are piled under terrible conditions, exposed to danger and the fear of natural, psychological and sexual violence and are trapped for a long period in a vicious bureaucratic circle and continuous dead ends in terms of asylum procedures but also their everyday needs (medical care, clothes, legal services etc.) In RIC's condition, where exception is the rule and the law is basically abolished, the unveiling of the personal story gets interrupted, the prospect of future collapses and the past, with all of its burden, drives forcefully and explodes into the dead-end everyday life. Often, very often what psychologists are called to deal with, it is not the traumas of the past but the consequences of a traumatic present.'

The description above, reflects precisely one of the arguments put forward in the previous chapter, that is, how the spatial intricacies of the hotspot of Moria generate the trauma of the everyday survival, as if refugees have de facto to struggle to survive. As if space works like a ritual passage from refugeeness (Kallio et al., 2019) to 'nationalisation', from 'oppression' to 'alienation', from 'frustration' to 'annihilation'. Traumatic present, as a conceptual tool in this chapter, therefore, seeks to depict the trauma of the everyday life, aiming to call to attention to the spaces that lie in-between the narrations of refugee and its cluster, the aid worker's hearing.

In this section, the concept of traumatic present is elaborated from an aid worker's story to depict, first, that it could be also traumatic for those who work there, and, secondly, to highlight what political possibilities trauma may encapsulate in the way aid workers perform. In terms of the first point, it needs to be clarified that

---

[62] 'στρατόπεδο συγκέντρωσης / stratopedo sygentrosis'

aid workers' experiences are non-equivalent to refugees' traumatic present. Undoubtedly, refugees encounter a much more traumatic reality in camps and hotspots since they are called to live there for an unknown period and the way they do is far from being a deliberate choice. Nevertheless, because refugees' condition of living is traumatic, the latter may also infuse aid worker's experience.[63] [64] The question stands as follows: What are the political possibilities in the traumatic register? Can trauma, in its psychoanalytic essence be a force of/to *the political?* And by political I use and quote Ticktin's (2011b, p.251) argument which says that '…the political refers to the disruption of an established order…'.

The following extract comes from an interview I had with a lawyer in the refugee camps in mainland Greece between October and December 2018. As indicated in chapter three, since I disclose the position of the aid worker, I do not specify the exact camp to assure anonymity.

-Me: 'How would you describe a day in the refugee camp?'

-Aid Worker: '(small pause) I would describe you a calm day and I would describe you a day in which you never know (emphasis) going to [the camp] what will arise. I cannot describe a day, there is no typical day (laugh), there is no classic day, no.'

-Me: 'What is the weirdest you remember?'

-Aid Worker: 'The most frightening I would tell you…not the weirdest (lowering voice), the most frightening for me was when *I could not manage a case (small pause) I could not manage a case and there I got scared. I got*

---

[63] It may also be argued that since aid workers are paid to be present there, the latter may not stand as a strong argument, since their positioning is obviously different than that of the refugee and thus have 'a reason' to be there. Although this is true, the aid workers' narratives reveal that working with refugees can be traumatic as well.

[64] I do not use the concept of 'traumatic' to reinforce a psychologised or psychoanalysed tropes about burn out and vicarious trauma. On the contrary, I use it to discuss what 'the political' means within conditions and situations that are getting both psychologised (i.e. burn out) and psychoanalysed (i.e. vicarious trauma).

scared in the sense that as a private lawyer umm a case would come, I can say that as a private lawyer a case comes, a case would come and I had the responsibility of the management, until where I would reach to have the desired outcome, not to win, to have a desired outcome, you don't always win…with this result, with this sense, I was going *too deep in the case* and in the beginning of the refugee [crisis] I was doing that […] *to go a bit deeper*, so what I did without having a context, because I considered that *I had to ascertain if there is anything else behind, and to go a little bit further*, and all of that…' (my emphasis).

The extract above comes from a lawyer to note that the enunciation of the subject in the state-humanitarian discourse comes from the recurrent ability of the refugee to perform psychologically. In this legal context, which is supposedly quite distinct from a psychologically informed session, the law enforcement works hand in hand with the psychological discourse to extract a profiling of refugeeness (ibid). 'To have a case' means to have the ability to elaborate psychologically your symptoms to mobilise a legal framework of refugees. 'Case' is a master signifier, to mobilise here the Lacanian framework, because it highlights a certain elaboration of meaning. As Parker (2005b, p.170) explains 'these "master signifiers" function as anchors of representation in a text'. They become the anchoring points and establish the meaning for a whole chain of signifiers. Having, therefore, 'a case' justifies the psycho-legal technique of going, as the participant said *'…a bit deeper […] a little bit further…'* because it establishes the resonance of 'case itself'. Going, as the participant continued, *'…too deep in the case […] to ascertain if there is anything else behind…'* is a discursive technique of truth extraction – a confession (Foucault, 1976/1978) which attempts to enunciate 'a strong asylum claim' in the performative action of *the psychological*.

The lawyer describing the initial communications and meetings they had with the refugee, continues:

'…Obviously I considered that I won her trust (small pause) and the third or fourth time, she comes, sits opposite to me, she had told me that she is

engaged, and she tells me "I want to umm help me because I want to help my child", I thought, because she hadn't mentioned to me about kids, just a fiancé, I thought that the translation and the interpretation, when she says kid means the fiancé and [while she says that] I need help for my child...*she takes the phone and she does this and she turns to me an image of her son being abused by his father, who was sending the videos to coerce her to come back* (pause) *I flip, unintentionally I flip* (emphasis) [the fact that] *"I turn the mobile phone and I show you the picture and the video"*; (small pause) *I freeze* (small pause). *He was in another country, which means that I didn't have, I had my hands tied*, and what can I answer (emphasis) to a human who may have considered that I can help in everything? She wanted to share it? She trusted me? She considered that I could do something? I do not know; *at that moment I could not do anything...*' (my emphasis).

Lacan (1973/2018, p.198) argues that 'a signifier is that which represents a subject'. However, he highlights that when a signifier represents a subject, it is 'not for another subject but for another signifier'. If we want therefore, to interpret a text in Lacanian terms, Parker (2005b, p. 167) states, we need to treat signifiers as 'the object of study'. In the previous extract the repetition of the signifier 'case' establishes a certain way and framework under which the woman is discursively approached. The lawyer *'...had to ascertain if there is anything else behind...'* and thus used a technique of truth extraction to enhance an asylum claim. The signifier 'case' signalled a certain performativity of language and discursive communication in-between the aid worker and the refugee.

The disclosure of a video (a form of non-verbal elaboration of truth) as evidence of the refugee to seek primarily help and then status, provoked the aid worker to flip '...*I flip, unintentionally I flip...*' and freeze. The lawyer, using a technique of enunciation to make the woman articulate clearly and precisely the reason of her asylum claim, did not expect a proof registered in an image. On the contrary, the lawyer was going '*deeper*' and '*further*' to make her produce a statement which would stand as a legal discourse. 'The turn' of the mobile, is a 'turn' in the technique itself, a turn of the signifier. By forcing the lawyer to encounter the

traumatic material more directly, the woman turns her position to the lawyer and calls them to share an act of enunciation, which can also be signified as an act and call for help. This unexpected 'turn' is polysemous because not only signals a different register in the discourse (i.e. different forms of proof)[65] but also shares a co-position in the traumatic register. The image of the abuse is an event in the Badiouan sense (2005), a sudden, unexpected, and incomprehensible something that has no place with it because it clashes with the way 'case' signifies meaning in the Symbolic register of the aid worker, a discursive psychological elaboration of truth.

This call, this turn is an *event* and a pathway towards *the political* in the *traumatic* register of the *present*.

And our conversation continued:

'(Long pause)'

-Me: '…and how did you respond?'

-Aid Worker: 'I responded that "I would kindly please, there is no need to to to see all (emphasis) this, there is no need this moment, it does not detract from what you are dealing with umm honestly it didn't happen to me before to intervene in another country, give me 5 minutes (small pause) to see what I can do and if I can do something". I left the room, I came outside, and I called UN umm GCR in Athens to see up to what point we can intervene, if we can intervene and of course it goes without saying that we would not be able to intervene (lowering voice) … it is Afghanistan, it is the father of her child which means that we had to umm cooperate with umm Afghani authorities to intervene…(pause) who?'

-Me: 'How did you manage it emotionally?'

---

[65] Using a cell phone video as legal evidence may be possible, but evidence is not always guaranteed to be admissible. In this way, in a case of a court for instance, the lawyer would have to convince the judge that the video footage is reliable.

-Aid Worker: '(small pause) *I think I did not manage it, and still I do not manage it…it cannot not be managed*, because what is problematic in the organisations is that we do not have the support in all of it, that is to say that I consider that since I called GCR that moment, the next one (emphasis) someone from the social service of GCR had to call me back. Never, no one, not even in ARSIS…' (my emphasis).

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, *the Real* is identified as a traumatic register. In this way it is difficult to be discussed because it concerns something 'impossible' (Stavrakakis, 2002), something that cannot be symbolised, it can neither be expressed in language nor captured in an image. The 'turn' to the photographic and video material is a turn to the traumatic register because it introduces the element of impossibility *'…I flip…'*, the element of the non-symbolised *'…I freeze'*, the element of the non-manageable *'…I did not manage'*. Trauma, as Bistoen (2016, p.70) points out is 'the result of failure of the symbolic imaginary system of representation to deal with an aspect of the real'. Similarly, traumatic present is a present which is unable to register meaning in the Symbolic.

In the first analysis chapter I discussed how aid workers and refugees are called to participate in the discourse of the master to understand themselves and the world in line with the master's understanding, the organisation, and its discourse. As soon as the aid worker confirmed that neither the organisation nor any other non- and inter-governmental body will be able to intervene in this case, the aid worker seems unable to produce and share meaning *'…I think I did not manage it, and still I don't manage it…it cannot not not be managed'*. Unable to intervene '…of *course it goes without saying that we would not be able to intervene…'*, they turn to the organisation in a different way to grasp some meaning.

The difference lies in lawyer's enactment of the signifier 'case'. This time it is not the woman that needs an intervention to perform psychologically in the legal discourse, it is the lawyer themself that seeks support from the organisation. Encountering with the traumatic present of the woman, the lawyer turns to the organisation and makes a call to become themself a case in the performative

psychological support of the organisation '…*because what is problematic in the organisations is that we do not have the support in all of it, that is to say that I consider that since I called GCR that moment, the next one (emphasis) someone from the social service of GCR had to call me back. Never, no one, not even in ARSIS…*'.

Žižek (2002) points out that the Real as the moment of rupture tears away the imaginary cover of ideology to reveal the Other's lack of foundation and its insufficiency. No matter how much the aid worker could justify the non-action towards the refugee woman based on international law and national context's restrictions ('…*it goes without saying that we would not be able to intervene [lowering voice] …it is Afghanistan, it is the father of her child which means that we had to umm cooperate with umm Afghani authorities to intervene… [pause] who?* '), the 'turn' to the traumatic present of the woman, and the organisation's *absence* in the production of meaning are an *event* (Badiou, 2005) which ruptures the pre-existing (institutional) schemata of making meaning. In other words, the intimacy with the traumatic encounter of woman's reality and the fact that the organisation could not help neither the refugee nor the aid worker to make some meaning, revealed a lack in the way organisation's Symbolic order is structured but also the lawyer's effort to demonstrate recognition of the severity and distressing character of the material shown.

In recent years, authors such as Eisenstein and McGowan (2012), Johnston (2009), Stavrakakis (2002) and Laclau and Mouffe (1985) have argued that it is precisely in these moments of rupture that the political surfaces. Hence, having shown that aid worker's present could also be traumatic, confronting closely and directly the refugee's life material, the following section discusses what an act in the political means in relation to aid worker's story.

6.3 Act in the political

Lacan distinguishes *the act* from mere 'action'. Action, according to him (see Bistoen, 2006, p.134), is readily inscribable in the pre-established framework whereas 'the act's' disruption signals its real aspect' precisely because it cannot

be symbolised. Bistoen (ibid) discusses that, in a traumatic rupture, the master signifiers suddenly 'lose their validity' and thus the entire framework that could make sense of the world is dislocated. 'Case' as a master signifier in the aid worker's discourse lost its validity when encountering the traumatic present of the refugee. The lawyer co-positioning in the traumatic register and being unable to co-produce meaning within the organisation's Symbolic order entered a traumatic present in which the signifier 'case' did not make sense as a framework by which to approach the woman. Making themself 'a case' calling for the organisation's support may therefore be perceived an action but is not an *act* in itself.

In addition, in Chapter Three (see section 3.2.2iii), I discussed how some aid workers referred to our communication during the interview as 'therapeutic'. Some of them, also, mentioned that either they have already sought support to cope emotionally with the job or they would seek support as soon as their contract would come to an end. The latter is important because it shows that they seek meaning from the real kernel of their job, by making themselves a case in a different therapeutic context.

The act however, according to Lacan, cannot find itself in existing systems of knowledge and justification. It destabilises the previous structure and calls for a new signification, a new signifying structure. The *'non-manageable' '…it cannot not not be managed…'* may encapsulate *an act* in Lacanian terms, because the master signifier of 'case' as a system of knowledge does not make sense anymore. The woman's traumatic present pierced the aid worker's presence, co-positioning them into a traumatic register, in which organisation's Symbolic order could not produce any meaning. It opened a gap to intervene in the traumatic present.

To put it differently, aid worker's present may have been traumatic coming closer to the refugee's truth and organisation's absence*,* but it is this clash in-between trauma, meaning and signification that opens the possibilities of an *act* to perform. It is the notion of trauma in aid worker's present that may encapsulate an act in the political. Bistoen, following Badiou's conceptualisation of 'event', argues that a subjective act starts firstly with its acknowledgement and secondly by naming it.

According to Badiou, the subject is not the one who names it, but the name comes as a result of the act of naming it. The name secures a signification, offers a paradoxical temporality, until the new world arises, and the subject can make meaning of what had happened. In Karen Blixen's (cited in Cavarero, 2000) famous story 'The Cardinal's First Tale' the story opens when Cardinal Salviati is asked 'Who are you?' Instead of answering the question, the latter asks: 'Who am I?' and he tells a story about his parents. Coming back to where my discussion started with the aid worker, the lawyer responded to my call to describe a weird day in the refugee camp using a story.

For Blixen, Cavarero (2000, p.137) stresses 'the question which reveals the desire of the self in the narrative scene is the questions "who am I?" addressed to another'. The woman's story narrated by the aid worker suggests, first, that traumatic present may be a succinct concept to narrate refugees' life-story in the camps. Taking into consideration the material shared in the previous chapter, in the current example woman's present is traumatic because she is not only living in such conditions but on top of that she clashes with a systemic and bureaucratic dead end which cannot intervene or ensure her son's safety. Second, it may be a fundamental concept because it transforms aid worker *as another narrator themself*. Aware of the representational intricacies that this may rise, especially from a postcolonial perspective, it is argued that traumatic present as the rupture of life's history may be connected to the moment of the political as the aid worker becomes a narrator themself and turns the question back to the self by asking: 'Who am I'?

As Zupančič argues (2000) at the moment of the act, the subject is 'objectified' in the sense that in an act the subject arises from the act and not the act from the subject. It is only after the act that someone can find their subjective position so to look back and claim responsibility.

What is at stake, therefore, is whether the subject will abstract meaning through misrecognition with the organisation or whether they will stand up by acknowledging that an event occurred and will attempt to proceed in an act of

naming. Becoming the narrator of this story, the lawyer opens the possibility of the radical by attempting to explain what was frightening in it. As indicated above, some aid workers seek meaning for their traumatic encounters by visiting a psychologist away of their workspace, which could also be read as a reproduction of psychologization, in the sense that the non-meaning from the everyday reality in the refugee camps, pushes them to seek and make meaning inside a therapeutic room. This may reinforce the discourse of psychology in the way the everyday reality is sensed. Nevertheless, some aid workers besides engaging and talking about their work in therapeutic sessions, also started unionising in the correspondent union for aid workers in the non-governmental sector as an attempt to fight back both the conditions of their work as well as the traumatic realities refugees must endure daily in camps and hotspots.

In the lawyer's example, the space of interview as an alternative space of speech seemed important to let the aid worker narrate and re-engage with what 'frightened' them. It is argued then, that it is important to reflect, overall, how spatial temporality and affect could become important elements in the way a narration transforms into a force in the political, in a therapeutic environment, in the actual form of taking political and activist action and in-between them. Although, in my opinion interview is not such a space, it is interesting that interview as an alternative space of speech, showed how the radical could surface in an almost free association of speech.

 It may be, thus, that the alienation of work and the identification with the organisation's meaning for who the Other shall be, to hinge aid workers' stories from producing their own 'naming'. In Lacanian terms, truth always arises from misrecognition because it requires an illusionary position from the analysand that knowledge exists in the transferential subject of the analyst, *the sujet-supposé-savoir*. The aid worker, therefore, 'needs to perform a series of actions of which only time will tell if one of them amounts to an act proper' (Bistoen, 2016, p.158). In the next section I will describe such a series of actions which suggest they blur the radical potentialities of traumatic present, moving between the misrecognition of time and symptom in the organisation's discourse.

6.4 Repetitiveness: Between *time* and *symptom* as a condition and method of meaning

In this section it is argued that aid workers, themselves living in a traumatic present and being sometimes unable to perform a radical act, tend to identify with the organisation's discourse to make meaning of the people they are working with. The discourse of the organisation is underpinned by institutionalised modes of knowledge, the scientific empiricism as well as the state's systems of knowledge (for instance the discourse of the university). In this way, the psychological discourse is not necessarily the discourse of the psychological per se, but the way it is performed by the state's institutionalised forms of knowledge such as the scientific psychology and the psychology of the state. Hence, the discourse of the psychological, works as a discourse of misrecognition in both state's and organisation's narrative, encapsulates time in two ways; the first is the discourse of activation and the second the discourse of symptomatology. Both are apparent in the state's and organisation's attempt at progress and pathology.

6.4.1 Activation

The discourse of activation 'to make refugees active' besides being a component of aid workers' narrative is a core policy in the way psychosocial support is performed in the refugee camps. The constant struggle of setting up and establishing a 'routine', a daily programme, seems crucial in the level of humanitarian intervention as well as in the level of the psyche. To make someone active, to mobilise someone, encapsulates per se a repetitive engagement in action and a time-specific schedule.

As a psychologist mentions:

> '…and when let's say someone comes and complaints that "I don't have anything to do, I feel bored, I want to go in an apartment" I know very well that the process to be given an apartment is complicated, either he will be given an apartment or not but until going there the activities we have in the camp which, with which he may get involved at least to fill in his day to be occupied with something at least of not being bored, to not be, not be

vulnerable to anxiety, to not be vulnerable in losing interest or I may say in "depression", he does not get involved with something. Ok so he sits, and he thinks "what I left back in my country" he thinks the life he had before, and he does not have any motivation to get involved with with the present and do something…'.

The call to make someone active in this extract is linked on the one hand with 'protecting' the other, of not being vulnerable to potential psychopathologies such as anxiety or depression, and, on the other hand, is closely linked with notions of past and present, to keep present busy, so to avoid past coming in and interrupt present's progress. To be involved in activities which have been created for them, performs a schedule which chimes in with notions of wellbeing and progress. As if someone mentally challenged with boredom and sickness is not potentially useful. As another psychologist mentions:

> '…they vegetate, this thing, hm…and through which [team activities] I believe that opportunities will be given umm to set some aims for their future, umm to see perhaps their future, because most of them do not care about their future, they just cry for the past and…they exist in the present…'.

Benjamin (Khatib, 2017 p.3) conceives history 'not as a progressive flow of "homogenous, empty time" but as an anachronic constellation of past and present'. This anti-evolutionary concept of history suggests that the past is never gone and, most importantly, it can never be historicised unless it is recalled in a revolutionary way.

> 'The medium in which the present is connected to all lost causes and struggles of those who literally and metaphorically have lost their histories is called "tradition of the oppressed"' (ibid).

To be activated, therefore, means to interrogate what is at stake when the past is infused in the present. To put it differently, to be activated, could possibly mean that past loses all its radical possibilities of existence, that it surrenders to the process of present, a process of activation.

One feature of the major theoretical heritage that Benjamin left was his theoretical elaboration on modernity and catastrophe. As Schinkel (2015) argues, while modernity emerged from the crisis of the pre-modern, the crisis of modernity brought within it a crisis of representation. Marx has stated that modernity becomes an eternal recurrence of the same, of crisis. This recurrence of the same is empowered by mechanized time. In fact, Jameson (2002) noted that modernity means 'now', signalling that the concept of modernity highlights 'the repetition of now', an eternal return of the same.

Taking, therefore, into consideration the link between time and the tradition of the oppressed, how the past and present become an intermediary terrain to rise causes and struggles of those who lost their histories, the tradition of the oppressed reminds that the past and its struggle cannot be narrated in/as a chronological story. Rather, past struggle should be narrated as a force which employs past's repressed potentialities (Khatib, 2017). Approaching it in a chronological order or with the present's criteria, would mean, as Marx, Benjamin and Jameson claimed, to fall in the repetition of an eternal return of the same, instead of deploying the past's potential struggles and potentialities.

Approaching refugees' time in the camp in pathological terms *'…they tend to fall in depression…'* and/or in terms of action *'…they do not do something; they just sit and watch the ceiling* [Greek expression] *…'* signifies that the discourse of activation encapsulates an eternal procedure of symptom and progress. Refugees come from a different cultural background which often links mainstream discourses (i.e. such as those of European and immigration politics, state nationalist discourses and mainstream theories in migration and science) with conservativism. Religious beliefs, as being a Muslim, have been repetitively linked with endemic patriarchy, terrorism, threat, refuge as constitutive of vulnerability and origin from a non-that-developed nation, blackness with lack, just to name a few. Taking into consideration the many ways their background is related to

conservatism[66] or lack, instead of being tied to an intimate history of colonialism and imperialism, misrecognising their past equals the misrecognition of their presence.

In this way, not only does normality become a concept identified with progress but also their past does not signal progress (an idea closely linked with modernity and colonialism). As the psychologist said before '…*most of them do not care about their future, they just cry for the past and…they exist in the present…*'. It is the activities that have been set up by the organisation that psychologists believe will help them address their future '…*through which* [team activities] *I believe that opportunities will be given umm to set some aims for their future…*', '…*he thinks the life he had before, and he does not have any motivation to get involved with with the present and do something…*'. It is the activities' presence in the western terrain that promises progress for a well-aimed future. It seems as if the way out of camp and refugeeness (Kallio et all, 2019) is an appropriately composed conception of the future.

To take this analysis a bit further, it could be said that the misrecognition of the oppressed in the present (in normal-pathological terms) signals alienation in the tradition of the oppressed per se. This alienation distorts both their presence in present, and the radical possibilities that their past encapsulates. Justifying their 'not response in activation' based on symptom-related narratives blurs their story of existence in the western territory and transforms their past into stories of symptom and failures of fulfilment. Schinkel (2015, p.40) points out that even if modernity no longer evolves based on a notion of progress but rather a notion of 'crisis recovery', it is nevertheless positioned as an eternal return of the same. This repetitiveness of the same, the fact that there are no alternatives is what, for Benjamin (ibid), constitutes catastrophe.

---

[66] By conservatism, I do not only refer to right wing conservative politics, but also and more broadly to the different ways of conservativism which are sometimes mobilised to reflect refugees life, within stereotypes, humour, and other form of communicative discourses.

Refugees' resistance in the organised everyday life of the camp has been often linked with ideas of 'spoon-feeding', apathy and mental health-related symptoms, actions that intercept their self-actualisation. In psychoanalysis, symptom is an active work which calls for further action. The identification of 'no-response' with symptoms of 'apathy' or 'depression' is closely linked with a mainstream psychological understanding, which interprets the 'no-response' as withdrawn from life itself. Shifting the focus and analysis of the 'no-response' from psychologised forms of understanding ('apathy', 'depression') especially when refugees had to endure forms of living, such as the hotspots and camps, it may be argued that what a psychologised interpretation of 'non-engagement' misses is the resistance to the symptom of modernity itself, progress.

Indeed, it could be said that it is precisely because of 'progress' or system's 'crisis recovery' that people fled from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Kongo, Somalia, Cameroun, and ended up as refugees. Their 'non-response' resists that call of progress which made them be there in the first place. It resists the very first symptom that made them what the system now calls 'refugee'. Recognising them in distorted categories which signal the system's present action (i.e. identification with legal categories which promise a certain form of existence), calls (or demands of) them to act in a certain way with their past-present-and future. They are represented as needing to 'stop crying' for the past and engage with the present so to have a future. It calls them to act in a way in which the system could repeat the fantasy of progress, as if refugees become another project of progress.

And, even if progress is no longer possible as we live in a recurrent performance of the same, of crisis, it is in the system's fantasy that makes progress. The 'crisis recovery' the idea that the system can overcome one crisis with another, one war with another, questions the very possibility of the present in the refugee camps. If the present, then, is the fantasy that promises system's progress, the refugees' resistance in the call of presence, traverses that fantasy and questions the way it asks them to perform in the present. Their 'not-engagement' signifies a hope that the past has not yet existed.

Thus, the following expression and statement, as shared earlier, *'…cry for the past…'* or *'…he does not have any motivation to get involved with with the present and do something…'* could be seen as a psychologised version of temporality which may miss the radical possibilities that past encapsulate.

Žižek, as Khatib (2017, p.7) mentions, rightly points out that Benjamin's anti-historicist stance relies on the notion that 'revolutionary Act that will […] retroactively realise the crushed longings of all past failed revolutionary attempts.' To put it simply, 'only a revolutionary act within class struggle can fully actualise and realise a past that has *not yet* existed. From a historical perspective, the past is still 'ahead' of us'' (ibid, p.7). This means that the past is not simply a past but carries within it the utopian promise for a future redemption (see also Žižek, 2000b). Therefore, to understand refugees' past and their 'withdrawn from the present', what needs to be considered are the utopian hopes of a future that were never actualised, that were betrayed and crushed. The past is not a given, it is not a symptom or a timing performance, because it is never fully constituted from an ontological point of view. It may be argued, then, that refugees do not withdraw *from* their present, but they are trying to make sense of the past's hidden, repressed, and betrayed potentialities. These are potentialities that reflect how it would be without war, or what a world of freedom might mean. Without considering the hidden, repressed, betrayed potentialities of the past, the latter cannot arrive at the point where *it can become history*.

Restoring the past is not a conservative or/ psychological process of activation. On the contrary, as Žižek (2000b) and Khatib (2017) emphasise, it is a matter of opening, of exposing the present as changeable. It is a matter of performing *a revolutionary act* that will make refugees past, history. 'Where the crushed potentialities of the past were, there the history of the struggling, oppressed class shall be' (Khatib, 2017, p.15).

Having argued that notions of activation excise the radical possibilities of the past, in the next section, I focus on psychosomatic symptoms to stress that the symptom carries a political and postcolonial meaning.

6.4.2 Psychosomatic symptoms

The value of temporality and history for clinical work was a major issue that also underpinned Fanon's thought, theoretical perspective and call for action. In *Frantz Fanon, Psychiatry and Politics* Gibson and Beneduce (2017, p.42) point out that 'history for him was embedded in and expressive of a collective psychic life'. Mental disorders, for Fanon, had to be understood sociogenically, within a social tension which raise their meaning in inter-subjective relationships. The latter was also part of Lacan's thought, who located the meaning of symptom inter-subjectively. Normality then, 'is acting within history and alienation is the suspension of the existential link to time' (ibid, p.43).

'Our medical perspective is spatial whereas it should temporalize itself,' Fanon said. It is necessary, he added, 'to consider patients' mystical beliefs not simply as an expression of "intellectual insufficiency" but in terms of a complex reaction - "a biological, psychic and metaphysical restriction" – to the inexplicable' (as cited in ibid, p.40). The symptom for Fanon must not be taken as fixed, but rather as something that creates a person from the beginning. A new person comes up whose body needs to be taken seriously into consideration. Gibson and Beneduce (ibid, p.41) highlight that Fanon was very close to the 'mindful body' of the current medical anthropology, acknowledging that 'our bodies undertake arduous struggle to maintain our health'. Body, for Fanon, is a 'posture', it is a condition which navigates our 'primordial interrogative' relation to the world, a condition 'to reveal meaning in things' (Khalfa, 2005, p.43).

In this way, psychosomatic symptoms are positioned in this moment of history and temporality, normality and madness, to signify the 'suspected bodies' (Bennani, 1980) of refugees; what Fanon once named, referring to his North African patients in France and the colonised patients in Algeria, the 'North African syndrome' (see Fanon, 1964/1967). Considering the experience of pain in Algerian migrants, the perceptions of their bodies and the constant fear of death in the face of what sometimes appeared to be trivial symptoms, Fanon's analysis centres the body as a concept of body politics (see Khalfa, 2005; Scheper-Hughes and Lock, 1987) which signifies history itself. The body, for Fanon, is always 'politically and racially

situated' (see Gibson and Beneduce, 2017, p.123), hence any gaze on the body becomes political as well. Consequently, the objectivity of the medical gaze is of high importance to him when medical practice comes to examine the body.

As the same psychologist, who opened section 6.4.1, shares:

> '…most of them embody, psycho-embody their problems, has issues in the family with the husband or the children the tension is too much, comes and says "I have headache and I need medicines", most of the cases I had umm they were referred to by the doctors of the umm world which were in the camp; someone goes without having aaaa umm medical issue I will say, and asks for medicines either for sleeping or for headache and the pain does not exist, then, they send him to a psychologist, they understand with some explanation that "the problem I deal with is this, I think a lot because I am here and I miss my family", most [of them] they do not know how to speak for their emotions…'.

And Fanon (1964/1967, p.8) writes:

> 'The patient who complains of headaches, ringing in his ears, and dizziness, will also have high blood-pressure. But should it happen that along with these symptoms there is no sign of high blood-pressure, nor of brain tumor, in any case nothing positive, the doctor would have to conclude that medical thinking was at fault; and as any thinking is necessarily thinking about something, he will find the patient at fault-an indocile, undisciplined patient, who doesn't know the rules of the game. Especially the rule, known to be inflexible, which says: any symptom presupposes a lesion.'

The objective medical gaze needs to justify the tensions of the body into symptoms which provoke lesions. As Fanon (ibid, my emphasis) shows, for doctors *'…any symptom presupposes a lesion…'*. The asymptomatic patient is a patient whose tensions are not recognised since he does not show any symptoms which could be medically read. In other words, his pain is misrecognised because it is unable to be seated in the medical terminology of suffering. 'The North African

syndrome', Fanon writes in his homonymous essay, positions the patient in a socio-diagnosis in which 'The North African takes his place in the asymptomatic syndrome and is automatically put down as undisciplined, inconsequential and insincere' (ibid, p.10).

Similarly, in the psychologist's extract, refugees' pain is also misrecognised upon the medical gaze. As the psychologist says, *'…the pain does not exist…'*. The pain in the head, unable to find a substantial medical interpretation loses its substantial meaning; and without medical meaning, the pain also loses its legitimate existence. It does not have a medical value which could be justified in tensions-lesions and thus prescribe a medication to alleviate it. The pain is misrecognised in its own embodiment and is moved from the level of body to the level of the psyche. Doctors of the world being unable to 'see' the outcome of pain in the body, refer the refugee to the expert of the psyche.

What if pain, though, is an affective emotion powerful to signify 'a symptom of its own time'? Up till now, for the pain to be considered, it means either to be 'seen' on the body or to be enunciated to articulate its meaning. In both cases, nevertheless, the pain must 'be seen' to be recognised. What, then, does 'a symptom of its own time' mean from a Fanonian point of view? What is the relationship of time and symptom in the refugee reality? And what does Fanon add to this reading of psychosomatic symptoms as they manifest in the refugee camps?

The past for the refugee as for 'the North African' is 'a burning past'. 'What he hopes is that he will never suffer again, never again be face to face with that past. This present pain […] suffices him' (ibid, p.4). The past is burning in a burning present, I would claim, where pain as a form of psychosomatic symptom is constantly misrecognised. See, for instance how the psychologist argues that refugees need help to understand why they feel pain *'…they understand with some explanation that "the problem I deal with is this, I think a lot because I am here, and I miss my family" …'*. It is not that the psychologist does not attempt to address the meaning of symptom, the meaning of pain, but pushes it into a level of psychic

elaboration which articulates a different form of existence and traps the refugee in-between past-and present. To *'think a lot'* because *'I am here, and I miss my family'* is a distorted interpretation. It psychologises their past in a psychologised present because it treats the symptom simply as a psychic manifestation. The attitude of the medical personnel, Fanon argues (ibid, p.7), 'is very often an a priori attitude. The North African [the same as refugee] does not come with a substratum common to his race, but on a foundation built by the European. In other words, the North African spontaneously, by the very fact of appearing on the scene, enters into a pre-existing framework'.

The pain in the head is losing its meaning as it enters a European terrain of signification and thus it loses the meaning of its own existence. The pain in the head is an embodied political symptom. A symptom which seeks to understand why 'I am here' in the first place. Turning the symptom inwards reveals firstly the European psychological framework, an individualistic understanding of suffering and secondly provides an argument that prevents the engagement with the role of the West in refugees' arrival. This is what makes Fanon so important in the way of reading psychosomatic symptoms in the refugee reality; it adds a racial and postcolonial reading of suffering which moves from the bodily integrity into the psychic elaboration, and it positions the West in the epicentre of refugee's subject formation. Fanon and Lacaton (1955, as cited in Gibson and Beneduce, 2017) tried hard to avoid medicalising what they considered as a political symptom of suffering and their task was to recover what they called 'the criminal's truth' referring to all the stereotypes the colonised people were subjected to. Therefore, psychosomatic symptoms may be repetitive in the refugee reality as they come again and again to claim a truth, as a form of subjective existence vis-à-vis the performance of truth embodied in aid worker's presence.

When the psychologist claims that *'…the other may not have a word in his mother tongue to say depression or to be able to speak to someone for the way (emphasis) he feels, that is to say to bring him from what he has come as "my head hurts" to understand that my head hurts because I think too much, or I don't sleep because I think too much…'* is a psychologised distortion of pain which extracts 'a symptom

of its own time' into a 'timed symptom'. In my interpretation, transforming what Fanon (1952/2008, p.6) once said, that 'I belong irreducibly to my time,' as a social constitution of the self in a certain contextual period of time, to 'a symptom [that] belongs irreducibly to its own time' is an attempt to re-situate and redefine the self in its psychosocial formation and its call for a different political existence. The symptom is radical because, while it sheds light in the past's truth, the reason of fleeing naked of counter arguments that turn symptom back to itself, it highlights at the same time a present that cannot be exceeded. The symptom belongs irreducibly to its own time because it captures the truth that was generated in the first place. Another war; another crisis recovery. Its repetition follows faithfully system's repetition to recover and reminds both the self as well as the Other that there is a truth which remains unanswered: 'why I am here?' and 'who am I in relation to you?'. It comes again and again to make a political statement and seek for an alternate political existence.

What I am suggesting here is that what psychiatrists call in Greece 'an adjustment disorder', as discussed in the first analysis chapter, is the epitome of bodily distortion in the level of psyche. Psychologist's statement, *'…in most of them we can say that they have difficulties in adjustment, that is what psychiatrists sign them, as "adjustment disorder"…'*, makes once again Fanon's theory contemporary. Psychiatry, working closely with psychology in the refugee camps,[67] approaches refugees' encounter with time as a psychic malfunction. Adjustment disorder is linked to time as well as the bodily integrity of psyche because it distorts refugee's existence in the camp. 'To live simply means not to die' Fanon said (1961/2004, p.232) but 'to exist means staying alive'. Adjustment disorder encompasses the social dysphoria of our own times, 'the racial conflicts in segregated societies' (ibid). The non-adjustment of body in a spatial temporality which calls it to live by not letting it die, it makes it die in a performance of a disorder in which to exist means to constantly enunciate a self in a western performance. This is 'the psychic life of history' itself (Beneduce, 2012) because,

---

[67] Kindly see chapter four where it is shown that psychologists quite often refer cases to psychiatrists.

while it recalls the colonial legacy of psychiatry, it also highlights that 'adjustment disorder' is a postcolonial disorder which speaks about a past that continues to haunt the present. Hence, psychosomatic symptoms as political symptoms themselves seek to position again and again the reason of refugees' existence in the western terrain. They put us into question, a constant questioning of 'who we are' as well.

The refugees' passivity, then, to the aid worker's call for action should not be considered laziness, or distraction from building a well-aimed future, or a reaction and impact of what aid workers called 'spoon-feeding'. On the contrary, as Fanon argued, 'laziness' should be considered 'a kind of passive resistance, reflecting an organic, anticolonial consciousness' (Gibson and Beneduce, 2017, p.251). Once again, another way to show us their resistance in our symptomatic call for existence and action.

6.5 The body as an accumulation of knowledge: Between rupture and a new beginning

In the previous chapter, it was argued that refugees' bodies besides being represented as vulnerable are also recognised as a body of a population which carries a certain body of culture and create embodied politics. It is not rare that refugees' bodies have been linked with a body of a religion or a disease that challenges the main body of Europe. In this sense, their presence is considered a risk for the body politics of Europe. Harvey (2000) introduces the concept of body as an accumulation strategy of meaning and profit to signal that bodies have the power to produce power, labour, or labour power. Inspired by Marx and his theory/analysis on labour power, he indicated that Marx made a distinction between the labourer, the person, the body, the will, and the labour power which is extracted from the body of the labourer as a commodity. In the spectrum of refugee reality, I argue that body as an accumulation strategy of meaning produces profit by accumulating its knowledge. The knowledge extracted by the refugees' bodies is transformed into a discourse of western expertise which is either imposed directly on them or is being sold as an up-to-date curriculum in the

working market of Europe. Take, for instance, two different cases. The first relates to the way psychosomatic symptoms, as shown above, produce meaning which is being distorted by western expertise. The second, which follows from the first, is the way in which this expertise is being sold meticulously, either in up-to-date university curriculums, policy documents and intervention strategies, or onto the aid workers' bodies who, based on that expertise, (have to) seek better conditions of living. In other words, they forward the knowledge they accumulated with their labour as a commodity. In both examples, which differ vastly among them, time plays a crucial part because it extends or restrains the accumulation of knowledge based on the body. The first links knowledge and time with the body, whereas the second signifies how much knowledge aid workers' bodies could accumulate *during* their time in the field so as to sell it as a commodity. The body therefore carries, as Harvey pointed out, the power (and knowledge), the labour and the labour power.

What is, then, the relation of time, symptom, and act on the 'body knowledge' that is accumulated in the refugee terrain? I claim that Harvey and Fanon may give us an insightful understanding on the way knowledge is accumulated in-between bodies, transforming it on the one hand into a commodity (commodification of knowledge) and one the other hand a chance to rupture with its history and provide a new beginning. In short to produce a field in which the *politics of truth may arise.*

The following four phrases reflect the words of two psychologists and a social worker who worked in the field of different refugee camps. However, I heard these phrases often, in all settings as well as during my work as an aid worker there.

'…every day we can learn and become better…'

'…every day is a new session…'

'…every day is a new discovery…'

'...every day is an experience…'

As can be seen in these 'phrases - extracts' there is a repetition of the *'every day'* as well as *'every day is a new'*. The repetition of the *'every day'*, in line with the everyday as a manifestation of the repetitive in the refugee reality, creates a body of knowledge which *'is a new'* - *'a new session'*, *'a new discovery'*, *'a new experience'*. All these new 'significations' signal some of the ways aid workers process their 'everyday' encounter with the refugee. In this way, it may be argued that the *'every day'* signals a certain body of knowledge related to a session, a discovery, and an experience. Fanon (see Khalfa, 2005, p.43), as indicated earlier, does not treat body as an object but rather as a 'viewpoint on the world'. As Khalfa (ibid)succinctly puts it: 'it is the place where our mind becomes vested in a specific physical and historical situation'. Echoing Fanon's alignment with Merleau-Ponty, who stated that it is the dialectic of body with the world that gives meaning to the given, the 'corporal schema' of aid workers' experience of the *'every day'* transforms their encounter with refugee as a situated knowledge in the level of the psyche - *'session'*, in the level of a contextualised reality - *'discovery'*, and in the level of the embodied self - *'experience'*.

Fanon (Gibson, 2011, p.32, his emphasis) has stated that 'the unemployed, the poor, don't *represent* the truth but are truth *in their being*' challenging the 'true representations' created by the intellectuals. In the context of refugees' representation, it is argued that the *politics of truth* (Gibson and Beneduce, 2017, p.107) involves questioning the relationship of power and knowledge between aid workers and refugees to move from 'the problematization of truth to the problematization of "telling the truth"' (ibid). Aid workers' embodied knowledge in the field of refuge 'told a truth' which, on the one hand, shows the politics of truth in the field (how refuges are represented) and, on the other hand, 'told a truth' which has no meaning for the refugee. To make it more explicit, the *'…every day is a new…'* does not speak at all to the '…every day…' of refugee. Conversely, it is because the 'every day' of the refugee is so stable, frozen, and 'prefixed' that let aid worker to embody their experience as a condition from which can extract something new as meaning. This repetition *'of new'* almost reflects the discussion the second chapter generated on 'camp as lab', as an experimental condition in

which the *'every day'* extracts fruitful insights for a) the organisations strategy to update its way of intervention, b) a framework for the contextualised reality of refuge and c) a particular (labour) experience for the aid worker. All three pillars, though, signal an extraction of truth based on embodied experience and representation which transforms it into a commodity for a) the organisational schema, b) for the state's framing of the situation and c) of the 'labour credit' the worker may take to move into a better condition of living.

'…every day is a new session…'

The reduction of the *'every day'* into the spatial temporality of *'a new session'* depicts first and foremost that the encounter of the aid worker with the Other is time framed. The signifier *'session'* not only indicates that time underpins their encounter, but it also schedules its very end and beginning. To go further, identifying the everyday with *'a session'* reflects the geo-psychoanalytic (Derrida and Nicholson-Smith, 1991) intonation of aid workers' encounter with refugees. The noun *'session'* signals the way they get to know the Other and that there is an ad hoc power relationship within it. The participant used these words to stress that there is always room for becoming better. In this way, they attempted to show that there is always a need to improve the way psychosocial support is implemented. Despite the good intensions, though, it should be noted that what makes a difference in this statement is the sub-phrase of *'…is a new…'*. Approaching the *'…every day…'* as *'…a new session…'* shows primarily that knowledge is time framed and accumulated in a psychologised way. Even though the latter is analysed across my thesis, what is pointed out, here, is the role of the adjective *'new'*. Aid workers' presence in the field is structured in the embodiment of a contract. As discussed earlier, it is quite often that their contracts are time limited, usually between 1 and 6 months. Consequently, the duration of the contract, sometimes also signifies the duration of the funding that an organisation may have secured. In this way, the more sessions take place daily in the field, the more chances there are for an organisation to claim the significance of its presence and remain there. Thus, the *'…every day is a new session…'* may signal the embodiment of aid worker in their time-framed contract: the embodiment of the

'every day' into a session. Such framing is powerful to provoke a certain understanding of the Other. Lastly, it signals that knowledge is embodied and accumulated in a certain spatiotemporal way which is strong enough to reproduce a body of knowledge as a body of commodification; the remaining of the aid worker and thus the organisation in the field.

'…*every day is a new discovery*…'

> Me: '…umm since you are working for some months in the refugee camp, how would you describe a day in the camp?'

> Aid Worker: '…umm I think that umm are many emotions together, plethora of emotions, is a complex [nexus] of emotions this…is hm every day *a disc… a new discovery, you discover* that your smile is *yours* which experience so strong difficulties…' (my emphasis).

Paying attention to the aid worker's response to my question to understand how they experience a day in the camp, the everyday life in the camp corresponds to a discovery and a discovery of emotions. The repetition of *'discovery'* as well as the fact that a day in the camp is represented by shedding light exclusively on their own experience, pinpoints on the one hand the call to contextualise *'discovery'* and on the other hand the embodiment of discovery in an interactive action, such as a smile, which comes back to itself. The adjective *'a new'*, it could also be read in English as *anew*, signalling therefore the repetitive essence of *'discovery'* itself.

Taking into consideration that the aid worker's day in a camp is closely linked with refugees' response, it merits attention that one of the two words that signifies a connection with the Other, is that, as the participant says above, of *'a new discovery'* located in the body in the form of *'…smile…'*. Etymologically speaking 'discover' comes from the late Latin word discooperīre which means 'to disclose', 'to expose'. The prefix 'dis-' indicates a reversal, an act which reveals. But for an act to occur this presupposes that there is an interaction in place. In this way, the signifier *'discovery'* while it encapsulates something new to the world which comes again and again (*'a/new'*), it also signifies a constant absence, the absence

of the Other. Lacan (Evans, 1996, p.1) has noted that the word is 'a presence made of absence', signalling the fundamental binary opposition in the Symbolic order. What I claim, therefore, is that the presence of the Other in the signifier of discovery exists in their constant absence and is interchanged by turning the discovery back to itself. A constant, repetitive absence of the Other in our own self/world making. How, then, does the statement '*…you discover that your smile is yours which experience so strong difficulties…*' speak to us?

To approach this statement, it is necessary to go back in the signifying chain and highlight the word '*complex*'.[68] The latter introduces the world of emotions in which the smile, as an embodied symbol, defines some of them. Reading it psychoanalytically, a complex 'involves multiple identifications with all the interacting images, and thus provides a script according to which the subject is led to "play out, as the sole actor, the drama of conflicts" between the members of his family' (ibid, p.28). It is, therefore, argued that discovery is turning back to itself because the aid worker is playing out as the sole actor in refugee reality. Refugees' presence in their symbolic absence offers a ground to discover both (your)self and the Other. Therefore, the knowledge that the body encounters between presence and absence discovers a truth: aid worker is present – refugee is absent. This psychoanalytic but racial encounter signals that '*discovery*' as a symbol of self/knowledge production signifies an embodied psychic presence and absence which tells a (post)colonial truth, the othering of the Other and its discovery. And the smile depicts the emotional labour of the aid worker in trying to enlist the refugee to enlist into the 'new', the future.

'...*every day is an experience*…'

Repetition, according to Freud (as cited in Rimmon-Kenan, 1980, p.156, but see also Freud, 1914/2003a), 'is not a reproduction of an antecedent presence but a production as "a piece of real experience"'. What this present experience repeats is again an absence. Additionally, according to Lacan, 'the repressed is not only an absent in the sense of being unknown [to the person] but also something that have

---

[68] Here the word *'complex'* is used as a noun, not an adjective.

never occurred in his life' (ibid, p.156). Assimilating the notion of repetition in this peculiar ground, I argue that the absence of refugee in the encounter of the everyday life is a 'phantomatic lie' raised on the aid worker's body who avoids establishing a postcolonial truth. The postcolonial truth, Fanon said, can only be a product of invention, '*the invention of the soul*' which is the work of decolonisation. Decolonisation, then, as a postcolonial truth encrypted on the body and embodied in the soul must be '*a new beginning of history*'. From provincializing the Europe, as once Chakrabarty (2000) stated, it is imperative to provincialize the way knowledge production is universalised and commodified upon refugees' bodies with an upper aim to shake the body politics of Europe.

Moving, from the 'phantomatic' refugee bodies which create experiences in their present absence, there must be a political and epistemological rupture which will turn the tools of diagnoses back to itself. Indeed, '...*every day is an experience*...' or could be an experience but it depends how we would manage to proceed truth based on the body politics of liberation.

To de-commodify the body as a body of labour, knowledge, and truth, it is necessary to make a historical rupture and pave the way for a new beginning, a beginning of multiple subjective acts. To do so, to move from the commodification of knowledge and body into a new beginning of subjective act, it is imperative to break from the *othering* of humanitarian border to a hamble encounter with the Other.

6.6 Conclusion

Returning, like the symptom returns, to Cavarero's tale and the question her main character Cardinal Salviati is asked 'Who are you?' I would like to return that questions to us and ask, 'Who are we?' amid this reality. If the Cardinal said the story of his parents, we would tell the story of refugees. This act of narration could be both liberating, as well as misrepresenting, depending on the time of its narration and the person who narrates it. It may be the time, then, to rupture with the way historical borders misrepresent the Other in 'the everyday experience of the camp', as a context which preconceives their form of existence, and move

together into an *act of naming*, an act which will locate why present is so traumatic there. We need to invent a different way of existing to be able to live.

Chapter Seven

Psychosocial support and the oriental Other – A postcolonial (his)-story

7.1 Introduction

So far, I have discussed how language, space and time formulate the intricacies of psychosocial support indicating that politics is interlocked within the provision of humanitarian and state support in the refugee landscape. The previous chapter showed how coloniality is embedded in psychological discourse of support provision at the level of trauma - symptom as well as in the level of body as an accumulation of western 'knowledge - expertise'. This chapter aims to continue the discussion by elaborating on the ways in which psychology and psychosocial support perform, as I name it, 'psycolonial' encounters with refugees (see also Beshara, 2019). By the latter term, I explore how the West having already constructed the Other as the Orient, by using psychology as a hegemonic discourse this may also reproduce what I call 'psycolonial'. It resonates with my third research aim on how the discourse of aid and psychosocial support construct the *orientalised other* through the conceptualisation and delivery of aid, work, and psychology in the refugee camps of Greece and with the last research aim on how the discourses of humanitarian aid and psychology produce the aid worker subjectivities.

Danewid (2017, p.1674) in her paper *White innocence in the Black Mediterranean: hospitality and the erasure of history* discusses how the themes of loss, grief and vulnerability occupy a central position in contemporary poststructuralist and feminist thought. Approaching with a sharp and critical spirit, authors such as Judith Butler and Stephen White who have argued that grief has the capacity to stage commonality, by eluding politics and building a new cosmopolitan ethics, Danewid focuses on the role of grief in pro-refugee activism and argues that these ethical perspectives:

> '…contribute to an ideological formation that disconnects connected histories and turns questions of responsibility, guilt, restitution, receptance and structural reform into matters of empathy, generosity, and hospitality. The result is a veil of ignorance which […] allows the European subject to re-constitute itself as "ethical" and "good", innocent of its imperialist histories and present complicities'(ibid).

I argue in the same vein that there is far more 'white innocence in the black Mediterranean' when the themes of psychology, (humanitarian) support, case, papers, and integration come into play. In other words, not only are there racialised configurations in the way psychosocial support works, but they also attempt at constituting humanitarian aid, state agency and psychology as 'ethical', 'good' and 'innocent' domains which solely provide aid and relief.

Drawing my analysis from the interviews that I conducted with psychologists, social workers, educators, and child protection officers (CPO) from the refugee camps of the mainland as well as interviews with psychologists from the hotspot of Moria, I argue that the notion of (his)-story has a particular claim to make. I refer to history as (his)-story, to highlight the imperial and colonial legacies as well as the patriarchal character of support. Bringing Danewid's argument in dialogue with Benjamin's (1955/2007) positioning on the concept of history, I claim that refugees' stories are getting distorted into legal, medical, and psychological histories, a white-European framework of documentation, progress, and remembrance. For Benjamin, dominant and received notions of history are identified only with the victors, and relate to the notions of modernity and progress. In this way, it becomes a tool of the ruling class and 'erases the memory of those who had to carry the weight of "progress"' (Bohn, 2019, p.5). *Connecting stories by disconnecting histories* then, is the first section of this chapter which builds upon the way refugees' stories are stratified into legal, medical, and psychological discourses. Despite the hopes that the latter signals for a successive asylum case, it disconnects an intertwined (his)-story of imperialism, colonialism, and remembrance.

Refugees' stories not only display how they function as a tool of their living-survival in the camp, but they also work as a psy-performative technique which transforms refugees into 'strangers' (Ahmed, 2000) of European history. *Psychosocial support as a technique of self-development and social adjustment: Erasing connected histories* is the second section of this chapter and highlights how the techniques of self-development and social adjustment[69] transform refugees into the 'strangers of modern history'. Distorting them into oriental others, they are approached once again by a logic of deficit - deviance which proclaims, 'a saviour attitude', a psycolonial encounter within the white European arena. This attitude, encapsulated in the 'ethical', 'good' and 'innocent' domains of humanitarian aid, state agency and psychology, erases connected histories because it disguises Europe's colonial past and transforms the story-teller migrant into a predetermined universalised figure in need of protection, help and hospitality.

The chapter ends by critically addressing what a critical psychology of liberation would look like amid these conditions. Drawing upon an account of an incident of rape and how it had been handled within a therapeutic space, it seeks to address what a feminist and postcolonial approach could add to the current analysis.

7.2 Connecting stories by disconnecting histories: The role of story

Hook (2005) argued that one mode of critique which remains notably absent in the broader field of critical social psychology is that of postcolonial theory. 'What might be the most crucial contribution that postcolonial critique can make to the project of critical psychology?', he asks.

> 'One answer is that of a reciprocal form of critique, the retrieval of a
> "psychopolitics" in which we not only place the psychological within the

---

[69] I use the term 'social adjustment' and not, for instance, 'social integration' to show and discuss that integration can never be of equal terms. Social adjustment as a term, conceptually links with the discussion in Chapter Four on the psychiatric term 'adjustment disorder' It signals the many ways refugees are called to adjust within the European territory. In some parts, I use the term 'integration' reflecting on participants' words and their use of the term.

register of the political, but – perhaps more challengingly – in which the political is also, strategically, approached through the register of the psychological' (ibid, p.475).

To seek refuge, a political and human right, which should have been available to people irrespective of gender, race, and class, is such an example where the psychological becomes intertwined with the political. Therefore, to seek for asylum and 'have a case' means to have a story which is considered legitimate to demand papers. As an interpreter in the Safe Zone vividly marks *'…you exist when there is a document* [which] *recognises you…'.*

The signifiers '*case*', '*papers*', '*story*', and '*demand*' compose a particular argument to narrate between psychological and political discourses in the refugee terrain. What is so interesting about them is the way they employ psychology to claim a political form of existence. To help, according to a social worker, is *'to build a better image of the case'* and *'…to have a general overview of their case'* means to bind *'their psychological, legal, medical* [aspects] alt*ogether…'.* A case then, as a signifier at the level of discourse, connotes not only a legal but also a medical and psychological formulation of truth (see for instance the example of the legal case in the analysis in the previous chapter, Chapter Six; also see Arce, 2012; Burman, 1998; 1997 for a discussion on the mutual legitimation and reliance of law and psychology/psychiatry). Blending the legal with the medical and psychological (or vice versa) provides a *story* via which refugees can establish, strengthen, or lose a case of asylum seeking. In this process, as a psychologist from the same camp highlights, *'…[they] will need some documents to prove* [the] *story…'*, documents which are often related to medical, psychological, and other reports. Under these circumstances, the 'story' works as a steppingstone in their case's recognition in the sense that it glues documents, and justifies pieces of their legal, medical, and psychological histories to stand for the existence of a case.

The argument and critical discussion of migrants' 'bio-credibility' (see Tomkow, 2019) vis-à-vis asylum seeking in the field of migrant studies, and in relation to state's discourse, is not new. On the contrary, it is recurrent and indicates the

detrimental and long-lasting consequences of the way migrants live and are perceived, even after they succeed in having been granted asylum or residency status. The work of Tomkow (2019), Ticktin (2011a) and Fassin and Rechtman (2009) have showed how migrants' credibility functions as a casualty of care. However, my focus here is to extend these arguments from the level of body to the level of *body and psyche* and address how refugees' stories are stratified into legal, medical, and psychological discourses which, besides supporting their chances of succeeding in claiming asylum, at the same time distort their histories which are connected with the European terrain.

Benjamin (Bohn, 2019, p.6), in his essay on Baudelaire, pinpoints that history and memory are intertwined. History, 'is not only a science, but equally a form of remembrance', he said. 'What has been "established" by science can be modified by remembrance'. For him, as indicated in the introduction, history connects with modernity and progress. History, as in historicism, is aligned with the victor and so remembrance comes not as a contemplative form of memory but rather as a kind of *actualisation* which seeks to depict the transformations of the past struggles in the here and now. 'To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it "the way it really was" (Ranke). It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up in a moment of danger' (Benjamin, 1955/2007, p.255). In contrast, therefore, with the notion of history, the story has a particular value for Benjamin because it encloses remembrance, in the sense of mobilising the possibilities of a revolutionary political practice in the here and now.

In Moria, Lesvos, refugees often visit a psychologist to get a paper which could prove fruitful for the asylum process or to access some services. As a psychologist, who works there, says: *'…many times, their motivation may be to come to us because they know that they would also benefit by taking a paper* […] *which will help them in the asylum service…'*. *'…and for that paper* […] *I need to write some headlines, what you have gone through* […] *before you come here, where have you been…before Turkey, before…'* another psychologist added. Asking them to remember the way their story unfolds, refugees' stories are organised as facts in memory which are powerful enough to mobilise 'headlines' of a paper constituted

to help, accompany and document the story as a legitimate case of asylum seeking. In this way stories, instead of actualising their revolutionary force, are already informed by a certain European framework to be able to be heard. Organised via structured and structural documentation procedures, they are not only processed in relation to state's asylum procedures to grant recognition but also between humanitarian organisations which process, for instance, the referrals from the island to the mainland as well as referrals that run inside an organisation (for example in-between lawyers, social workers, and psychologists as part of their support).

While I was doing my field study in mainland Greece, almost 600 to 700 'new arrivals'[70] had recently reached the camp. One of the social workers reported, the cases that had arrived were so serious in relation to psycho-traumatic incidents that *'…to sit and read the story of someone, with details how was tortured, how many times, where, how many times, where was, it was too much as it was back-to-back for two weeks…'*. Refugees' story function as an informative channel that indicates who is the most legitimately[71] vulnerable to proceed and who needs psychological support. Their memory is handled strategically to update forms and follow procedures which may help them proceed into different forms of living.

One aspect of this reflects the legal pathways their story can take, whereas another reflects whether they would be eligible to apply for an apartment in the urban accommodation scheme. For instance, to move from the refugee camps of mainland to an urban accommodation project, refugees need to meet certain

---

[70] 'New arrivals' is a term used by aid workers to refer to the recent arrivals of refugees from the hotspots of the islands (mainly of Lesvos, Chios and Samos).

[71] I use the word 'legitimately' to indicate first that refugees who did not arrive by a country which is internationally recognised as being currently or recently in 'war and conflict' may not be eligible for asylum (i.e. such case as those of refugees who arrived from Afghanistan, Somalia, Cameroon, and Congo among others); Second, and in relation to the latter, if refugees want to have a successful asylum application, they need to perform exceptionally in the way they will narrate their story in the asylum service. In this way, it is often that lawyers and Child Protection Officers (CPO) help them narrate their story as many times as possible so to be sure that they will not forget mentioning any crucial element during the interview in the Asylum Service. Third, the notion of legitimacy underpins their stories in the form of vulnerability criteria while they seek to move from the islands to the mainland or from the camps of mainland to urban accommodation projects.

vulnerability criteria. These criteria, according to a social worker, are *'if someone is a single parent, if they have many children, if umm is a victim of torture/rapes umm if they have a serious medical issue umm if they have some diagnosis* […] *either psychological or psychiatric or in relation to their physical health* […] *because the environment in which they stay is not, does not umm does not help their situation'*. Refugees' stories constantly negotiate forms of existence which are discussed mainly in line with notions of vulnerability and victimhood to file up a case, receive support and normalise among the population.[72] Not to mention that storytelling has worked in the hotspot of Moria as a technique of normalisation to help refugees *'express their experience outwardly and see it either as an observer or as something that would be able anyway to normalise it according to the rest of the population'* as a psychologist in Moria said (see also Chapter Five). It was also used, as indicated, and discussed in chapter five, to connect with stories of other people.

Hence, memory and storytelling are also used (even in good faith) as a story of and for normalisation. In contrast with what Benjamin (1955/2007) described as the radical figure of the 'storyteller': it is important to critically discuss how refugees' memory and stories are transformed into western histories which, although in legal, medical, and psychological terms are calls for support, they do not let these stories transmute into a 'moment of danger', a moment of rupture. On the contrary, as Danewid argued, they are situated in such a way as to reconstitute state and humanitarian agency as 'ethical', 'good' and 'innocent' – as agents that 'are trying to help', while refugees' stories, following that pathway, become once again part of Europe's compassionate history. The past, then, may not only call for papers, support, and approval of cases, but it may also seek for a recognition of its own time, story, and memory. A (his)-story of intervention. A (his)-story which confirms Stuart Hall's words: 'They are here because you were there' and

---

[72] There is a significant feminist literature which critically discuss and question the homogenisation of migrant women as a singular monolithic category 'third world woman' and/or as a 'weakened and dependent figure' (See Nayak, 2015; Hyndman and De Alwis, 2004; Mohanty, 1984). A single woman, for example, in a camp is considered automatically 'vulnerable'.

additionally poses the feminist question of: 'whose story?', his story, (his)-story, a colonial as well as patriarchal story of progress.

7.3 Psychosocial support as a technique of self-development and social adjustment: Erasing connected histories

In the important paper by Danewid (2017, p.1683), the author asks what

> '…might it mean to rethink global ethics and solidarity on the basis of not the connections forged from the ontological universal experience of vulnerability and mourning but, rather of the shared, intertwined histories that arise out of the colonial past of the neo-colonial present?'

Linking Danewid's argument with Benjamin's notion of history, as a concept deeply embedded in modernity and progress, in this section I aim to critically discuss how psychosocial support performs as an imperialist or even neo-colonial technique of self-development and social adjustment which disconnects, and erase refugees' interwoven histories. The themes of 'self -development' and 'social adjustment' elaborated below emerged from my material based on the interviews I conducted in the refugee camps of the mainland and the hotspot of Moria, my field study, as well as my personal experience and work. Using extracts from the interviews with psychologists, social workers, educators, and CPOs, as indicated in the introduction, I show what the politics of psychosocial support may 'do', moving away from the master signifiers of 'help, aid and support' and in doing so, I suggest this comes closer to disclosing and indicating what underlies support amid these discussions.

The reason I refer to psychosocial support, and not only psychology, as a technique is to highlight, first, that activities such as social work, education, recreational activities, familiarity with the local community and national/local public sector encapsulate a psychologised element in the way they are implemented among all ages. Second, I would like to emphasise that psychology does not perform solely as a science in-between an 'expert' and service user, but on the contrary is infused in other domains of social life that are education-language and/or recreational

activities – art in the form of psychoeducation (see De Vos, 2011). As Burman (2006, p.325) puts it, this psycho-educational praxis 'normalises and circumscribes emotional expression in the very act of "giving voice" to it'. The latter is not only apparent in the way that psychosocial support manifests at the level of the psyche – individual, but also in the way it deploys processes like integration into a new milieu. As will be shown based on my material and extracts, there is a 'psychologising procedure' illustrated and embodied in the name of self-development and social adjustment, both terms and techniques that echo adaptationist and developmentalist assumptions in an imperialist and colonial way.

7.3.1 Self-development

Édouard Glissant (1989) has argued that Europe is not a place but a *project* signifying, along with Aimé Césaire, W.E.B. DuBois and Frantz Fanon, that European subjects became free not only through struggling for liberty but also through imperial and colonial procedures of domination (see Danewid, 2017). As Broeck (2014; as cited in Danewid, 2017, p.1679) highlights:

> 'Europeans were able to emerge as free and masterful subjects, not only through their struggle for liberty, equality, and fraternity in Europe, but also through the creation of colonial empire abroad'.

Throughout the discussions I had with aid workers, coloniality was surfacing at the level of discourse. The latter does not mean that aid workers were themselves racist, imperialists or colonialists. On the contrary most of them were giving the best they could in their jobs on an every-day basis. Rather my emphasis here on coloniality as a concept works to depict how psychosocial support, as a westernised performance could reproduce colonial encounters. *'…basically, you don't need to know for someone that they carry a psychic trauma…'* a CPO at the Safe Zone said, *'…all you need to know is his story…'*. Focusing on a refugee's story as a medium to identify a psychic trauma, besides the fact that homogenises and universalises an experience of war (Summerfield, 1997), it also promotes a process of becoming internalised into a psychic story (see for instance Smith, 1978) which

decontextualises and depoliticises the histories of forced migration, histories of Europe's expansion, progress, and accumulation of power.[73]

And the CPO continues:

> '…we tend to deal with them *like we treat medical cases* let's say, we tend to approach them for example *like we treat a destitute old man…*because this is *the way we have learned for instance from our university* or from previous jobs for example […] we have learned to treat these people with a mix of all of these things we have learned before […] without ever being oriented to meet exactly who these people are, who each one of them is, did you understand?' (my emphasis).

The history of psychology and colonialism is well-inscribed by the signifier of 'medical case' recalling the colonial legacies of the 'School of Algiers' (see Antoine Porot in Keller (2007)) which Fanon, among others, extensively challenged in Martinique, Algeria, and Tunisia (see for instance 'Colonial War and Mental Disorders' chapter in Fanon 1961/2004). The CPO by referring to the medical gaze under which refugees' stories unfold, makes several crucial points about the implicated way social care professions unfold themselves in the 'knowledge-production' system, that is the university. Working and responding according to what '*we have learned for instance from our university or from previous jobs for example'*, the aid worker reflects and demonstrates primarily how they came to approach refugees in such a way, in their words as *'medical cases'*.

Lacan, (1991/2007) has put forward a polemic analysis on the Discourse of the University and its overlap with the Discourse of the Master. In contrast with the partial and limited character of analytic knowledge, he saw the inquiry of science and knowledge in general as vulnerable to instrumentalisation and bureaucratic

---

[73] However, up to a certain extent, one characteristic of war is precisely the fact that there are certain issues of commonality and homogenisation. For instance, experiences such as those of loss of homeland, fleeing war, forced evictions and migrations commonly belong to stories/experiences of war. In this way, when I refer to the critique of the homogenisation of a psychic trauma in the name of the experience of war, I do it to emphasise the use of a hegemonic and western perspective of psychology in the articulation of experiences of war.

power structures. In this way the Lacanian notion of 'astudied', as Burman (2003) critically observes, is particularly useful within educational and professional – practitioner contexts because it works to remind us of how the student (and current worker) has already been caught within master-slave dialectics of (dominant regimes of) truth production. In addition, the CPO by bringing into dialogue the way they have been taught in educational contexts with the knowledge they gained from other jobs, depicts the overlap that Lacan indicated between the Discourse of the University and the Discourse of the Master. The key issue here is not only that the Discourse of the University could overlap with the Discourse of the Master, but also, and more importantly, how the discourse of organisations - as the Discourse of the Master (see Chapter Four) - reproduces and reinforces the university's instrumentalised understanding around medicine – case and refugee – to produce meaning.

Hence, '...*to deal with them like we treat medical cases...*' illustrates first how depersonalised[74] aid workers' encounter with refugees could be, like '*an empty vessel in need of training that precisely wipes out preceding knowledge and compels acquisition of proffered techniques instead*', Burman highlights (2003, p.282). Second, it notes how patriarchal the discipline of psychology, as another Discourse of the Master and the University, is, since as the CPO asserts, *'we tend to approach them for example like we treat a destitute old man…'*. It seems, then,

---

[74] I use the term 'depersonalise' to indicate, first, that the framework under which psychosocial support is implemented does not leave room for a more personal encounter with refugees. An example is the humanitarian guidelines based on professionalism and how aid workers must keep a distance between themselves and refugees (i.e. they should not visit refugees in their containers, they should not accept having lunch or dinner in refugees' containers). Second, the term 'depersonalise' does not imply that aid workers do not come emotionally close to refugees during their work. On the contrary, they do come close, but the way they come close to each other is mediated by multiple protocols (i.e. professions' code of conduct, humanitarian guidelines as these mentioned above, camp's/space's restrictions) which formulate the contact with the other in a pre-structured way (see Chapter Four). Also, most of the aid workers mentioned that what they remember are stories, refugees' stories highlighting that the notion of story may interplay as a mediatory communicative pattern. In any case, though, there have also been many 'stories' of a different format, in which the story provoked a closer relationship, reminding the worker of multiple and common history of oppression and struggle. Lastly, aid workers and refugees have come closer on a personal and political level, in the demonstrations and political actions which have taken place in various regions and refugee camps in Greece.

that what Benjamin and Danewid refer to as 'history' unfolds itself to connect with the feminist question which asks how stories are getting articulated in the elaboration of master signifiers - 'medical', 'case' and 'man' - and most importantly, it poses the question of *whose story* is actually addressed. History – as *his* story- may therefore reflect the lens under which refugees' stories are interpreted, inscribed by the Discourse of the Master and the University, into a form of deviancy that deviate them from 'their own story' into the Europe's history that is *'a medical case …*[of]*… a destitute old man'*.

And if aid workers were oriented, as the CPO highlighted above, *'…to meet exactly who these people are…'*, the latter, if it is going to be situated as a learning outcome in the current academic psycho-curricula, encapsulates many dangers imprinted both in 'cross-cultural interpretations' as well as equations of culture with 'nation'. As Burman (2007) shows psychology's (and anthropology's) past and heritage was always shifting between orientalism and normalisation.

In her words (ibid, p.180):

> 'Reports of cross-cultural similarities and differences function as a key site of legitimising for the applicability and generality of psychological research […] "cultural differences" become expressed as variations along predetermined dimensions, with the superiority of Anglo-U.S. modes of living and relating structured into models as invisible, implicit resumptions or norms […] such normalizations allow for difference only via a discourse of deficit or deviation -that correspondingly pathologize or stigmatise all those who fail to "fit"'.

This discourse of deviation or deficit manifests in the broader milieu of humanitarian and psychosocial provision which besides medically, as shown above, may as well perform by extension psycolonially. *'This is the guideline to train them in that'* [referring to the recreational activities the organisation has been planning i.e. visiting local museums], another CPO in the Safe Zone mentioned. And they continued: '*to broaden their horizons*, *but up to a certain extent, you also have to listen the child's demand'*. In line with the previous

chapter's argument (see Chapter Six, section 6.5), psychosocial support is implemented mostly under western eyes (Mohanty, 2003; 1984) using as conceptual tools and signifiers: 'medical cases', 'the broadening of the horizons' and/or 'the guideline to train them…'.

An educator in another camp in the mainland reflects, in relation to my question, on how psychosocial support activities address or engage with refugees' lives *'…ok it's more for them, so to say for the development…umm for their self-development[75]* […] *development of skills, development of knowledge* (small pause) *this help should be, be a necessity let's say* […] *for every person* […] *the fulfilled development'*. There is a presupposition that refugees are not as 'complete' or 'developed' as they should be; or to put it differently, they are not as 'developed' as 'others are' in which case 'others' could mean 'us' as well. This discourse of deficit or deviation from what is supposed to be Europe's history, 'a history of progress', a progress that has been linked extensively with development, missions, and aid, recalls that development has not only been equated spatio-materially but also psychically. Under the notions of 'development of skills and knowledge,' the concept of coloniality now moves from space to the embodied psyche. Several works on critical psychology (see Harris, 1987) have discussed the notion of skills and their role in the abstraction of emotional (and physical) labour. Using educator's words, *'fulfilled development',* based on the development of skills, allows difference, as Burman (2007) indicated, only by a discourse of deviation, a discourse which pathologizes and stigmatises all those who fail to 'fit' (in).

In the words of a psychologist in another refugee camp *'…the non-efficient or the limited implementation of psychosocial* [support] *will have as a result many people not being able to be masters of their self. '*Does not, therefore, come as an aporia to ask what links psychosocial support with a sense of psychic mastery and most importantly why is it so important for refugees to encompass that element of mastery or 'self-development' through the efficient implementation of psychosocial support?

---

[75] The aid worker uses in Greek the word *internal* to refer to 'self-development'.

The signifiers and concepts of 'implementation', '(non-) efficient', 'result' calls Berlant's (2011) work on *Cruel Optimism*. 'Cruel Optimism argues […] for moving away from the discourse of trauma […] when describing what happens to persons and populations as an effect of catastrophic impacts. Why does that follow? Given trauma's primary location in describing severe transformations of physical health and life, it might be surprising to think about trauma as a genre for viewing the historical present' (ibid, p.9). In this way, Berlant proposes that:

> '…most such happenings that force people to adapt to an unfolding change are better described by a notion of systemic crisis or "crisis ordinariness" and followed out with an eye to seeing how the affective impact takes form, becomes mediated. Crisis is not exceptional to history or consciousness, but a process embedded in the ordinary that unfolds in stories about navigating what's overwhelming' (ibid, p.10).

Likewise, the 'process of mastery' is not exceptional to history and consciousness because it is embedded in the crisis of neoliberalism as a political mode that arose from colonialism itself. What may, then, be overwhelming in refugees' stories is not the 'lack of self-mastery' but rather, on the contrary, that their stories (and their symptoms), on which PSS is based on, are presented as lacking mastery. Refugees' stories are an 'affective history'. Connecting 'the non-efficient' or 'the limited implementation' of psychosocial support with the refugees' non-mastery, presumes that the discourse of deficit-deviation, names 'what we offer' and 'what they should get to become "*masters of their self*"'. Seeking for optimisation of psychosocial support, to be, in other words, 'more efficient' or 'better implemented', is a neoliberal trope, a reciprocal procedure that reflects the context and history under which aid workers crafted their selves.

Aid workers' call for refugees' 'self-development and mastery' portrays though, that these two 'development and mastery' seek also for a shift in the way aid, help, care, work, and support have been approached so far amid humanitarian crises, interventions, and missions. As a CPO states: '*…to know, at least what the other is more or less, that is for me I consider it very important, right, to get trained in it*

and extend yourself… […] … now in the other part on how you can learn the other, there is no need to learn him necessarily, besides what I told you for his culture, there is no need to know each one personally…'.

Han (2017, p.1, his emphasis) in his book *Psycho-Politics* argues that:

> '…freedom is felt when passing from one way of living to another – until this too turns out to be a form of coercion. Then, liberation gives way to renewed subjugation. Today we do not deem ourselves subjugated *subjects*, but rather *projects*: always refashioning and reinventing ourselves. A sense of freedom attends passing from the state of the subject to that of project. All the same, this projection amounts to a form of compulsion and constraint – indeed, to a *more efficient kind of subjectivation and subjugation'*.

Coming back to Glissant and Danewid's statements regarding 'Europe as a project', and what the latter encapsulated in terms of colonial (re)formulations, it seems that 'the self-development' of the worker comes as a form of 'mastery' in the sense that personal development regarding the other's culture manifests through learning or training and does not entail a further (personal) encounter with the other. As if the other needed once again to be studied to be understood as well as made 'us' feel that we are in line with our (self) development and progress.

But what about the 'astudied'? The 'astudied' aid worker that strives to pursue his own place of 'mastery and self-development'? As Lacan (1991/2007, p.106) demonstrates: 'Don't think that the master is always there. It's the command that remains, the categorical imperative, "Keep on knowing". There is no longer any need for anybody to be present.' Does it still remain an aporia that the 'will to know' from the point of view of aid worker returns to the master's house either by seeking additional training or complementary knowledge?

There are, as Sara Ahmed (2000) has put it, 'strange encounters', fetishizing encounters that address the other as stranger. Although, the aid worker highlights the importance of knowing 'the other', refugees are still getting understood by getting othered via discourses of deviance (such as the Discourse of the Master

and the Discourse of the University) and homogenised based on cultural assumptions and rough approximations. As the aid worker continues *'…if I could…If I could…*[change something]*…that would be to pay more attention in what they want…that's it, that is to say what they demand in the end, what each one wants and not to feel that I do, I do things which I understand myself and I feel it that either they are not interested in what I am doing or that it happens at their expense or in their name…'*.

Even though aid workers stressed many times the importance of personal encounters with the other, this question of 'what the other wants and demands' intrigued me. Besides the good intensions, in the sense of trying to adjust (whenever that was possible) any activity of the programme according to refugees demands, I came to see and understand aid workers' question 'on what refugees want and demand' as another strange encounter. Refugees presence have a clear-cut demand. They ask for papers, rights, citizenship, and proper accommodation. What is this, then, that makes so important the participation in activities which, as the worker says, sometimes *'…happens at their expense or in their name…'*; or to know, for instance, what they want so to re-adjust the programme within camps?

I suggest that, sometimes, the freedom the aid workers attempt to reach may fall, as Han said earlier, into a new form of subjectivation. The optimism for the aid worker's self-development to be better equipped and help, as well as the need 'to develop' the other to be able to attain 'a better future', works as a reflection and reminder that there may be a form of mastery in their work's performance. The latter may entrap not only strange encounters but also a dismissal of the other's story, that is, our own history.

The next section seeks to demonstrate that 'self-development' links with social adjustment as part of a broader practice to adjust the stranger into our current and cultural forms of familiarity.

7.3.2 Social adjustment

One of the main axes regarding the role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of the mainland Greece is to integrate refugees in the

local/current/national society. As a psychologist in a camp in the mainland vividly remarks *'…what we mainly try to do is to decrease umm the symptoms from the post-traumatic disorder which is the common disorder in this population umm and strengthen them to come into the mood to re-integrate in the society'.*

By the end of 2017, beginning of 2018 the UNHCR announced that the 'refugee crisis' in Greece should now move from a situation of emergency towards a procedure of integration.[76] Part of the latter included the shutdown of UNHCR offices in the region of Epirus where I conducted my field study[77] and the reassignment of major responsibilities from UNHCR to the Greek state.[78] In this way, the main task of psychosocial support would be from now on to facilitate refugees' integration in the Greek state and local communities. Although, the situation in the Greek islands did not seem to get better with the highlight of Moria, 'accommodating' by February 2020, 18.342 refugees in a territory which could host maximum 2.200 (see Mahecic, 2020), psychosocial support in the mainland had to attain a 'well-integrated future'. Aid workers in the mainland had to deal with situations like the one mentioned above from a social worker; while running to issue national insurance numbers[79] for the refugees in the already crowded camps, they also had to attend to more than 600 to 700 people who were arriving simultaneously from the islands to the mainland of the country with severe issues that also needed urgent follow-up.

Hence, besides the ideological contradictions embedded in the provision of psychosocial support, as was shown in the previous section, and will be shown

---

[76] It may be argued, here, that there is a double 'integration'; one at the level of and for the refugees but also another one at the level of international policy and transnational relations between INGOs and Greece.

[77] The region of Epirus is considered part of the projects which run in mainland Greece.

[78] One of these was the handover of the management of the cash assistance programme for asylum seekers in Greece, from the beginning of October 2021. The Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation (ESTIA) programme, which began in 2018, was handed over to the Greek government in2020 (see UNHCR, 2021b).

[79] In Greece, National Insurance Number (NIN) is referred to as *'AMKA'* and *'AFM'*. The first is regarding the national public health sector whereas the second gives people access to be able to work in Greece.

below, there were also structural issues about the interpretation of 'what *is* the current situation' in mainland Greece. According to the same psychologist:

> '…there has been a very bad handling [of this] because we have not scheduled efficiently the integration of these people; there are many in camps without education, without giving them chances to work, even rudimentary, *even if they continue to live in camp but work somewhere*, have an income to become slightly active, because a human when [they] leaves from a war zone and is in a camp, ok *here is somehow better* but in conditions which don't let him feel active umm his symptoms may be increased even more; that is to say that he must feel somehow that, good I escaped I can now take my life in my own hands, so these people *even even if they worked four hours per day*, they would be better' (my emphasis).

It is not only that integration has not been structurally well-planned and implemented, but also how the latter comes to reproduce discourses of deviation as well as significations of nation-state territorial intimacies. For instance, the way refugees live amid spatial temporalities of stasis[80] and therapeutic spatiality, is also discussed and interpreted within a discourse of deviance (Burman, 2007). Living in a camp is not a solution which invites discussions of future and integration. The condition itself restrains prospects of prosperity. Despite that, the camp as a condition of living integrates discussions of whether 'here or there' is better, usually highlighting the difference of living in a camp in mainland in contrast with that of the islands. In this way, although many aid workers mentioned how difficult the life even 'here' in the camps of mainland is, this discourse of deviance mediates the way refugees are understood as needing to be adjusted and activated amid this reality. As the psychologist said, one way for

---

[80] By 'spatial temporalities of stasis' I refer to situations where a) refugees wait for two years or more to have their asylum interview, b) they have conducted their asylum interview, but they have not received a response for two or three years, c) they have received their asylum, so they had a positive outcome from the interview, but they wait for years their papers to be issued.

doing that maybe was to *'continue to live in camp but work somewhere […] even even if they worked four hours per day'*.

Very quickly, the dead ends of systemic structure (and psychology), reflects aid worker's conceptualisation and pushes their self to resort to solutions which reiterate, once again, refugees as a distinct category of class. If a refugee, therefore, was going to work in the agricultural land with payment of 1 euro per hour, as another psychologist working in Moria highlighted ironically in chapter five, that would be considered progress in terms of their integration within the local community. Agamben (1995, p.115) points out that each time refugees no longer represent individual cases but rather a mass phenomenon; humanitarian organisations and single states have proven that they cannot tackle the issue adequately, let alone solve it. Thus, refugee reality is quite often approached either as an individual case of pathography incorporating developmentalist narratives (see Burman, 2017) of self-activation, -resilience, -development, and/or a mass phenomenon which must be dealt in the trinity of adjustment, awakening, integration.

To put an emphasis on the contradictions aid workers face, and the way refugees are dealt as a mass phenomenon, I refer to the following extract which is from the same psychologist as above. In my question about how refugees understand the notion of psychosocial support, the psychologist responds:

> '…if I bring here a refugee and tell him we would do anything you wish, tell me what you want to do and I will tell you yes, will tell me "I want [you] to write me a social report,[81] the social worker to write me a social note and make a referral for an apartment". They won't tell me I want to find a job, will tell me I want apartment, I want to, I want to find someone to pay for me a full-house […] I don't blame them it is also very big, our responsibility…*we have made them believe and they do that they are in a passive role, in a role which they expect us to give to them*' (my emphasis).

---

[81] The concept of social report could be also referred as 'case's social report' and 'needs' assessment'.

Besides the psychologization (De Vos, 2011) of this hypothetical request from the refugee to the psychologist which elicited the acknowledgement that *'they are in a passive role'*, there is an implication that refugees, instead of getting 'active' and seeking a job, rather enjoy whatever they could get for free, becoming passive recipients of the organisations' support. The signifier of being 'a refugee' indicates an over generalisation because it implies that any refugee from the camp could have the same claim. The stance that refugees are passive, and that rather than being independent they become dependent on organisations' provision of support, is also shared by other aid workers I interviewed including an educator, a CPO, and a care assistant. As indications, I offer two extracts *'…you know what they see, what they see, beds, stretch, food, clothes and whatever you want to provide them, whatever they want, we provide it, almost, why who would not stay?'* a CPO said, while an educator advised *'…not to have everything ready and prepared. This is mainly to give them more independence and not provided everything by organisations'*.

The over generalisation and homogenisation of what 'a refugee' could have as a claim within camps, is one issue here, as refugees have every right to demand what laws and organisations claim as provisions. Another issue is how this homogenisation of 'refugees' raises them into a body which almost sounds as 'stealing' what the organisations provide. In the sense, that they 'may steal *my* enjoyment', enjoyment in the shade of what the 'I' as a 'national I' cannot get or do gets by working excessively in jobs which may be also 'exploitative and abusive', as the psychologist shared in Chapter Five. With that in mind, I argue that this kind of approach could be a route into racist tropes of subjects' configuration, which are not always conscious.

 At this point, I would like to remind that the aim, here, is not to accuse aid workers of being nationalists, racist, imperialists or colonialists. On the contrary, it is to show how the contradictions, intensity, and alienation of work under these circumstances produce, at the level of discourse, phenomena which are simultaneously discussed and addressed, in the broader socio-political arena. It is not by accident, for instance, that from 2014 and onwards far-rights movements

became more publicly active across Europe. I would also like to mention that these extracts come as a highlight of contradictions in aid workers' reflections who sometimes strongly oppose the inhumane ways in which the refugees live within hotspots and camps, but in other instances, like the above, they may proceed with such responses.

As, the national 'I', becoming a signifier, and while aid workers and refugees seeking refuge in the figure of the refugee, both aid workers and refugees are situated as a mass phenomenon which raises a postcolonial encounter between 'us and them', 'west and the rest', 'here and there'. Agamben (1995, p.114) writes that 'at least until the process of the dissolution of the nation-state and its sovereignty has come to an end, the refugee is the sole category in which it is possible today to perceive the forms and limits of a political community to come'. As both he and Arendt highlight, 'refugees expelled from one country to the next represent the avant-garde of their people' (ibid, see also Arendt, 1943) as they are a 'border concept that radically calls into question the principles of the nation-state' (Agamben, 1995, p.117). Discussing refugees as 'dependent' on organisation's support provision, support is misrepresented as a 'dependency' and a phenomenon which 'takes advantages' of any 'free provision' instead of attempting become 'independent' or 'productive'.

From 'dependency' to 'independence' and 'productivity' is almost like there is a psychologised performance, and a convenient way via its psychologization, of another mass phenomenon that is *colonial history*: to avoid, to put it simply, the consideration of why refugees are 'here' because we were 'there'. From colonialism to independence and from independence to capitalist neo-colonial performance of truth, the evasiveness of the reason that forced refugees into the European terrain, recollects a 'national I' that attempts to restore itself the more it feels endangered in the presence of the Other. Having that in mind, I argue along with Mills (2013) (also Beshara, 2019 specifically on the 'Psychologization of Islamophobia') that refugees' presence and stories are not only misrepresented, but they are also getting distorted through the provision of support to protect this 'national I' that feels so imperilled(what the psychologist from Moria was saying

228

in chapter five; how this work, despite the fact that it is desperately exploitative and abusive, sometimes make you feel good that you have it. Feeling good, in the sense that you have a job and how, also, the latter creates an impression to refugees that any job, which may be exploited, like those who offer a payment with 1euro per hour may be fruitful).

This brings to the fore both nationalist and developmentalist underpinnings of the discourse - support and their relationship. As indicated earlier, refugees when they are not interpreted as individual vulnerable cases, they are transformed into a category which, if not becoming as dangerous as already constructed in other parts of national/European discourses, will urgently need a form of adjustment. As a CPO remarks, integral part of psychosocial support is:

> '…to show the way [...] to society'. '…to integrate a human better and better in the ethos, culture, and the everyday life of a society such as the Greek one, or by extension the European, umm for sure this is very, the very difficult part, right, and is a part which is universally more difficult, the social integration of people in the society because as you know very well, they tend each one to have their *sub-society*…' (my emphasis).

Integration, hence, does not only mean a form of normalisation or pathologisation, but it also signifies *a call for assimilation*.

It remains, then, a significant question as to what is even meant by a limited spatial understanding of 'integration' since a) refugees can remain in a protractive displacement - a version of which is the camp - for a long time even after they have a positive outcome with their interview in the asylum service, b) if they are not vulnerable, they are not eligible to get an apartment, so they will remain in the camp, c) even if they are vulnerable and get an apartment, they could stay there for a certain period of time[82] and d) as shown before, not all refugees would be

---

[82] During 2019-2020, UNHR planned to implement evictions from the urban accommodation project. Each family accommodated in a flat could stay for 6 months and then their contract could be renewed based on their vulnerability criteria. Also, if the family has been granted asylum during this period and they are recognised officially in Greece, their contract could be renewed for a maximum of another 6 months and then they would have to leave the property because of the

able to succeed in their asylum claim as some are considered migrants and not refugees (i.e. Afghani population).

Integration in the form of assimilation is shared by other aid workers as well. I offer here, as an indication, the following example:

> '…there is no need to change completely, they just simply if, if they want to live in a European society, in a European country either it is Greece, or Italy, Germany, England etc, they have to make some concessions otherwise they will have huge issues' an aid worker stated.

However, as a social worker in the refugee camp of the mainland underlined:

> '…most of them, they express, they want to do something, they want to work (pause) yes and that they cannot neither, they do not want this life to sleep, that they did not come here to sit and sleep, they want to do something…'.

Even though contradictory in nature the claims they make, their conflict lies precisely in the interpretation under which refugees come to justify their presence in the Greek terrain. The first version speaks directly to a colonial history and mentality transmitted in the recent historical present, whereas the second one is a call to what Benjamin (ibid) named as a history of now and here, an actualisation which seeks to depict the transformations of past struggles in the here and now. There is a continuous conflict which pursues to address 'what do refugees demand' *'…what they ask for eventually…, '…what they ask from us here…'* in the words of two CPOs. It may be, then, that wondering what refugees' demands are, even if the latter comes from intentions of goodwill that aim to help refugees the most, may be considered a mental colonial legacy, that also makes a postcolonial call to the national citizen. As Agamben (1995, p.119) put it, 'to acknowledge the refugee that he himself is'. To acknowledge, therefore, as Arendt (ibid) emphasised that refugees 'represent the avant-garde' not only of their people, I

---

argument that there are many other families who are vulnerable, and they are waiting to get a flat. The latter provoked forms of resistance not only from refugees but also aid workers themselves who had to implement evictions.

would argue, but also of the classes that each country suppresses and divides. As an interpreter stated:

> '…It is there that they think that you can wear their shoes, that you can be in their position…it is there [...] because from there they know that they can can open up, can trust you, can support you and they will support you too. For me it is not that, let us say for me I do not see it that I simply offer them things. Because I know that they are also there for me, to offer me things. Do you understand?'

I may not, in the end, understand what it means to be forcefully displaced given the position from which I write, but I do understand that this call to become liberatory should be neither a psychologised and developmentalist call in reverse, nor reflected upon the humanitarian ethos of western capital. It has to be complemented with feminist and postcolonial perspectives of understanding, understandings which will show that there is far more 'white innocence in the Black Mediterranean'. These approaches will attempt to reconstitute the chain of signifiers as they started from their colonial past and became history. This is a history which calls for a radical reconstitution of the way we tell our story. And in this attempt, refugees' story as well as the ways we come to tell refugees' stories should be decentralised, because if they come back to the epicentre, they risk falling in the same dangers in their reversed form; as it did before, in the recent past. Not a long time ago, though.

7.4 Towards a critical psychology of liberation: Feminist and postcolonial encounters

In this last section, I critically discuss an extract from an interview that I had with a psychologist in Moria to show, first, how rape becomes a weapon of war (Oliver, 2007). Second, I use this example to discuss how the aid workers - psychologists may resist within (humanitarian-therapeutic) clinic and how resistance, gender and rape are contextualised and implicated within the spatial politics of humanitarian aid. In this example, it is argued that perhaps through mobilising a feminist framework of understanding, issues such as rape and culture come in the

forefront in the form of a dialogue. However, from a postcolonial viewpoint it will be argued that divisive categories such as those of 'us and them' are reiterated as well as internalised within humanitarian and therapeutic spatiality. In this way, this extract gives the opportunity to make some conclusive remarks on what a theory of liberation amid psyche's spatiality could add in the field of migration. Further, what does *the political* mean when aligned with feminist and postcolonial crucial remarks and whether a liberatory theory of psyche could take place within therapeutic spatiality, and the spatiality of hotspots and camps.

To begin with, rape as a weapon of war has been discussed extensively in feminist literature, especially in reference to the cases of Rwanda, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo. Buss (2009, p.145) said that 'for many feminists "rape as a weapon of war" provides a way to articulate the systematic, pervasive and orchestrated nature of wartime sexual violence that marks it as integral rather than incidental to war'. It is, therefore, 'planned and targeted policy' (ibid, p.146). Brownmiller (1975), argued that rape as a weapon has been used in both 'peace' and 'war' times, highlighting, however, that when it is used as a weapon against women, is also 'part of an attack against "the enemy"' (as cited in Buss, ibid, p.148). In addition, Olujic (1998, p.31) focusing on the gendered violence in peacetime and wartime in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, noted that when it comes to issues of war rapes and women, the latter would not be an effective weapon, 'if it were not for concepts of honor, shame, and sexuality that are attached to women's bodies in peacetime'.

In the recent years and context of 'refugee crisis', Freedman (2016) has argued that sexual and gender-based violence against refugee women, is a hidden aspect of the 'crisis'. She explains how many women in their attempt to abandon conflict and violence in their countries, end up experiencing different forms of violence during their journey to and/or upon their arrival at a European country. As she points out, one source of violence is the smugglers or traffickers that facilitate their journey.

The extract offered below comes from an interview I had with a psychologist, where the participant raised an incident of a woman's rape, in which the perpetrator was her trafficker. During our interview, she also mentioned that rapes were taking place inside the hotspot, mostly in women's bathrooms, in the section where women lived on their own as well in the food line where they waited to pick up food. She further indicated that children were raped, and as a matter of fact many rapes that were taking place in the food line among women and children were often perpetrated by refugees' volunteers. Not to mention the fact that in other incidents of rape, police officers were referred to as the offenders.

The reason I mention the latter is, first, to show how the discussion on rape as a weapon of war continues in-between the journey of women and their arrival in Greece as well as to indicate the structural injustices women endure. To report, for instance, an incident of rape was a complicated and difficult issue. The difficulty was in the way that reporting must go through and submitted. Specifically, the person who had endured the sexual assault had to report it to the manager of the hotspot, who at that time was the police and the army. In this way, many times women were afraid to report it in case the latter came to know. If known the fear was that it may provoke similar incidents, even as a matter of revenge because the rape has been disclosed. There was also fear, according to the participant, that disclosing rape would shame the honour of the family.

Second, I contextualise rape in the hotspot, because I believe that gender-based violence, challenges the spaces of hotspots and camps, as well as humanitarian principles of neutrality. It does so because it shows that hotspots and camps are not 'safe spaces' and indicates rape as inherently part of a broader socio-political issue which cannot be tackled within humanitarian principles, like neutrality. I will come back to this point in a later part of the discussion after I introduce my extract:

> '…I remember let's say specifically a girl from Yemen with whom we had a session and the woman had been raped from the trafficker, she was very ashamed of that, she did not want at all to tell it to her husband to not shame the honour and for some reason, after an evaluation of how embedded this

cultural context in herself is umm and we had simply a deconstruction of what changing roles means, I played the raped woman and I simply approached her in terms of what she would tell me, let's say as a friend. And she told me that there is no need to feel ashamed for that thing and it was not something in your control etc, so the interpreter at that time felt that it can't be that you don't respect the cultural background of the girl, but culture is something that I think (emphasis) that…(small pause) they don't have it…*they have it internalised* but that does not mean that it does not let you [have] *a gap to be able to deconstruct something*, in any way' (my emphasis).

The clinic of MSF accepted patients falling in certain categories like those who were identified as victims of sexual violence. However, as the psychologist mentioned elsewhere in the interview, there were overall issues of violence, therefore victims of violence had to have certain symptoms to be accepted as patients within the organisation. In the participant's words: *'…they have to have certain symptoms, because we cannot take* [accept] *them all…'*.

Ticktin (2011b) in her paper "The Gender Human of Humanitarianism: Medicalising and Politicising Sexual Violence*"* critically discusses the way MSF as an organisation address, medicalise and tackle sexual violence against women. One of her arguments is that gender-based violence would not have been possible to become a humanitarian issue without medicalising it, without making it an issue of health and suffering in moments of crisis, emergency, and intervention. As she stresses, this form of approach ignores gendered relations of power, which are part of larger histories of inequality, interconnected class, race, and colonialism. It also represents women, especially women from the global south, as victims, who are sick, and they suffer from oppressive patriarchal cultures.

The participant referred in the interview to victims of violence and the symptoms they need to have to be seen by the personnel of the organisation. In the same vein, Ticktin's arguments reflect the way violence should be medicalised in order to be heard. It tells that violence, including SGBV, should be located as an issue of

health in the body as well as in the psyche to be addressed, given that the participant is a psychologist. Thus, to have certain symptoms may also mean that some people are excluded and are left out. On top of that, what is additionally left out, is how there is a 'crisis system' in place which takes advantage of refugees, considering that the perpetrator was a trafficker and in other instances, as indicated above, a volunteer or a police officer. Rape, therefore, is inherently socio-political as much as it is a personal issue (in the feminist way).

In the extract offered above, it is important to pay attention to the way the psychologist approached the incident as well as the girl. As the psychologist say, the girl was very ashamed of what happened, and the psychologist in their attempt to break that shame mobilised a form of role play. In this way, she asked the girl to speak to her not as a psychologist, but as a friend. At this point, before I move to the intricacies of the role play, and the way that culture is understood, I would argue that it is precisely because gender is relational, that here a feminist understanding comes to the fore front. I mention the latter because their communication at this point starts with commonality and friendship '... *what she would tell me, let's say as a friend*...', and not with a psychologised performance of suffering and help. The latter does not eliminate the power imbalances as well as the context under which this discussion takes place (private space, office of a psychologist), but it shows precisely that it needed more than a psychological role to create some form of understanding/solidarity. Hence, as soon as the girl and the psychologist change position the girl argues that this is not an incident that she should be ashamed of. At this point, engaging with a feminist framework, I believe, the psychologist challenged and resisted humanitarian and psychologised approaches of suffering, which are common toolkits in situations named as 'crisis, emergency (and recovery)'.

However, it is at this very point that the intricacies of help and support, as well the politics of gender come to play. In this incident, the fact that the psychologist decided to challenge the 'culture' which, according to her, made the young girl internalise the incident '...*she did not at all want to tell her husband so as to not shame the honour ...*', reproduced a narrative of 'us and them'. I argue for the

latter, because the psychologist says explicitly that '*…they have it internalised…*'. Although, indeed, culture is not one thing, it is constructed as well as internalised in all of us and there are ways in which it could be deconstructed, it is the underlined pronoun of 'they' that reiterates a division between 'us-whoever us are we' and them 'whoever they are'. Consequently, even though the psychologist attempted to resist the therapeutic spatiality by mobilising a feminist understanding, I think that feminism should be hand in hand and closely aligned with postcolonialism, to raise a liberatory theory of understanding.

It is here that the interconnection of class, race, gender, and struggle could really provide the ground for a theory of liberation. Rape as a weapon of war raises several political questions to humanitarianism, to state approaches and humanitarian interventions within hotspots and camps, and to therapeutic spatiality attached in migration. SGBV challenges the very face of humanitarianism because it pushes the humane face of aid, outside of artificial concepts such as the neutrality, since gender relations are relations of power, and power can never be neutral; it asks you to take a position. It, therefore, raises questions which cannot be simply addressed or resolved within the current state and humanitarian apparatus. Such a question is how can someone live in hotspots and camps? Or better, what does the accommodation of people in these spaces serve? What does it mean to offer support to someone being raped, who quite often will return to the very space in which rape occurred?

Why do we need to victimise sexual abuse to approach or make it heard?

Rape is interlinked with racialised, gendered, economic and geopolitical inequality. It does not affect only women, but also men, straight and queer. This is the reason it needs to be addressed within all these axes to make *the personal and the political* speak. And by the latter I mean how it disrupts the established and mainstream narrative of refugees and victimhood or women and victimisation, its understanding as only a medico-psychological trauma which could be addressed within orders, the order of the state, the order of humanitarianism, the order of psychology.

If the extract in this section showed something, it is that a solely feminist approach to rape is not enough. It must be aligned with postcolonial encounters to provide a critical framework of understanding. It also needs to break from the clinic and align with broader movements of liberation since hotspots and camps are the institutional format to impose limits. They are in essence spaces of exclusion. In that sense, a critical psychology of liberation needs to take seriously these incidents, stories, and histories into consideration and instead of situating them solely in the bodily integrity and psyche function, will also contextualise them within intersected systems of oppression which suppress refugees, and people who have been sexually abused alike.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed how psychosocial support in its attempt to connect refugees' stories, disconnects their histories. In so doing, psychosocial support works also as technique of self-development and social adjustment. Besides workers' good intension to help and support refugees, it is often a question, of gender, class, and race, of how the programme approaches (self) development as well as integration in the Greek terrain. The chapter ended with discussing an incident of rape within humanitarian and therapeutic spatiality to conclude how feminism should be aligned with postcolonialism so to enhance and enlighten a critical psychology of liberation. The next and last chapter, chapter eight, provides an overall overview of the project. It discusses its contribution to knowledge and its limitations. The thesis concludes by critically reflecting on this study's limitations, and how the latter could become a way and pathway for future research.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion: Site, psychology, subject

8.1 Introduction

What, then, is the role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece? Coming back to the principal inquiry of this project, the present and last chapter aims to give an overall discussion of the main arguments as well as the main questions that arose in-between research and practice. Language, space, time and trauma, story and history are discussed as the four pillars that comprise the conceptualisation of the politics of psychosocial support. The latter aspects have been considered significant, if not crucial, to locate the antinomies and paradoxes that lie underneath humanitarian, state, and psychological discourse. In other words, they work as the main pillars to highlight that help and support in migrant and refugee studies should not be solely localised in the level of the psyche, but on the level of the psychopolitical. Focusing solely on the psychic contemplation of support, as the last analysis chapter has shown, could miss a central point; on the one hand how it constitutes humanitarian aid, state agency and psychology as the 'ethical', 'good' and 'innocent' domains of support and on the other hand the way it transforms the migrant into a predetermined universalised figure in need of protection, help and hospitality.

Elaborating on language, space, time and subject, this research has brought to the fore, first, that if we want to understand and contextualise the psychosocial intricacies of the 'humanitarian everyday', we need to move forward into the dialectics of subjectivity. So far, humanitarian studies (including migration and refugee studies) have spoken about the subject of their focus as if there were only migrants and refugees. Aid workers have been, overall, approached as the constitutive, but mechanical, link which connects, facilitates, and executes humanitarian and states' organisational support provision. Without underestimating and eliminating the way that migrants and refugees may benefit from humanitarian and psychological agency and support, situating the focus in-

between aid workers and refugees as the primary facet of inquiry, this project demonstrates that subjectivity is relational and its dialectics in the field of migration raises several psychopolitical questions reflecting, thus, this thesis' primary inquiry: *the politics of psychosocial support.*

Second, language, space, time, and (his)-story work in an auxiliary manner, in the sense that they not only contextualise the dialectical relationship between aid workers and refugees and the politics that underlie between the subject and psyche, but they also display a core psycho-political issue, which is that the psyche should be conceptualised and approached as an embodied entity. Extending and going beyond the current anthropological and psychological debates that tend to see the body and psyche as separated (see Ticktin, 2011a but also Tomkow, 2019), these four pillars have been chosen intentionally to structure an account of the politics of psychosocial support in the embodiment of a subject's psyche in a specific space, time, and discursive format. Nevertheless, in the same way that they structure the politics of psychosocial support, the latter structures them as well. Hence, the dialectics of subjectivity and psyche come to be situated always in relation to, its by-products that are: a) language, b) space and c) time, what we may conclude as a discursive spatial temporality.

Third, the humanitarian sector misses a crucial point of enquiry: race. Although, race is discussed within studies of anthropology, psychology, sociology, and migration studies, it is not often raised and discussed explicitly in-between these fields of research and humanitarian research and practice (see De Genova, 2018; 2016; Ticktin, 2011a; 2011b). As Fassin (2007, p.508) puts it, there is '*no war without its humanitarian corridors and its humanitarian workers. And no western military intervention into another country is now without its justification on humanitarian grounds*'. The concept of humanitarianism interplays constantly, if not repetitively, between wars and interventions. Notwithstanding the political situatedness of humanitarianism in Fassin's words, race and postcolonial conceptualisations of aid are underrepresented in both the current literature of aid and its practice. This is not to say that if the humanitarian field would engage in a self-reflexive introspection concerning race, that would be enough. No.

Contrariwise, race and postcolonial interpellation as a core axis of this thesis come to highlight the upper-class whiteness of the field in its full format; that is, in its interventions, in its wars, in its own understanding. Race is what adds to the *politics* of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece. And I am saying 'adds' because it has already been argued how psychology is already caught up in its own politics and dead ends in the western terrain.[83] Therefore, questions of racialisation are necessary to extend the politics of the field of psychology into a different level, that is *the psychopolitical* as well as *the psycolonial*.

The dialectics of subjectivity, as a somewhat Marxist and Fanonian way of 'seeing' class, race, and gender, is what ties together a discussion on aid workers, refugees, psychology, and the politics of support under the gaze of war, intervention, and colonialism. By approaching the aid worker as 'the subject who speaks' while conceptualising this act of speech as a relational mechanism that attempts to bring closer the meaning-making of ~~aid~~ workers and refugees, this study highlights that mainstream psychological research in-between humanitarian scenes of suffering reproduces yet *an-othering* understanding of experiences and their life yet an-*other* story's passage. This *othering* may be seen as manifested primarily towards refugees, but it also runs across aid workers, as they constitute *the hybrid figure* (inspired to some extent by Bhabha, 1994)[84] that becomes prolonged and cut between *aid* and *work*. This is the reason I strikethrough aid from ~~aid~~ workers, to highlight the politics of work and aid within these conditions and circumstances.

In the following three sections, I provide an overview of the project, its contribution to knowledge as well as its limitations and the way forward, towards a critical knowledge production and future research. The first section entitled *Work, psychology, histories* address the concluding remarks of the project and

---

[83] This is how the field of Critical Psychology emerged, (selectively in North America: Teo, 2005; Fox and Prilleltensky, 1997, but also Sloan, 1996; in United Kingdom: Parker, 1999b; Burman, 1990; in Germany: Tolman, 1994; in Greece: Mentinis and Critical Psychology Network, 2013; Dafermos and Marvakis, 2006; in Latin America: Martín-Baró, 1994; Montero and Dorna, 1993;)

[84] For a discussion on Bhabha's concept of hybridity and its implications on agency (and vice versa) see Bhabha (1994), 'The Postcolonial and the Postmodern: The Question of Agency in *The Location of Culture* (pp.171-196).

how they speak to and in relation with my research questions. In the section that follows, *Knowledge, psychopolitics, migration*, I show the different levels in which this study contributes to knowledge, and I discuss how it forms, transforms, and traverses current debates in academia, humanitarian, and psychological research and practice. The last section of this study, *Limitations, ruptures, continuum* considers the limitations of the project, offering however a way forward and towards a future critical knowledge enquiry of the psychological (Parker and Pavón-Cuéllar, 2021).

8.2 Work, psychology, histories

It is sometimes said that a question could offer more questions than an answer itself. In this sense there is still a pending question in relation to this research: where do the politics of psychosocial support stand regarding the illustration of migration within the figuration and concept of 'refuge'? The humanitarian domain, together with states' discourse in Europe, have established since the 1951 Convention the division between the categories of *migrant* and *refugee*. While refugees are defined and protected in international law since they are considered people fleeing from armed conflict or fear of persecution, migrants have been defined as those who 'choose to move not because of a direct threat of persecution or death but mainly to improve their lives by finding work, or in some cases education, family reunion, or other reasons' (UNHCR, 2016). Thus, the highlighted difference according to UNHCR (ibid) is that, unlike migrants, refugees cannot safely return home.

Home and safety, though, do not only signify who can return home but who can also demand a place in another's home. If the signifier *refugee* shows anything at all in the manifestation of *home* as an emotional but spatial and legal geography, what it depicts comes with its second signifier, *-crisis*. *Refugee crisis* as a chain of only two but important signifiers, despite its short length, is powerful enough to show how open, patriarchal, and white our home in the European arena is. And it starts right from the sea, the Mediterranean Sea which has been positioned as the frontier, the blood-covered frontier, of the European continent. It is in this Sea

that home as an indication of refuge reveals its deeply racialised meaning because it starts mattering the very moment it is crossed and it takes within it all those who struggled to cross both the sea and the chance to get a 'home'. For those who have been left to die in this frontier-sea and for those who managed to cross, the Sea was already making clear the spatial politics of the European home-to-come.

Even if *refugee crisis* obscures the multiple and interconnected *crises*[85] within Europe as well as those that started a long time ago in the transnational politics of Syria, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Cameroon among others, at the level of discourse unfolding, it is as if it has just started there in that crossing. To cross (the Mediterranean), signified a certain repertoire of both discourse as well as practice, and it is right there that the intricate relationship between migrants and refugees continued unravelling in relation to such questions as 'who has the right to remain', while hotspots and camps continued to be justified as inhumane but necessary spaces to accommodate the 'crisis', and the programmes of psychosocial support continued attempting to bring back the humane but humanitarian facet of 'the crisis'. And it is there, in the latter, that the main conclusions of this project lie; to highlight that politics do not only constitute a facet of the crisis in that crossing but also in the way politics cross in between the discursive and spatial temporality of the psyche in the very spaces that await a home to come, the refugee camps.

This thesis is devoted to those who crossed, worked, and lived, are crossing, working, and living in the refugee camps of Greece as a critical attempt to rethink what we do and what is being done in these spaces. As chapter four, *On language,* showed, language matters. It matters because we can see the politics and

---

[85] Scholars from Critical Migration studies (see New Keywords Collective, 2016, online) stress the interconnectedness of crises in the name of refugee crisis; economic, political, juridical, and institutional crisis of European Union and its institutions; the crisis in and of Europe as well as the European border regime; the epistemic and methodological crisis concerning the categories of thought and actions that constitute 'the contemporary' Europe; how analysis regarding migration should not be confined within European geo-political boundaries as 'the very borders and boundaries attributed to "Europe" are unsettled by the transnational dynamics and inter-continental scale of migrant and refugee movements'; but also beyond Europe's eurocentrism(s), within crises in countries, borders, borderlands and conflict zones of the so-called Global South.

dialectics of subjectivity in the way we speak both for ourselves and for others. From the level of the Imaginary and the fixation of the refugee as Other, to the level of the Symbolic and the realisation of what workers' positionings mean in the role of the Cardinal to the Real is traumatic, the way aid workers speak the language of 'the professional' implies a series of power dynamics. One of them is that their language is mediated through multiple fields of discourse, such as the language of the organisation as well as the field of humanitarian and state discourse.

Nevertheless, the latter does not suggest that workers choose always and intentionally to speak in these discourses. The section on *The Real is Traumatic* demonstrated that mainstream discourses, like psychology or psychiatry, are reproduced sometimes because we are trying to make sense of what we *do not understand*. This is as simple and as difficult as it sounds. Remember, for instance, how the discourse of psychiatry prompted the psychologist to rethink and reflect what psychiatrists and psychologists are doing in the refugee camps by questioning the role and meaning of the diagnostic and psychiatric category of *adjustment disorder*. Both workers and refugees try to adjust but refugee camps and hotspots are far from being spaces that anybody *should* adjust to.

Psychology, as a psychopolitical mechanism, besides being helpful, offers on top of that a space of reflexive adjustment. The way that the humanitarian, state, and psychological domain position their discourse on refugees has a series of implications, as has been indicated so far. War becomes thingified as a means of understanding, refugees become racialised to confirm a white understanding and the conditions of living become psychologised as an attempt to keep the state and humanitarian order going. From the language, then, the Cardinal speaks within camps to the space of Moria in which the language of psychology does not understand the fear of the refugee to sleep inside the hotspot while security and army coexisted there, there are constant contradictions that signify and repetitively ask: 'who am I' in this place? This question returns exactly because some of the workers resist, refuse or cannot themselves do that work of adjustment.

It goes without saying that for the (aid) workers this job is a means of surviving in the jobless national working sector (of Greece). If we could conceptualise 'aid worker' as an absent figure in a mirror, I would argue that the adjective 'aid' is what attempts to constitute a unified picture of the self, while it is becoming divided and is breaking apart behind that distorted, reflexive surface. The adjective 'aid' in front of the noun 'worker', in front of the noun 'sector' has something to say and claim. It says how the master signifier of aid tries to unite the divided position of work as a procedure of alienation and it claims that aid has a quite unique role in the field of empire (Hardt and Negri, 2000). In addition, when this, also, comes to the field of psychology, the psychological apparatus, based itself on offering aid and support, adds yet another distorted layer in what we see as being done in these spaces and for whose benefit.

Recalling again Fassin's (ibid) words that there is '*no war without its humanitarian corridors and its humanitarian workers*' *but* putting the latter in dialogue with Stuart Hall's (as cited in Danewid, 2017 p.1683) statement that refugees '*are here because you were there*', there is a need to reposition the question of aid as well as the role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece within a feminist, Marxist and postcolonial framework of understanding. If the unified image of the aid worker falls apart, this is not only because aid or psychology as master signifiers cannot sustain it, but also because what the worker sees behind the mirror of aid is that, given the financial situation and crisis inside the terrain of Greece, they could be potentially another 'object' of humanitarian aid (Kapsali and Mentinis, 2018). In other words, they might themselves be the migrant that assists every day. This is where the 'humanitarian everyday' of the psychological becomes traumatic because we get closer to our own lack.

The second and third analysis chapters, respectively, showed that the spatial and temporal reality of the everyday is traumatic both for aid workers and refugees. This is not to say that they struggle or suffer in the same way. No. The sections on *Therapies of Space: Psychotopology in Emotional Geography* (Chapter Five) and *Repetitiveness: Between time and symptom as a condition and method of meaning* (Chapter Six) depicted how there is a white and symptomatic understanding of

therapy, safe space, therapy as a safe space, time, and symptom. Despite, however, the racialisation refugees experience on an everyday basis due to certain humanitarian and psychological discourses, the discourse on race and racialisation should not become a force that instead of critically reflecting on class, race, gender, and psychology, will reconstitute an upper-class form of whiteness.

To clarify this point, it is not a matter of psychologising, psychoanalysing, and reversing racialisation as the latter entails the danger of recentralising whiteness and missing the functioning of class. On the contrary, the link I am making between psychology and race comes about as an attempt to show that racialisation is embedded in the field of psychology and humanitarianism because they have both been constituted in a western terrain that desperately tries to assist what has already been constituted as *othered*. The section on *The body as an accumulation of knowledge: Between rupture and a new beginning* (Chapter Six) showed how the commodification and racialisation of knowledge registered on the body is crucial to make a historical rupture so as to open a new beginning. In this way, it is not a matter of psychoanalysing history, but of exposing work and history to some psychoanalytic concepts as this is vital for a social theory of understanding (Oliver, 2004), as well as offering a way to act towards *the political*, an act of speaking out.

For those of us who passed by hotspots and refugee camps, worked, and are still working there, it is central to critically reflect on the way refugees have been asked so far to tell and connect with their stories and disconnect with their histories that are encapsulated in our own history. What I call *politics* or *the political* is not an abstract, theoretical configuration of aid and resistance but the way we make sense of and act within ourselves and others. It is there that class, race, gender, and struggle intersect and they make a complex narrative of the being. As this study suggests, the politics of psychosocial support are not restrained in the performativity of psychological language at the level of discourse but conversely, they are exposed to the materiality around the way language unfolds. Space, time, trauma, and history function as the Real, in its Lacanian sense and format; that is,

as a form of reminiscence to re-pose the question of 'who are we' and 'what do we do' in these spaces.

I left the hotspot of Moria on 20th April 2019. Moria was the last site I visited as part of my field study. Back then, the aid workers with whom I collaborated as part of my research were saying that 'things are good now', referring to the fact that Moria was hosting 6.500 to 7.000 refugees, comparing the high numbers of people (approximately 12.000 to 14.000 people) that had been accommodated in the hotspot in the previous years. A couple of months later, Moria would come to 'host' almost 19.000 people. In the months that followed, upheavals, demonstrations and riots became the primary headlines to depict what was going on in Moria. What was missing, though, and omitted from these representations was the fact that the conditions under which refugees came to be trapped in Lesvos and stuck in Moria was a government decision and policy choice. It is what followed the *crossing*. In that period, several demonstrations took place run by migrants primarily and workers, and/or citizens of the island of Lesvos. Among the demands was to *close Moria and refugee camps* and *open the borders*. It is in these moments that action, as the actional spirit of Fanon and the Marxist origin of class struggle and mobilisation, would come together to situate what politics could also mean in the refugee camps of Greece. An act of speaking out.

In September 2020 Moria was burned to the ground. There was literally nothing left. It did not come as a surprise to many of us, but it worked as a reminder that it is not hell that is burning but the everyday, the every-day that makes spaces like Moria remain open. And still, even now that Moria closed, refugees were moved into the second hotspot the island had, in Karatepe – or what many have called 'the New Moria'.

8.3 Knowledge, psychopolitics, migration

Undoubtedly, the positions from which I write, and I make these claims is privileged and white. In any case, though, as a migrant myself from Greece to the UK, a woman yet a white one, a former worker and a psychologist I took advantage of this moment to use this study as a reflexive surface and make peace with the

ruptures around and within me, while thinking among and with others about what a new beginning might look like.

The reason I turned the gaze of psychology back to itself (as have many other researchers, see Burman, 2017; Mills, 2013; Parker, 2007) is, therefore, twofold. First, to depict that, besides the mainstream views of psychological research on suffering, trauma, life stories and histories, there are other multiple ways of doing psychological research. These forms of critical research, which I believe the present study belongs to, seek to turn the gaze of psychology back to itself to highlight the power dynamics, the ideological formats, and the binary oppositions under which we come to make meaning of ourselves and others.

Second, psychology became a method of enquiry for a critical exploration of the humanitarian sector itself. In other words, the humanitarian sector since the 1990s (Pupavac, 2004a; 2001) has used psychology and the notion of psychosocial support as an additional technology of administration in its field of operation. Linking the humanitarian domain of migration studies with the critical psychological research that highlights the power and ideology inscribed in the field, I have shown not only how these discussions can be applied and extended but also, and most importantly, that they reflect equally the field of humanitarianism and migration studies per se. 'Refugee' as a signifier has been intonated with pity, vulnerability, and hostility. Psychology in and outside its humanitarian clinic has been associated with compassion, legitimate power, and empowerment.

Despite the latter and mainstream form of signification, this thesis has questioned the role of psychosocial support in the humanitarian terrain to situate the intricate relations between language, space, time, subject and history in what I call the *politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece*. It has, specifically, exposed the power and ideology of psychology in-between humanitarian and migration studies and practice by demonstrating that psychology's supposed compassion and empowerment in the humanitarian clinic has real impact and consequences.

Each analysis chapter opened these repudiated discussions starting with the way the language of humanitarian organisations and psychology construct both refugees and their (re)presentation, and the way to approach them from the workers' perspective. The way, also, we make sense of space, safe space, and their emotional topology as well as the way time, symptom, and trauma meet to locate the symptom back to 'its own time' continued this repudiated dialogue. Having as a final and crucial encounter for the thesis, the intricated role of stories and their histories, each chapter constituted a waypoint of this study's kernel of signification, to critically explore the role and practices of aid workers in this particular and chronologically specific scene of aid. Hence, this thesis' contribution lies in locating the politics of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece in four distinct levels: the empirical, the methodological, the conceptual and the political, as an endeavour to re-pose the question of 'what psychology does' in these spaces of refuge.

Empirically speaking, besides the work of Kapsali and Mentinis (2018) who illustrated that psychology performs as a mechanism of compliance in the refugee camps of Greece, there has not been yet any other research, as far as I am aware, that focuses on the politics of psychosocial support and the rise of psychopolitics in the domain of humanitarian, migration, and refugee studies in Greece. In that sense, this study is unique because it brings into dialogue and critical discussion the complexities under which psychology, humanitarianism and migration unfold overall and especially in the context of Greece. Although, there have been studies in the domain of psychology-humanitarianism (see Mills, 2013; De Vos, 2011; Pupavac, 2001; Summerfield, 1991) and anthropology-humanitarianism (see Ticktin, 2011a, Redfield, 2010; Fassin and Rechtman, 2009; Bornstein, 2003) that critically reflect on psychology-anthropology, politics and humanitarianism (see also Oliver, 2017), an empirical and critical discussion of psychopolitics within migration studies in the humanitarian domain in the recent context of 'refugee crisis' is very limited.

Moreover, in the humanitarian domain of research and practice the concept of *psychosocial support* comes to be understood as a *technical-operational term*. By

the latter, I mean that psychosocial support is, on the one hand, understood as what sustains the medical and the legal aspect of humanitarian support in the refugee camps, and, on the other hand, as what entails the social aspect of support based on its psychic configuration. Psychosocial support, thus, becomes a technical term which attempts to justify that a more holistic approach of support is offered, even though the social is assimilated into the psychic, and it functions as an operational anchor point because the medical and the legal do not seem to be enough to sustain a 'humanitarian mission' or asylum claims from the part of the state. Besides the attempts to constitute psychosocial support as a fruitful mechanism of aid, 'PSS', as the abbreviation of the term itself highlights, has become very technical both in its discursive format as well as in its implementation. Contrary to a research mentality that would aim for a 'policy-document improvement', this study extended beyond the technicalities and the operational character of psychosocial support by critically elaborating and exploring what psychosocial support entails in the politics of living and working in-between the field of state, humanitarian and psychological aid, policies, and assistance.

This is the reason I choose to use what I name as 'theory as method' across my research and analysis to connect and depict how different theoretical frameworks and concepts become a critical force for a different reading and understanding. Working with different methods such as ethnography and critical observation, interviews, maps, and photographs, along with my personal experience as a worker and my reflections, theory as method came to bridge and interconnect them as part of the analysis. The latter seemed important because by engaging with a range of theories while reading the text in a particular psychoanalytic way, I located both the text and its methods from which the material arose in an interdisciplinary but historical context. On top of that, theory as method located structures of power within a historical context, producing a critical understanding of psychology and migration, aid and work, subject and capitalism, imperialism, colonialism. In any case, theory as method does not imply, however, a method in a strict, 'scientific', and technical operation of research terms and conditions.

Emerging from a feminist and postcolonial epistemological framework, theory as method addresses and highlights the necessity of positionality and political reflexivity, while reminding that the latter should go hand in hand with a critical reflection of their power dynamics. Thus, it constantly negotiates issues of positionality and authorship as well as power as part of a research dynamic.

As this project intersects with several academic and research fields, being therefore interdisciplinary, this study contributes conceptually both to the field of psychology, critical psychology, psychoanalysis, and migration and to the field of humanitarian research and practice. In the introduction of this chapter it was shown how this study's conceptualisation is based on three main axes: a) the dialectics of subjectivity (aid worker – refugee), b) the psyche as an embodied entity, and c) race as a postcolonial reading of aid and support. Each of these axes have been discussed and analysed in relation to language, space, time-trauma, and story-history, adding overall to the current academic discussion, research and humanitarian practice on migration, on politics and the role of the 'refugee crisis'.

The politics of psychosocial support, comprised by these main axes and crossed by these four analysis chapters, reinforce a conceptual and Fanonian understanding of what the term 'psychopolitical' means amid these circumstances. Inspired, initially, by the discussion on the *psychopolitics* from Han (2017) and Kapsali and Mentinis (2018), Fanon's work and actional mentality on the intersection between psychology and politics brings to the fore and extends the dialectics of subjectivity when he warns that any discussion, conceptualisation, and action on the 'psychopolitical' should be approached and analysed reciprocally. Even though Fanon himself did not use the term 'psychopolitics', his work on the politics of colonial war and its detrimental consequences to the psyche as well as his positioning that psychic disorders could come to an end only by the end of colonialism, shed light on what 'psychopolitics' could look like from a postcolonial, psychological, and political frame of understanding (Burman, 2020; 2016; Hook, 2005; 2004).

The reciprocal nature of understanding psychology and politics, then, lies at the heart of this thesis, and it is what adds to a current conceptual understanding of psychology, migration, and politics as a manifestation of humanitarianism and aid, suffering and ~~aid~~ work. Linking the language of psychoanalysis with organisational discourse, chapter four entitled *On language* added a conceptual psychoanalytic layer to the way we speak about migration in different psychic levels, performing while speaking the landscape of migration as politics and politics as migration. The discussion on *space*, for example, enhanced the conceptual understanding of *emotional geographies* as a concept, *and embodied encounters* as a conceptual framework, moving beyond a simplistic and binary understanding of psyche and body in space, as a milieu, and therapeutic space as a milieu that attempts to tackle psychosocial inequalities. In this context of what I called *therapeutic spatiality*, time, symptom, and trauma work as a reminder that the symptom, as an embodied psychic manifestation of trauma, goes beyond the humanitarian and anthropological arguments of Fassin and Rechtman (2009), Ticktin (2011a), and Redfield and Bornstein (2010). This is because the symptom has a memory, a memory that reveals the '*symptom's own time*' (Fanon, 1952/2008) as a time of political upheaval, colonial wars, and interventions. This is the reason that a strict interpretation of migration and health cannot be inscribed solely by narratives of bio credibility (Tomkow, 2019) or in discourses of medical anthropology. Although, these sources are both critical and important to understand the crucial context of health and migration, there is something more in what is being done in the domain of psychology as health, and in migration as politics.

What psychology and politics highlight in their encounter with migration is that class, race, gender, and history traverse the way we speak, the way we 'make space' for refugees and the way we speak with refugees about their traumas. Psychosocial support as *a technique of self-development and social adjustment* depicted that the way 'we make space' for the 'home to come' is still entrapped within a class, white, and patriarchal issue. Not always, though, and not intentionally -necessarily- from the people who work and assist on the ground. The following phrase, coming from an aid worker and discussed in chapter seven,

that 'we tend to approach them for example like we treat a destitute old man', I believe encompasses in detail how the field of psychology approaches refugees within its humanitarian clinic. It also indicates presumptions of age, gender, poverty, and lack of resources. This is not just a phrase by default but *history* in a sentence format.

In one of her papers, Burman (2007, p.194) asks *'what is there between orientalism and normalization?'* and she continues by unfolding 'how psychology, -as *the* discipline of normalization- has worked both to counter and then incorporate orientalising tendencies'. Politics and history, history and politics go hand in hand, are intertwined so far as to be inseparable. It would not be feasible to talk about politics, if it were not discussed how history played a role in normalizing and orientalising refugees. Yet, they are not the only ones. Aid workers themselves have been normalised and orientalised based on a white upper class humanitarian understanding. This is apparent in the way interpreters quite often become assimilated into the organisation's discursive format or in the way ~~aid~~ workers are approached in their weekly and monthly meetings as if there is nothing more that could be done, highlighting quite often that the primary priority is to protect themselves before any *other(s)*.

And, indeed, it is true that most of the time nothing else could be done because everyday dead ends are structural (i.e. slow procedures in the asylum service, lack of space, high numbers of people accommodated in the same camp or hotspot, lack of personnel). While these are just some of the many and major issues, the fact that the psychic response to them is turned back to the self, to the way that workers need to learn how to be resilient and 'armor' themselves, demonstrates that any psychic upheaval generated by and in relation to structural issues is normalised into a psychic manifestation of resilience and protection of the self. This is not to say that workers' self-protection does not matter. On the contrary, it really does; but it is mentioned to emphasize how the history of psychology within humanitarian politics reproduces yet another oriental understanding, because the subject who needs desperately to adjust so as to let the operational order keep going is the national youth force of a country in bankruptcy.

If, therefore, *the political* matters, this research has shown that it is the way the political is inscribed in our everyday understanding of both migration and psychology, humanitarian research and practice. And thus, having the political as 'counter-ally', the question around the role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece shifts inquiry to a question that tracks not how to lift repression but rather how repression and oppression operate. So, the task of this thesis' analysis was not to embed the reader in a worldview but rather to break from a dominant one by posing again the question: *what is the role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece?* Fanonian, Lacanian and Marxist perspectives brought to the fore that if a dialogue on the 'personal-political' matters it is because a Lacanian understanding of subjectivity is 'extimate', which means that what is apparently exterior is also interior (and vice versa).

As Parker (2022) explains, this connects with 'socialist and feminist' readings of Marxism that bridge the 'personal' and the 'political'. Nevertheless, the latter is not to say that Lacanian psychoanalysis solely allows to bring all of them together. Despite my alignment with Parker's (ibid) argument that Lacanian psychoanalysis is in some respect Marxist, and that Lacanian and Marxist theory have both similarities and differences, this thesis used theory as method to warn and argue that neither Lacanian nor Marxist theory should become a worldview. Rather, theory as method should become a critical and productive appropriation of these forms of knowledge production whose primary enquiry is the end of oppression.

It is therefore more than central to connect this research with the different ways that refugees and workers resist, separately but also together. There have been not a few times that workers and refugees allied in struggle, in demonstrations, for example, outside hotspots and refugee camps, demanding and fighting to close these spaces down, open the borders and give papers to refugees. Neither could I miss noting the different building occupations that took place in Athens and Thessaloniki so to accommodate refugees away and outside of camps, declaring against and resisting the system of humanitarian governance. Equally important was the creation of the union of workers in the humanitarian sector, which gave the chance to unite, discuss and fight back collectively the conditions under which

we work but also the conditions under which refugees are required to live. It is these spaces that this research refers to, as an attempt to continue the discussion on the politics of psychology and migration, and attempt to make it 'extimate' to different and collective ways of resistance.

8.4 Limitations, ruptures, continuum

To conclude, then, although Fanon would perhaps argue that this form of research could manifest as a form of 'political education' we need to take seriously into account the limitations of assimilating radical theory within 'the Discourse of the University'. In that sense, indeed, this research is limited from its own beginning and thus if I have attempted to expand that knowledge it is only to connect it with the broader movements that have been arising as a form of support to speed up the asylum processes, open the borders and close hotspots and refugee camps. This research was also an attempt to provide a critical space for reflection, for workers like me and some of this study's participants who were aware of the politics, intricacies, power, and problematics of working in these spaces. It is, additionally, for those workers and participants that supported the project and may find commonalities as well as differences in what is presented and use them as a force and action of resistance.

However, and upon reflection, I believe that this is precisely one of the major limitations of the thesis; that instead of inspiring and provoking critical discussions within it, as part and therefore embedded in its methodological design, any critical reflection and discussion will strictly be only an aftermath of it. While remembering the comments of some participants who approached the interview as being '*therapeutic*', I realise that if I had offered an alternate, more political, and co-constituted engagement with this study, I would have avoided reiterating 'therapeutic discourses', and it might have been possible to constitute a further collective way of understanding and action as part of the research.

It is, also, while remembering moments where I could have responded differently to participants' views which challenged me that I regret I did not provoke a more politically formulated narrative. It was in these specific moments that I was feeling

uncomfortable and my approach to research turned mainstream, and hence instead of posing questions against ideology, power, and resistance, as Parker suggests (2005a), or providing a space of reflection and discussion, I acted as if I agreed (i.e. saying for instance 'aha') or was interested to continue. Rethinking these moments and their political power, I came to realise that this research may have failed to provide a space within it which would provoke, discuss, and act against the mainstream discourses arose in relation to refugees in and outside of hotspots and camps.

A different, perhaps militant (Scheper-Hughes, 1995), emancipatory (Montero, 2009) or participatory action research (PAR) (Jimenez-Dominguez, 1996) may have worked better to offer a radical and qualitative research, and not just a kind of reflection and feedback on being 'therapeutic' or reflexive in listening. I am wondering what it would mean to conduct this research from a PAR perspective, instead of interviewing workers which ended up reinforcing to some extent certain power dynamics as those raised before? It is while reflecting on this study's limitations and my power as a researcher that I come to conclude that a more radical and militant research would have been possible, if not needed, without minimising its complexity and politics within the 'field of migration' (see Grappi, 2013).

Furthermore, and strictly academically speaking, the limitations of this research lie, also, in the number of sites I visited and in the word-limit I had to adhere to discuss and reflect on the differences between hotspots and refugee camps. It was useful and fruitful that I conducted six-months of research in the refugee camps of Greece on top of my previous one-year work and experience there, but the current project could not accommodate a further analysis of the commonalities and differences between each site. Such analysis is, however, clearly called for – also as an update on the current situation since the closure of Moria. In addition, although I processed most of my material, there is still a great amount of material that I would like to work with, expand and write about.

For instance, the role of provision for minors (i.e. for young asylum seekers and refugees) within structures such as the 'Safe Zone' that I mentioned through my analysis is a crucial element of analysis. It is not only the structure itself that makes it so important, but the way age and the politics of childhood work to seek, on the one hand, better conditions of living and on the other hand reproduces developmentalist approaches of maturing together with state and humanitarian control of 'adulthood' (as Burman's 2019 discussion of 'child as method' helps inform). Age assessment (Sedmak et al., 2018) is such a tool when the humanitarian personnel are not sure that a refugee is 'really' a child (i.e. under 18 years old) and not an adult. Considering, among these discourses, the role of race and time, there is a great deal of work that needs to be done to show how childhood acts as both a form of resistance and European governmental form of restraint. Hence, the 'ageing of refuge', in the sense that the need of a lot of people to move from one part of the world to the other rises daily, and the fact that those who come into the European terrain had better have 'a good age' so as to be used as a cheap labour force for the provincial projects of reconstruction in Europe, play a great political role in many domains.

Undoubtedly, in-depth critical feminist discussions on 'womenandchildren' (Burman and Stacey, 2010; Burman, 2008; but see also Sylvester, 1998), gender, migration and violence are another central area of analysis which was also missing from this study, and I consider it another limitation of the project. Notwithstanding that feminist analyses are a key framework and orientation for me (i.e. in the epistemological foundations of this study), and gender appears and disappears in the thesis (i.e. in the feminisation of asylum, the feminisation of work, the gender of workers, the ad hoc victimisation of 'womenandchildren' and the patriarchal histories of state, aid and psychology), it is true that it has been approached and discussed neither in depth, nor as much as I would like to. And it is also true that the latter disappoints me. Likewise, given the fact that more and more refugees who arrive in Greece from the continent of Africa are victims of the state, psychology and torture remained unaddressed enquiries.

Fanon has written specifically on the 'techniques of torture' and how these forms of techniques, based on fear, break the body with the hope to demolish the national consciousness (Fanon, 1961/2004). Along these lines, culture, religion and migration need to be also embedded in a narrative that aims to unpack the complexity of the so called 'refugee crisis'. And with that in mind, all the above comprise domains of future research and action that are more than needed.

This project did not touch in detail any of these issues, although they all constitute its future aims and ruptures. I believe that without the present study and the discussions that opened I would not be able to move on in the issues that remain unaddressed. As a matter of fact, the way gender, violence and torture intersect within psychology and humanitarian discourses is the focus of the postdoctoral research proposal I wrote, to critically discuss some of these issues and shift the focus from aid workers' accounts concerning refugees to refugees themselves. Hence another key limit of this study is the absence of the refugees' voices.

The focus here has been on how the 'voice' and available positions of the refugee are circumscribed by professional discourses mobilised by the aid worker, including and especially psychological discourses which also play a key role in producing the subjectivity of the worker even as it also specifies that of the refugee. In this sense, the refugee has been a vital and key presence in this study, albeit as narrated and inferred from the aid workers' accounts. The question of whether any research (or practice, for that matter) could ever document a 'direct' 'voice' or account remains at play in this thesis, given the focus here on the ways subjectivity and speech are constituted by power-knowledge discursive complexes. It should, lastly, be of critical concern and problematisation any focus on 'voices' given the polemic and problematic nature of representation. As far as this study is concerned, the focus has been intentionally put on the aid workers so to navigate how repression and oppression work as part of the psychological and humanitarian praxis.

Bibliography

Abdelnour, S., & Abu Moghli, M. (2021). Researching Violent Contexts: A Call for Political Reflexivity. *Organization 00*(0), 1-24.

Arce, M. (2012). Towards an Emancipatory Discourse of Children's Rights. *The International Journal of Children's Rights 20*, 365-421.

Adams, G., Estrada-Villalta, S., Sullivam, D., & Markus, H., R. (2019). The Psychology of Neoliberalism and the Neoliberalism of Psychology. *Journal of Social Issues 75*(1), 189-216.

Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo Sacer*. California: Stanford University Press.

Agamben, G. (1995). We Refugees. *Symposium: A Quarterly Journal in Modern Literatures, 49*(2), 114-119.

Agier, M. (2011). *Managing the Undesirables: Refugee Camps and Humanitarian Government* (D. Fernbach, Trans.). Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA: Polity Press.

Ahmed, S. (2010). *The Promise of Happiness*. Durham and London, UK: Duke University Press.

Ahmed, S. (2000). *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. Oxon: Routledge.

Althusser, L. (2004). Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses. In J. Rivkin & M. Ryan, *Literary Theory: An Anthology* (pp.693-702). Oxford: Blackwell.

Anastasiadou, M., Marvakis, A., Mezidou, P., & Speer, M. (2017 & 2018). *From Transit Hub to Dead End: A Chronicle of Idomeni*. München: bordermonitoring.eu e.V. Available in English at: https://bordermonitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/reports/bm.eu-2017-idomeni.en.pdf & in Greek at: https://bordermonitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/bm.eu-2017-idomeni.gr_.pdf

Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands. La Frontera: The New Mestiza.* San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Arendt, H. (1943). We Refugees. In J. Kohn & R. H. Feldman (Eds.), *The Jewish Writings* (pp.264-274). New York: The Schocken Books.

Augé, M. (1995). *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (J. Howe, Trans.)*. London and New York: Verso.

Badiou, A. (2005). *Being and the Event* (O. Feltham, Trans.)*. London: Continuum.

Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination* (M. Holquist, Ed.; C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Banister, P., Bunn, G., Burman, E., Daniels, J., Duckett, P., Goodley, D., Lawthom, R., Parker, I., Runswick-Cole, K., Sixsmith, J., Smailes, S., Tindall, C., & Whelan, P. (2011). *Qualitative Methods in Psychology: A Research Guide*. Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Barberio, A. (2018). Moria is in a State of Emergency. An Open Letter from MSF Clinical Psychiatrist Dr Alessandro Barberio, Moria Camp, Lesbos, Greece. Available at: https://www.msf.org/moria-state-emergency

Barker, C. (2002). *Making Sense of Cultural Studies*. London: Sage.

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

Barthes, R. (2000). *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (R. Howard, Trans). London: Vintage Books.

Barthes, R. (1977). *Image, Music, Text.* London: Fontana.

BBC (2014). Greece Jobless Rate Hits New Record of 28%. 13 February. Available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-26171213

Bell, D., N. & Blanchflower, D., G. (2015). Youth Unemployment in Greece: Measuring the Challenge. *IZA Journal of European Labor Studies 4*(1), 1-25.

Bendfeld, M., A. (2000). *Conflicted Identities. The Challenge of Maria Lugones to Theories of Oppression.* [Master's Thesis, Dalhousie University]. https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services/theses/Pages/item.aspx?idNumber=1007000802

Beneduce, R. (2016). Traumatic Pasts and the Historical Imagination: Symptoms of Loss, Postcolonial Suffering, and Counter-Memories among African Migrants. *Transcultural Psychiatry 53*(3), 261-285.

Beneduce, R. (2012). La Vie Psychique de l'Histoire: Fanon et le Temps Fracturé de la Mémoire. *L'Autre 13*(3), 273-284 .

Benjamin, W. (2007). *Illuminations* (H. Zohn, Trans.; H. Arendt, Ed.). New York: Schocken Books. [Originally published in German in 1955].

Benjamin, W. (1998). *The Origins of German Tragic Drama*. London: Verso. [Originally Published in German in 1928].

Bennani, J. (1980*). Le Corps Suspect*. Paris: Galilèe.

Berger, J. (2013). *Understanding a Photograph* (G. Dyer, Ed.). London: Penguin Classics.

Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of Seeing*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation and Penguin Books.

Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel Optimism*. Durham and London, UK: Duke University Press.

Bernasconi, R. (2011). The Great White Error and the Great Black Mirage: Frantz Fanon's Critical Philosophy of Race. In N. Gibson (Ed.), *Living Fanon: Global Perspectives* (pp.85-92)*.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Beshara, R., K. (2019). *Decolonial Psychoanalysis. Towards Critical Islamophobia Studies*. London and New York: Routledge.

Best, S., & Marcus, S. (2009). Surface Reading: An Introduction. *Representations 108*(1), 1-21.

Bhabha, H. (1994). *The Location of Culture.* London: Routledge.

Bhambra, G., K. (2014) Postcolonial and Decolonial Dialogues. *Postcolonial Studies 17(2)*, 115-12.

Bistoen, G. (2016). *Trauma, Ethics and the Political beyond PTSD*. Hampshire, UK and New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Blum, V., & Secor, A. (2011). Psychotopologies: Closing the Circuit between Psychic and Material space. *Environmental and Planning D: Society and Space 29*, 1030-1047.

Bohn, C., O. (2019). Historiography and Remembrance: On Walter Benjamin's Concept of Eingedenken. *Religions 10*(40), 1-8.

Bondi, L. (2003). A Situated Practice for (Re)Situating Selves: Trainee Counsellors and the Promise of Counselling. *Environment and Planning 35*, 853-870.

Bondi, L. (1990). Progress in Geography and Gender: Feminism and Difference. *Progress in Human Geography 14*(3), 438-445.

Bondi, L., & Fewell, J. (2003). "Unlocking the Cage Door": The Spatiality of Counselling. *Social & Cultural Geography 4*(3), 527-547.

Bornstein, E. (2003). *The Spirit of Development: Protestant NGOs, Morality and Economics in Zimbabwe*. New York and London: Routledge.

Bosworth, M., & Turnbull, S. (2015). Immigration Detention, Punishment and the Criminalization of Migration. In S. Pickering & J. Hamm (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook on Crime and International Migration* (pp.91-106). London and New York: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (2003). Participant Objectivation. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 9*(2), 281-294.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L., J., D. (1992). *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Cambridge and Oxford, UK: Polity Press.

Bowie, M. (1991). *Lacan*. London: Fontana Press.

Brison, S., J. (1997). Outliving Oneself: Trauma, Memory and Personal Identity. In D. T. Meyers (Ed.), *Feminist Rethinking the Self* (pp.12-39). Boulder, CO: Westview.

Broeck, S. (2014). Commentary. In Response to Michel Feith. *Black Studies Papers 1(*1), 25-28.

Brownmiller, S. (1975). *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Burman, E. (2021a). *Developments: Child, Image, Nation* (2nd ed.). Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Burman, E. (2021b). Lockdown Vistas: Time, Space, Solidarity, Actions. In I. Strasser & M. Dege (Eds.), *The Psychology of Global Crises and Crisis Politics. Intervention, Resistance, Decolonization* (pp.189-212)*.* Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Burman, E. (2020). Therapy of/for the Oppressed: Frantz Fanon's Psychopolitical Pedagogy of Transformation. In H. Neville & L. Turner (Eds.), *Frantz Fanon's Psychotherapeutic Approaches to Clinical Work: Practicing Internationally with Marginalized Communities* (pp.109-126). New York and Oxon: Routledge.

Burman, E. (2019). *Fanon, Education, Action: Child as Method*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Burman, E. (2017). *Deconstructing Developmental Psychology* (3rd ed.). Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Burman, E. (2016). Fanon, Foucault, Feminisms: Psychoeducation, Theoretical Psychology and Political Change. *Theory & Psychology 26*(6), 706-730.

Burman, E. (2008). Beyond 'Women vs. Children' or 'WomenandChildren': Engendering Childhood and Reformulating Motherhood. *The International Journal of Children's Rights, 16*(2), 177-194.

Burman, E. (2007). Between Orientalism and Normalization: Cross-Cultural Lessons from Japan for a Critical History of Psychology. *History of Psychology 10*(2), 179-198.

Burman, E. (2006). Emotions and Reflexivity in Feminised Education Action Research. *Educational Action Research 14*(3), 315–332.

Burman, E. (2003). Narratives of 'Experience' and Pedagogical Practices. *Narrative Inquiry 13*(2), 269-286.

Burman, E. (1998). Children, False Memories and Disciplinary Alliances: Tensions Between Developmental Psychology and Psychoanalysis. *Psychoanalysis and Contemporary Thought, 21*(3), 307-333.

Burman, E. (1997). Telling Stories: Psychologists, Children and the Production of False Memories. *Theory & Psychology 7*(3), 291-309.

Burman, E. (1992). Feminism and Discourse in Developmental Psychology: Power, Subjectivity, and Interpretation. *Feminism & Psychology, 2*(1), 45–59.

Burman, E. (Ed.) (1990). *Feminists and Psychological Practice*. London: Sage.

Burman, E., & Chantler, K. (2004). There's No-Place Like Home: Emotional Geographies of Researching 'Race' and Refuge Provision in Britain. *Gender, Place and Culture 11*(3), 375-397.

Burman, E., & Parker, I. (Eds.) (1993). *Discourse Analytic Research: Repertoires and Readings of Texts in Action*. London and New York: Routledge.

Burman, E., & Stacey, J. (2010). The Child and Childhood in Feminist Theory. *Feminist Theory 11*(3), 227-240.

Burnett, J., & Chebe, F. (2020). Towards a Political Economy of Charging Regimes: Fines, Fees and Force in UK Immigration Control. *The British Journal of Criminology 60*(3), 579-599.

Busquet, G. (2012-13). Political Space in the Work of Henri Lefebvre: Ideology and Utopia. *JSSJ 5*, 1-12.

Buss, D., E. (2009). Rethinking Rape as a Weapon of War. *Feminist Legal Studies 17*, 145 -163.

Butler, J. (2005a). *Giving an Account of Oneself*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Butler, J. (2005b). Photography, War, Outrage. *PMLA 120*(3), 822-827.

Butler, J. (1997). *The Psychic Life of Power. Theories in Subjection*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that Matter. On the Discursive Limits of "Sex".* London and New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble*. London and New York: Routledge.

Calais Writers (M. Godin, K., M. Hansen, A. Lounasmaa, C. Squire & T. Zaman, Eds.) (2017). *Stories from the Jungle*. London: Pluto Press.

Campbell, K. (2004). *Jacques Lacan and Feminist Epistemology*. London and New York: Routledge.

Cavarero, A. (2000). *Relating Narratives: Storytelling and Selfhood* (P. A. Kottman, Trans). London and New York: Routledge.

Chakrabarti, S. (2012). Moving Beyond Edward Said: Homi Bhabha and the Problem of Postcolonial Representation. *International Studies. Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal 14*(1), 5–21.

Chakrabarty, D. (2000). *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (S. B. Ortner, N. B. Dirks & G. Eley, Eds.). Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Chen, K. H. (2010). *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Cherki, A. (2011). Fanon, Fifty Years Later: Resisting the Air of Our Present Time. In N. Gibson (Ed.), *Living Fanon: Global Perspectives* (pp.131-138)*.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Christinaki, A. (2020a). The Borders of Humanitarianism (in Greek). [Review of the book *Borders, Bodies and Narratives of Crisis in Europe*, by T. Lagios, V. Lekka & G. Panoutsopoulos]. *Misfit 1*, 94-97.

Christinaki, A. (2020b). Crisis, Trauma, Refugees: Towards a Political Reading and Reconsideration (in Greek). *Misfit 1*, 39-46.

Cliff, T. (1980). *Rosa Luxemburg* (2nd ed.). London: Bookmarks.

Cooper, D. (1972). *The Death of the Family*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Cooper, D. (1967). *Psychiatry and Anti-psychiatry*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Coward, R., & Ellis, J. (1977). *Language and Materialism: Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Dafermos, M. (2015). Rethinking the Crisis in Social Psychology: A Dialectical Perspective. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass 9*(8), 394–405.

Dafermos, M., & Marvakis, A. (2006). Critiques in Psychology - Critical Psychology. *Annual Review of Critical Psychology 5*, 1–20.

Danewid, I. (2017). White Innocence in the Black Mediterranean: Hospitality and the Erasure of History. *Third World Quarterly 38*(7), 1674-1689.

De Genova, N. (2018). The "Migrant Crisis" as Racial Crisis: Do Black Lives Matter in Europe? *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 41*(10), 1765-1782.

De Genova, N. (Ed.) (2017). *The Borders of Europe: Autonomy of Migration, Tactics of Bordering*. Durham: Duke University Press.

De Genova, N. (2016). The European Question: Migration, Race and Postcoloniality in Europe. *Social Text 128 34*(3), 75-102.

De Genova, N., Garelli, G., & Tazzioli, M. (2018). Autonomy of Asylum? The Autonomy of Migration Undoing the Refugee Crisis Script. *The South Atlantic Quarterly 117*(2), 239-265.

De Lauri, A. (2019). Humanitarian Militarism and the Production of Humanity. *Social Anthropology 27*(1), 84-99.

De Lauri, A. (2016). Introduction. In A. De Lauri (Ed.), *The Politics of Humanitarianism* (pp.1-16). London and New York: I.B.Tauris.

Dei, G., J., S., & Asgharzadeh, A. (2001). The Power of Social Theory: The Anti-Colonial Discursive Framework. *The Journal of Educational Thought (JET) / Revue de la Pensée Éducative 35*(3), 297-323.

Derrida, J., & Caputo, J., D. (1997). *Deconstruction in a Nutshell. A Conversation with Jacques Derrida* (J. D. Caputo, Ed.). New York: Fordham University Press.

Derrida, J., & Nicholson-Smith, D. (1991). Geopsychoanalysis: "…and the Rest of the World". *American Imago 48*(2), 199-231.

Deutscher, P. (2003). Already Lamenting: Deconstruction, Immigration, Colonialism. *Studies in Practical Philosophy 3*(1), 5-21.

De Vos, J. (2020). Psychologization, What It Is and What It Is Not: Objectivism, Psychology, and Silicon Valley. In N. Cocks (Ed.), *Questioning Ayn Rand. Subjectivity, Political Economy and the Arts* (pp.45-61). Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

De Vos, J. (2013). *Psychologization and the Subject of Late Modernity*. London: Routledge.

De Vos, J. (2012). *Psychologization in Times of Globalisation.* London and New York: Routledge.

De Vos, J. (2011). The Psychologization of Humanitarian Aid: Skimming the Battlefield and the Disaster Zone. *History of the Human Sciences 24*(3), 103–122.

Duffield, M. (2004). *Carry on Killing: Global Governance, Humanitarianism and Terror*. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies.

Duffield, M. (1997). NGO Relief in War Zones: Towards an Analysis of the New Aid Paradigm. *Third World Quarterly 18*(3), 527–42.

Ecclestone, K., & Hayes, D. (2009). *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education.* London and New York: Routledge.

Edwards, A. (2016). Refugee or Migrant? Word choice matters. Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html

Eisenstein, P., & McGowan, T. (2012). *Rupture. On the Emergence of the Political*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Enloe, C. (1993). *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Evans, D. (1996). *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*. London and New York: Routledge.

European Council (2016). EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016. Available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/

European Council of Refugees and Exiles (2015). 'Hotspot' Opens in Lesvos but Reports of Conditions on the Island Remain Worrying. Available at: https://ecre.org/hotspot-opens-in-lesvos-but-reports-of-conditions-on-the-island-remain-worrying/

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: Longman.

Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. London: Longman.

Fanon, F. (2018). *Frantz Fanon Alienation and Freedom* (J. Khalfa & R.J.C. Young, Eds; S. Corcoran, Trans). London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Fanon, F. (2008). *Black Skin White Masks* (C. L. Markmann, Trans.). London: Pluto Press. [Originally Published in French in 1952].

Fanon, F. (2004). *The Wretched of the Earth* (R. Philcox, Trans.). New York: Grove Press. [Originally Published in French in 1961].

Fanon, F. (1967). *Toward the African Revolution* (H. Chevalier, Trans.). New York: Monthly Review Press. [Originally Published in French in 1964].

Fanon, F. (1965). *A Dying Colonialism* (H. Chevalier, Trans.). New York: Grove Press. [Originally Published in French in 1959].

Fanon, F., & Lacaton, R. (1955). Conduites d'aveu en Afrique du Nord (Confession in North Africa). Paper presented at the Congrès de Psychiatrie et Néurologie de langue française, Nice. (Reprinted in *L'Information psychiatrique 51*(10), 1975).

Farah, R. (2020). Expat, Local, and Refugee: 'Studying Up' the Global Division of Labor and Mobility in the Humanitarian Industry in Jordan. *Migration and Society: Advances in Research 3*, 130-144.

Fassin, D. (2007). Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life. *Public Culture 19*(3), 499-520.

Fassin, D., & Pandolfi, M. (2010). *Contemporary States of Emergency. The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions*. Cambridge: Zone Books.

Fassin, D., & Rechtman, R. (2009). *The Empire of Trauma. An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood* (R. Gomme, Trans.). Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Fink, B. (1997). *The Lacanian Subject.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Fletcher, R. (2012). Capitalizing on Chaos: Climate Change and Disaster Capitalism. *ephemera 12*(1/2), 97-112.

Foucault, M. (2008). *The Birth of Biopolitics. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979* (G. Burchell, Trans.). Hampshire, UK and New York: Palgrave Macmillan. [Originally Published in French in 1979].

Foucault, M. (2003). '*Society Must be Defended'. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976* (D. Macey, Trans.). New York: Picardo. [Originally Published in French in 1997].

Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (A. Sheridan, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books. [Originally Published in French in 1975].

Foucault, M. (1996). Rituals of Exclusion. In S. Lotringer (Ed.), *Foucault Live: Interviews, 1961–84* (L. Hochroth & J. Johnston), (pp.63–72). New York: Semiotext(e). [Originally Published in 1989].

Foucault, M. (1988a). *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (L. H. Martin, H. Gutman & P. H. Hutton, Eds.). London: Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, M. (1988b). *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (R. Howard, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books. [Originally Published in French in 1961].

Foucault, M. (1981). The Order of Discourse. In R. Young (Ed.), *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader* (pp.48-78). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. [Originally Published in French in 1971].

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* (C. Gordon, Ed.; C. Gordon, L. Marshall, J. Mepham & K. Soper, Trans.). New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction* (R. Hurley, Trans.). New York: Pantheon Books. [Originally Published in French in 1976].

Foucault, M. (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* (A. M. Sheridan Smith, Trans.). New York: Pantheon Books. [Originally Published in French in 1969].

Foucault, M., & Miskowiec, J. (1986). Of Other Spaces. *Diacritics 16*(1), 22-27.

Fox, D., & Prilleltensky, I. (1997). *Critical Psychology: An Introduction*. London: Sage.

Freedman, J. (2016). Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Against Refugee Women: A Hidden Aspect of the Refugee "Crisis". *Reproductive Health Matters 24*(47), 18-26.

Freud, S. (2008). The Unconscious. In P. Rieff (Ed.), *General Psychological Theory. Papers on Metapsychology* (pp.109-146). New York: Touchstone. [Originally Published in German in 1915].

Freud, S. (2003a). Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through. In S.Freud (J. Reddick, Trans.), *Beyond the Pleasure Principle and Other Writings* (pp.31-42). London: Penguin Books. [Originally Published in German in 1914].

Freud, S. (2003b). Beyond the Pleasure Principle. In S.Freud (J. Reddick, Trans.), *Beyond the Pleasure Principle and Other Writings* (pp.43-102). London: Penguin Books. [Originally Published in German in 1920].

Freud, S. (2002). *Civilizations and its Discontents* (D. McLintock Trans.). London: Penguin Books. [Originally Published in German in 1930].

Fuss, D. (1994). Interior Colonies: Frantz Fanon and the Politics of Identification. *Diacritics 24*(2-3), 19-42.

Fuss, D. (1989). *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference.* London and New York: Routledge.

Gavroche, J. (2016). Freedom of Movement, Movement of Freedom: Transgressing Borders with Migrants. Available at: https://autonomies.org/2016/03/reaching-across-borders-with-migrants/

George, S. (2016). *Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity.* Texas: Baylor University Press.

George, S., & Hook, D. (2021). *Lacan and Race: Racism, Identity, and Psychoanalytic theory.* London: Routledge.

Gendzier, I., L. (1976). Psychology and Colonialism: Some Observations. *Middle East Journal 30*(4), 501-515.

Gherovici, P. (2017). *Transgender Psychoanalysis: A Lacanian Perspective on Sexual Difference*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Gibson, N., C. (2011). The New North African Syndrome. A Fanonian Commemoration. *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy XIX*(1), 23-35.

Gibson, N., C. (2003). *The Postcolonial Imagination*. Cambridge and Oxford, UK: Polity Press.

Gibson, N., & Beneduce, R. (2017). *Frantz Fanon, Psychiatry and Politics.* South Africa: Wits University Press.

Gitlin, A. (Ed.) (1994). *Power and Method: Political Activism and Educational Research.* New York and London: Routledge.

Glissant, E. (1989). *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia.

Goffman, E. (1961). *Asylums. Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates.* New York: Anchor Books.

Goonewardena, K., Kipfer, S., Milgrom, R., & Schmid, C. (Eds.) (2008). *Space, Difference, Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre*. New York and London: Routledge.

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (Q. Hoare & G. N. Smith, Eds. and Trans.)*.* New York: International Publishers.

Grappi, G. (2013). Three Problems Without a Solution: The *Militant Research Conundrum* and the Social Condition of Migration. *Postcolonial Studies 16*(3), 320-327.

Greenwood, J., D. (2004). What Happened to the 'Social' in Social Psychology? *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour 34*, 19–34.

Hagan, M. (2018) Capturing the Invisible: The Challenges of Using Photography as Method with Asylum Seekers Living in Calais, France. Available at: https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/centre-criminology/centreborder-criminologies/blog/2018/10/capturing

Han, B., C. (2017). *Psycho-Politics: Neoliberalism and New Technologies of Power.* London: Verso.

Hanisch, D. (1970). The Personal is Political. *Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberation. Major Writings of the Radical Feminism*, 76-77.

Hannah, M., G. (1997). Space and the Structuring of Disciplinary Power: An Interpretative Review. *Geografiska Annaler 79B* (3), 171-180.

Haraway, D. (1998). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies 14*(3), 575-599.

Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2000). *Empire*. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press.

Harley, J., B. (2001). *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography.* Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Harris, A. (1987). The Rationalization of Infancy. In J. M. Broughton (Ed.), *Critical Theories of Psychological Development* (pp.31-59). New York and London: Plenum Press.

Harvey, D. (2006). *Spaces of Global Capitalism. Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development*. London and New York: Verso.

Harvey, D. (2005). *Spaces of Neoliberalization. A Theory of Uneven Geographical Development.* Heidelberg, Germany: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Harvey, D. (2001). *Spaces of Capital. Towards a Critical Geography*. New York: Routledge.

Harvey, D. (2000). *Spaces of Hope*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Harvey, D. (1990). Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers 80*(3), 418-434.

Harvey, L. (2011). Intimate Reflections: Private Diaries in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Research 11*(6), 664-682.

Hayter, T. (1971). *Aid as Imperialism*. Middlesex, UK and Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books.

Hemmings, C. (2011). *Why Stories Matter. The Political Grammar of Feminist Theory*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Henriques, J., Hollway, W., Urwin, C., Venn, C., & Walkerdine, V. (1998). *Changing the Subject. Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity.* London and New York: Routledge.

Hepburn, A. (2003). *An Introduction to Critical Social Psychology*. London: Sage.

Hepburn, A. (1999). Derrida and Psychology. Deconstruction and Its Ab/uses in Critical and Discursive Psychologies. *Theory & Psychology 9*(5), 639-665.

Herman, J., L. (1997). *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*. New York: Basic Books.

Hertz, R. (1996). Introduction: Ethics, Reflexivity and Voice. *Qualitative Sociology 19*(1), 3-9.

Hoffmann, S. (2016). A Sovereign for All: The Management of Refugees as Nation-State Politics. In A. De Lauri (Ed.), *The Politics of Humanitarianism* (pp.147-174). London and New York: I.B.Tauris.

Hook, D. (2013a). Tracking the Lacanian unconscious in language. *Psychodynamic Practice 19*(1), 38-54.

Hook, D. (2013b) Nixon's "Full-speech": Imaginary and Symbolic Registers of Communication. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology, 33*(1), 32-50. Available at: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/60338/1/Hook_Nixon%27s-full-speech_2012.pdf

Hook, D. (2007). *Foucault, Psychology and the Analytics of Power*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hook, D. (2005). A Critical Psychology of the Postcolonial. *Theory & Psychology 15*(4), 475-503.

Hook, D. (2004). Frantz Fanon, Steve Biko, 'Psychopolitics' and Critical Psychology. London: LSE Research Online. Available at: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/961

hooks, b. (2015). *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics.* New York and London: Routledge. [Originally published in 1990].

hooks, b. (2000). *Feminist Theory. From Margin to Center*. London: Pluto Press. [Originally published in 1984].

Hyndman, J. (2000). *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism.* London and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Hyndman, J., & Giles, W. (2017). *Refugees in Extended Exile: Living on the Edge.* Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Hyndman, J., & Giles, W. (2011). Waiting for What? The Feminization of Asylum in Protracted Situations. *Gender, Place & Culture 18*(3), 361-379.

Hyndman, J. & De Alwis, M. (2004). Bodies, Shrines and Roads: Violence, (Im)mobility and Displacement in Sri Lanka. *Gender, Place and Culture 11*(4), 535-557.

Immigration Act, Law 4636/2019, Gazette 169/A/1-11-2019 (2019). Available at: https://www.e-nomothesia.gr/kat-allodapoi/prosphuges-politiko-asulo/nomos-4636-2019-phek-169a-1-11-2019.html

Ingleby, D. (Ed.) (2005). *Forced Migration and Mental Health: Rethinking the Care of Refugees and Displaced Persons*. Utrecht: Springer.

International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) and European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) v. Greece, 173 EU 1 (2018). Available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-social-charter/pending-complaints/-/asset_publisher/lf8ufoBY2Thr/content/complaint-no-173-2018-international-commission-of-jurists-icj-and-european-council-for-refugees-and-exiles-ecre-v-greece?inheritRedirect=false

Jameson, F. (2002). *A Singular Modernity. Essays on the Ontology of the Present*. London and New York: Verso.

Jimenez-Dominguez, B. (1996). Participant Action Research. In I. Parker & R. Spears (Eds.), *Psychology and Society: Radical Theory and Practice* (pp.220-229). London: Pluto Press

Johnston, A. (2009). *Badiou, Žižek and Political Transformations*. *The Cadence of Change*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Joseph-Salisbury, R. & Conelly, L. (2021). *Anti-Racist Scholar-Activism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Kallio, K., P., Häkli, J., & Pascucci, E. (2019). Refugeeness as Political Subjectivity: Experiencing the Humanitarian Border. *EPC: Politics and Space 37*(7), 1258-1276.

Kapsali, A., & Mentinis, M. (2018). *Psychologies of Compliance: Notes on the Psychopolitical Control of Migration* (in Greek). Athens: Oposito.

Kathimerini (2018a). One Rape a Week Takes Place at Moria Refugee Camp, Report Cites NGO as Saying. Available at: https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/233618/one-rape-a-week-takes-place-at-moria-refugee-camp-report-cites-ngo-as-saying/

Kathimerini (2018b). MSF Responds to Denials of Rape at Moria Migrant Camp. Available at: https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/233753/msf-responds-to-denials-of-rape-at-moria-migrant-camp/

Keller, R. (2007). *Colonial Madness: Psychiatry in French North Africa*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Kelly, K. (2000). Action Research, Performance and Critical Hermeneutics. *Annual Review of Critical Psychology 2*, 89-108.

Khalfa, J. (2005). My Body, this Skin, this Fire: Fanon on Flesh. *Wasafiri 20*(44), 42-50.

Khan, N. (2014). A Moving Heart: Querying a Singular Problem of 'Immobility' in Afghan Migration to the UK. *Medical Anthropology: Cross-Cultural Studies in Health and Illness 32*(6), 518–34.

Khatib, S. (2017). Where the Past Was, There History Shall Be. Benjamin, Marx, and the "Tradition of the Oppressed". *Anthropology & Materialism,* Special Issue I, 1-22.

Khiabany, G. (2016). Refugee Crisis, Imperialism and Pitiless Wars on the Poor. *Media, Culture & Society 38*(5), 755-762.

Klein, E. (2016). *Developing Minds: Psychology, Neoliberalism and Power.* London and New York: Routledge.

Klein, N. (2007). *The Shock Doctrine. The Rise of Disaster Capitalism.* New York: Metropolitan Books.

Kolokytha, E. (2012). The Dictatorship of Happiness (in Greek). *Radicalμα 1*(1), 17-20.

Lacan, J. (2018). *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (J. A. Miller, Ed.; A. Sheridan, Trans.). New York: Routledge. [Originally Published in French in 1973].

Lacan, J. (2017). *Formations of the Unconscious. Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book V* (J. A. Miller, Ed.; R. Grigg, Trans.). Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA: Polity Press. [Originally Published in French in 1998].

Lacan, J. (2007). *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis: The Seminar of Jacque Lacan Book XVII* (J. A. Miller, Ed.; R. Grigg, Trans.). New York and London: W.W. Norton. [Originally Published in French in 1991].

Lacan, J. (2006a). Logical Time and the Assertion of Anticipated Certainty. In *Écrits* (B. Fink, Trans.) (pp.161–175). London and New York: W. W. Norton. [Originally Published in *Écrits* in French in 1966].

Lacan, J. (2006b). The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience. In *Écrits* (B. Fink, Trans.) (pp.75-81). London and New York: W. W. Norton. [Originally Published in *Écrits* in French in 1966].

Lacan, J. (2006c). The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis. In B. Fink (Trans.), *Écrits* (pp.197-268). New York and London: W.W Norton. [Originally Published in *Écrits* in French in 1966].

Lacan J. (2006d). Remarks on Daniel Lagache's presentation: Psychoanalysis and Personality Structure. In B. Fink in collaboration with H. Fink & R. Grigg (Trans.) *Écrits*, (pp.543-574). New York and London: W. W. Norton. [Originally Published in *Écrits* in French in 1966].

Lacan, J. (1991a). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book I: Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953-1954* (J. A. Miller, Ed.; J. Forrester, Trans.). New York and London: W.W. Norton. [Originally Published in French in 1975].

Lacan, J. (1991b). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: Book II. The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis 1954-1955* (J. A. Miller, Ed.; S. Tomaselli, Trans.). New York and London: W.W. Norton. [Originally Published in French in 1978].

Lacan, J. (xxxx). *Seminar XII: Crucial Problems for Psychoanalysis 1964-1965* (C. Gallagher, Trans). Available at: http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/translations/seminars/

Laclau, E., & Mouffe, C. (1985). *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. London: Verso.

Lagios, T., Lekka, V., & Panoutsopoulos, G. (2018). *Borders, Bodies and Narratives of Crisis in Europe.* Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Pivot.

Lefebvre, H. (2009). *State, Space, World. Selected Essays* (N. Brenner & S. Elden, Eds, G. Moore, N. Brenner & S. Elden, Trans.). Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Lefebvre, H. (2002). *Critique of Everyday Life: Foundations for a Sociology of the Everyday. Volume II* (J. Moore, Trans.). London and New York: Verso. [Originally published in French in 1961].

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space* (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). Oxford, UK and Cambridge, USA: Blackwell. [Originally published in French in 1974].

Leonardo, Z. (2009). *Race, Whiteness, and Education*. New York: Routledge.

Leonardo, Z., & Porter, R., K. (2010). Pedagogy of Fear: Toward a Fanonian Theory of 'Safety' in Race Dialogue. *Race Ethnicity and Education 13*(2), 139-157.

Louis, C. (2016). Médecins Sans Frontières and the Refugee Crisis in Greece: An Interview with Dr. Apostolos Veizis. *Pathogens and Global Health 110*(6), 219–222.

Lugones, M. (2010). Toward a Decolonial Feminism. *Hypatia 25*(4), 742-759.

Lugones, M. (2003). *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorising Coalition against Multiple Oppressions.* Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Luxemburg, R. (2010). *Rosa Luxemburg: Socialism or Barbarism: Selected Writings* (P. Le Blanc & H. C. Scott, Eds.). London and New York: Pluto Press.

Luxemburg, R. (1951). *The Accumulation of Capital* (A. Schwarzschild, Trans.). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. [Originally Published in German in 1913).

Mahmood, S. (2005). *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Mahecic, A. (2020). UNHCR Calls for Decisive Action to End Alarming Conditions on Aegean islands. Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/briefing/2020/2/5e3d2f3f4/unhcr-calls-decisive-action-end-alarming-conditions-aegean-islands.html

Malkki, L. H. (1995). Refugees and Exile: From 'Refugee Studies' to the National Order of Things. *Annual Review of Anthropology 24*, 495-523.

Mama, A. (1995). *Beyond the Masks: Race, Gender and the Subject*. London: Routledge.

Martín-Baró, I. (1994). *Writings for a Liberation Psychology* (A. Aron & S. Corne Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Massey, D. (2005). *For Space*. London: Sage.

Massey, D. (1994). *Space, Place and Gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Mavelli, L. (2017). Governing Populations Through the Humanitarian Government of Refugees: Biopolitical Care and Racism in the European Refugee Crisis. *Review of International Studies 43*(5), 809-832.

McClintock, A. (1992). The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term "Post-Colonialism". *Social Text 31/32*, 84-98.

McMahon, J. (2015). Behavioral Economics as Neoliberalism: Producing and Governing Homo Economicus. *Contemporary Political Theory 14,* 137–158.

Médecins Sans Frontières (2016). Why is MSF Closing its Moria Project on Lesvos? Available at: https://www.msf-me.org/media-centre/news-and-stories/why-msf-closing-its-moria-project-lesvos

Mentinis, M., & Critical Psychology Network (2013). *Redefining the Psychosocial: Texts of Critical Social Psychology* (in Greek). Thessaloniki: Epikentro.

Mentzelopoulou, M., M., & Luyten, K. (2018). Hotspots at EU External Borders. State of Play. *European Parliamentary Research Service*, 1-7.

Mertek, K. (2021). The Post-Cold War Era and The Humanitarian Principles: An Analysis of The ICRC's Discourse on The Syrian War. Presentation at the 1st Hitit International Congress on Security Studies, Hitit University, Çorum, 24-27 December 2021.

Mezzadra, S. (2018). In the Wake of the Greek Spring and the Summer of Migration. *The South Atlantic Quarterly 117*(3), 925-933.

Mezzadra, S., & Neilson, B. (2013). *Border as Method*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Mignolo, W., D. (2007). Introduction: Coloniality of Power and De-colonial Thinking. *Cultural Studies 21*(2-3), 155-167.

Mignolo, W., D. (2000). The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference. *South Atlantic Quarterly 101*(1), 57-96.

Miller, J., A. (1995). Introductory Talk at Sainte-Anne Hospital. In R. Feldstein, B. Fink & M. Jaanus (Eds.), *Reading Seminar XI. Lacan's Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (pp.233-241)*.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Mills, C. (2013) *Decolonizing Global Mental Health. The Psychiatrization of the Majority World*. New York and Oxon: Routledge.

Mills, K. (2005). Neo-Humanitarianism: The Role of International Humanitarian Norms and Organisations in Contemporary Conflict. *Global Governance 11,* 161-183.

Minh-ha, T., T. (1989). *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism.* Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Missios, C. (1988). *Smile! What are they asking you?* (in Greek). Athens: Grammata.

Mohanty, C., T. (2003). "Under Western Eyes" Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 28*(2), 499-535.

Mohanty, C., T. (1984). Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses. *Boundary 2, 12/13* (3/1), 333-358.

Moncrieff, J. (2009). *The Myth of the Chemical Cure: A Critique of Psychiatric Drug Treatment*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Moncrieff, J. (2007). Co-opting Psychiatry: The Alliance Between Academic Psychiatry and the Pharmaceutical Industry. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences, 16*(3), 192–196.

Montero, M. (2009). Methods for Liberation: Critical Consciousness in Action. In M. Montero & C., C. Sonn (Eds.), *Psychology of Liberation* (pp.73-92). New York: Springer.

Montero, M., & Dorna, A. (1993). La Psicología Política: Una Disciplina En La Encrucijada. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología 25*(1), 7-15.

Mufti, A., & Shohat, E. (1997). Introdution. In A. McClintock, A. Mufti & E. Shohat (Eds.), *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation and Postcolonial Perspectives* (pp. 1-12). Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Mylonas, N. & Christinaki, A. (Eds.) (2020). Bizarre Ideas: Refugees, Camps and NGOs (in Greek). *Misfit 1.*

Nayak, S. (2015). *Race, Gender and the Activism of Black Feminist Theory: Working with Audre Lorde.* London: Routledge.

Nelson, C., & Grossberg, L. (Eds.) (1988). *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Hampshire and London, UK: Macmillan Education.

Neocleous, M. (2013). Resisting Resilience. *Radical Philosophy 178*, 2-7. Available at: https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/commentary/resisting-resilience

Neocleous, M., & Kastrinou M. (2016). Commentary: The EU Hotspot. Police War Against the Migrant. *Radical Philosophy 200*, 3-9.

New Keywords Collective, (2016). Europe/Crisis: New Keywords of 'the Crisis' in and of 'Europe'. *Near Futures Online 1*, Available at: http://nearfuturesonline.org/

Nietzsche, F. (1968). On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. & Trans.) *The Portable Nietzsche* (pp.42-47). New York: Viking Press.

Nyers, P. (2006). *Rethinking Refugees: Beyond States of Emergency.* New York and London: Routledge.

Observatory of the Refugee and Migration Crisis in the Aegean (2020a). A Statement from Inside Moria. Available at: https://refugeeobservatory.aegean.gr/en/statement-inside-moria

Observatory of the Refugee and Migration Crisis in the Aegean (2020b). Come Walk Through the Moria Refugee Camp "Olive Grove". Available at:

https://refugeeobservatory.aegean.gr/en/come-walk-through-moria-refugee-camp-olive-grove

Observatory of the Refugee and Migration Crisis in the Aegean (2018). EuroRelief: Evangelical organisation providing more harm than aid to refugees. Report by Are You Syrious? Available at: https://refugeeobservatory.aegean.gr/en/eurorelief-evangelical-organisation-providing-more-harm-aid-refugees-report-are-you-syrious

OECD, (2014). Labour Market Integration of Immigrants and their Children: Developing, Activating and Using Skills. In *International Migration Outlook 2014*. Paris: OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2014-5-en.

Oliver, K. (2017). Earthquakes: Deconstructing Humanitarianism. *Derrida Today 10*(1), 38-50.

Oliver, K. (2007). *Women as Weapons of War*: Iraq, Sex, and the Media. New York: Columbia University Press.

Oliver, K. (2004). *The Colonization of Psychic Space: A Psychoanalytic Social Theory of Oppression*. London and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Oliver, K., & Edwin, S. (Eds.) (2002). *Between the Psyche and the Social. Psychoanalytic Social Theory.* Lanham, Boulder, New York and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Olujic, M., B. (1998). Embodiment and Terror: Gendered Violence in Peacetime and Wartime in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly 12(*1), 31-50.

Orwell, G. (2009). *Animal Farm.* In G. Orwell, *George Orwell the Complete Novels* (pp.1-74). London: Penguin Books. [Originally Published in1945].

Pandolfi, M., & Rousseau, P. (2016). Governing the Crisis. A Critical Genealogy of Humanitarian Intervention. In A. De Lauri (Ed.), *The Politics of*

Humanitarianism: Power, Ideology and Aid (pp.17-32). London and New York: I.B. Tauris.

Paras, A. (2014). Between Missions and Development: Christian NGOs in the Canadian Development Sector. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies 35*(3), 439-457.

Parker, I. (2022). Lacanian Psychoanalysis and Marxism: Conceptual and Practical Work. In C. Vanderwees, K. Hennessy & M. Miller (Eds.), *Psychoanalysis, Politics, Oppression and Resistance*. London and New York: Routledge.

Parker, I. (2020). Interviewed by Ayurdhi Dhar for *Mad in America: Science, Psychiatrist and Social Justice*, 11 March. Available at: https://www.madinamerica.com/2020/03/psychology-not-think-interview-critical-psychologist-ian-parker/#comments

Parker, I. (2015). *Psychology After Discourse Analysis: Concepts, Methods, Critique.* London and New York: Routledge.

Parker, I. (2013). Discourse Analysis: Dimensions of Critique in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology 10*(3), 223-239.

Parker, I. (2011). *Lacanian Psychoanalysis: Revolutions in Subjectivity*. London and New York: Routledge.

Parker, I. (2010). Psychosocial Studies: Lacanian Discourse Analysis Negotiating Interview Text. *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society 15*(2), 156-172.

Parker, I. (2007). *Revolution in Psychology: Alienation to Emancipation*. London: Pluto Press.

Parker, I. (2005a). *Qualitative Psychology: Introducing Radical Research*. Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Parker, I. (2005b). Lacanian Discourse Analysis in Psychology. Seven Theoretical Elements. *Theory & Psychology 15*(2), 163-182.

Parker, I. (2002). *Critical Discursive Psychology.* Hampshire, UK and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Parker, I. (Ed.) (1999). *Deconstructing Psychotherapy*. London: Sage.

Parker, I. (1999b). Critical Psychology: Critical Links. *Annual Review of Critical Psychology 1*, 3-18.

Parker, I. (1989). *The Crisis in Modern Social Psychology, and How to End it*. London: Routledge.

Parker, I., & Pavón-Cuéllar, D. (2021). *Psychoanalysis and Revolution: Critical psychology for liberation movements*. London: 1968 Press.

Parker, I., Georgaca, E., Harper, D., McLaughlin, T., & Stowell-Smith, M. (1995). *Deconstructing Psychopathology*. London: Sage.

Parry, B. (2004). *Postcolonial Studies. A Materialist Critique*. London and New York: Routledge.

Parry, B. (1993). A Critique Mishandled. *Social Text 35*, 121-133.

Pascucci, E. (2019). The Local Labor Building the International Community: Precarious Work Within Humanitarian Spaces. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space 51*(3), 743-760.

Pavón-Cuéllar, D. (2010). *From the Conscious Interior to an Exterior Unconscious: Lacan, Discourse Analysis and Social Psychology.* London: Karnac Books.

Pickles, J. (2004). *A History of Spaces. Cartographic Reason, Mapping and the Geo-Coded World*. London: Routledge.

Pink, S. (2007). *Doing Visual Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Polman, L. (2010). *The Crisis Caravan: What's Wrong with Humanitarian Aid?* New York: Henry Holt.

Pupavac, V. (2004a). Psychosocial Interventions and the Demoralization of Humanitarianism. *Journal of Biosocial Science 36*(4), 491–504.

Pupavac, V. (2004b). War on the Couch: The Emotionology of the New International Security Paradigm. *European Journal of Social Theory 7*(2), 149-170.

Pupavac, V. (2001). Therapeutic Governance: Psycho-social Intervention and Trauma Risk Management. *Disasters 25*(4), 358-372.

Pyles, L., Svistova, J., & Ahn, S. (2017). Securitization, Racial Cleansing and Disaster Capitalism: Neoliberal Disaster Governance in the US Gulf Coast and Haiti. *Critical Social Policy 37*(4), 582-603.

Quijano, A. (2007). Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality. *Cultural Studies 21*(2-3), 168-178.

Rahimi, S. (2009). The Unconscious: Metaphor and Metonymy. Available at: http://somatosphere.net/2009/unconscious-metaphor-and-metonymy.html/

Raimondi, V. (2019). Resisting the Camp: Migrants' Squats as Antithetical Spaces in Athens' City Plaza. In J. Darling & H. Bauder (Eds.) *Sanctuary Cities and Urban Struggles: Rescaling Migration, Citizenship, and Rights* (pp.191-216). Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Ramazanoğlu C., & Holland J. (2002). *Feminist Methodology: Challenges and Choices*. London: Sage.

Redfield, P. (2012). The Unbearable Lightness of Expats: Double Binds of Humanitarian Mobility. *Cultural Anthropology 27*(2), 358–382.

Redfield, P. (2010). The Verge of Crisis: Doctors Without Borders in Uganda. In D. Fassin & M. Pandolfi (Eds.), *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions* (pp.151-168). New York: Zone Books.

Redfield, P. (2005). Doctors, Borders, and Life in Crisis. *Cultural Anthropology 20*(3), 328-361.

Redfield, P., & Bornstein, E. (Eds.) (2010). *Forces of Compassion: Humanitarianism Between Ethics and Politics*. New Mexico: School for Advanced Research Press.

Refugee Support Aegean – RSA, (2020). Moria Nightmare. Available at: https://rsaegean.org/en/moria-nightmare/

Rimmon-Kenan, A. (1980). The Paradoxical Status of Repetition. *Poetics Today 1*(4), 151-159.

Rodríguez Mora, I. (2003*). Psychosocial Interventions in Emergencies: Theoretical Models and Their Ethical and Political Implications in the Venezuelan Context. The Case of UNICEF*. [Doctoral Thesis, The University of Cambridge]. https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/264154

Rose, N. (1999). *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*. London: Free Association Books.

Rose, N. (1998). *Inventing Our Selves: Psychology, Power and Personhood.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Rose, N. (1985). *The Psychological Complex: Psychology, Politics and Society in England 1869–1939.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Rozakou, K. (2017a). Solidarity #Humanitarianism: The Blurred Boundaries of Humanitarianism in Greece. *Etnofoor 29*(2), 99-104. Available at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/26296172

Rozakou, K. (2017b) Access to a Hot Field: A Self-Reflexive Account of Research in the Moria Camp, Lesvos. Available at: https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/centre-criminology/centreborder-criminologies/blog/2017/11/access-hot-field

Ruíz, E. (2021). Postcolonial and Decolonial Theories. In K., Q., Hall & Ásta (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Philosophy* (pp. 541–551; Online edition, Oxford Academic). Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190628925.013.45

Said, W., E. (2003). *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books. [Originally published in 1978].

Scheper-Hughes, N. (1995). The Primacy of the Ethical: Propositions for a Militant Anthropology. *Current Anthropology 36*(3), 409-440.

Scheper-Hughes, N., & Bourgois, P. (2004). Introduction: Making Sense of Violence. In N. Scheper-Hughes & P. Bourgois (Eds.), *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology* (pp.1-27). Oxford: Blackwell.

Scheper-Hughes, N., & Lovell, A., M. (Eds.) (1987). *Psychiatry Inside Out: Selected Writings of Franco Basaglia* (A., M. Lovell & T. Shtob, Trans.). New York: Columbia University Press.

Scheper- Hughes, N., & Lock, M., M. (1987). The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly 1*(1), 6-41.

Schinkel, W. (2015). The Image of Crisis: Walter Benjamin and the Interpretation of 'Crisis' in Modernity. *Thesis Eleven 127*(1), 35-51.

Schmid, C. (2008). Henri Lefebvre's Theory of the Production of Space: Towards a Three-Dimensional Dialectic. In K. Goonewardena, S. Kipfer, R. Milgrom & C. Schmid (Eds.), *Space, Difference, Everyday Life* (pp.27-45)*.* New York and London: Taylor & Francis.

Sedgwick, P. (1982). *Psycho Politics*. London: Pluto Press.

Sedmak, M., Sauer, B., & Gornik, B. (Eds.) (2018). *Unaccompanied Children in European Migration and Asylum Practices: In Whose Best Interests?* London and New York: Routledge.

Sekyi-Otu, A. (2011). Fanon and the Possibility of Postcolonial Critical Imagination. In N. Gibson (Ed.), *Living Fanon: Global Perspectives* (pp.45-60)*.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Seligman, M. (2011). *Flourish*. North Sydney, N.S.W.: Random House Australia.

Seshadri- Crooks, K. (2000). *Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian Analysis of Race.* Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Siddiqui, S. (2017). A Turn to Ghost in Social Science Theorising. Presentation at the International Society for Theoretical Psychology Conference, Rikkyo University, Tokyo, 21-25 August.

Sköld, N. (2021). Helping Vulnerable Children to Find their Inner Hero: Syrian Refugee Wins UNHCR Innovation Award for an Inventive Project that Helps Vulnerable Children Overcome Trauma Linked to Past Experiences. Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/stories/2021/2/603611e14/helping-vulnerable-children-find-inner-hero.html

Sloan, T. (1996). *Damaged Life: The Crisis of the Modern Psyche*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Smith, A., D. (1993). The Ethnic Sources of Nationalism. *Survival 35*(1), 48-62.

Smith, D., E. (1978). K is Mentally Ill. *Sociology 12*(1), 23-53.

Smith, N. (2008). *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space*. Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press.

Sontag, S. (2005). *On Photography*. New York: RosettaBooks. [Originally Published in 1973].

Sontag, S. (2003). *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Picador.

Spivak, G., C. (1999). *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Spivak, G., C. (1988). Can the Subaltern Speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (pp.271-313). Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Squire, C. (2001). The Public Life of Emotions. *International Journal of Critical Psychology, 1*, 27-38.

Squire, V. (2018). Mobile Solidarities and Precariousness at City Plaza: Beyond Vulnerable and Disposable Lives. *Studies in Social Justice 12*(1), 111-132.

Stavrakakis, Y. (2002). *Lacan and the Political.* London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Summerfield, D. (2002). Effects of War: Moral Knowledge, Revenge, Reconciliation, and Medicalised Concepts of 'Recovery'. *British Medical Journal (BMJ) 325*, 1105 - 1107.

Summerfield, D. (2001). The Invention of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the Social Usefulness of a Psychiatric Category. *British Medical Journal 322*, 95-98.

Summerfield, D. (1999). A Critique of Seven Assumptions Behind Psychological Trauma Programmes in War Affected Areas. *Social Science and Medicine 48*, 1449-1462.

Summerfield, D. (1998). "Trauma" and the Experience of War: A Reply. *The Lancet 351,* 1580-1581.

Summerfield, D. (1997). Legacy of War: Beyond 'Trauma' to the Social Fabric. *The Lancet 349*, 1568.

Summerfield, D. (1991). Mental Health of Refugees and Asylum-Seekers. *The Lancet 338*(16), 1261-1262.

Sylvester, C. (1998). Homeless in International Relations: Women's Place in Canonical Texts and Feminist Re-Imaginings. In A. Phillips (Ed.), *Feminism & Politics* (pp.44-66). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tazzioli, M. (2020). *The Making of Migration: The Biopolitics of Mobility at Europe's Borders.* London: Sage.

Teo, T. (2018). Homo neoliberalus: From personality to forms of subjectivity. *Theory & Psychology, 28*(5), 581–599.

Teo, T. (2005). *The Critique of Psychology: from Kant to Postcolonial Theory*. New York, NY: Springer.

Terre des hommes (2018). The Trauma Caused by Migration. Available at: https://www.tdh.ch/en/news/trauma-migration

Ticktin, M. (2011a). *Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Ticktin, M. (2011b). The Gendered Human of Humanitarianism: Medicalising and Politicising Sexual Violence. *Gender and History 23*(2), 250-265.

Ticktin, M. (2005). Policing and Humanitarianism in France: Immigration and the Turn to Law as State of Exception. *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies 7*(3), 346–368.

Tolman, C. (1994). *Psychology, Society and Subjectivity: An Introduction to German Critical Psychology*. London: Routledge.

Tomkow, L. (2019). *Health and Ageing in a Hostile Environment: Understanding Older Asylum Applicants' Narratives of Life, Health and Ageing in the UK.* [Doctoral Thesis, The University of Manchester]. https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/theses/health-and-ageing-in-a-hostile-environment-understanding-older-asylum-applicants-narratives-of-life-health-and-ageing-in-the-uk(6b9586d9-284c-446b-9698-819c3934e6f7).html

Tsavdaroglou, C. (2018). The Newcomers' Right to the Common Space: The Case of Athens During the Refugee Crisis. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies 17*(2), 376-401.

Turner, L. & Neville, H., A. (Eds.) (2020). *Frantz Fanon's Psychotherapeutic Approaches to Clinical Work: Practicing Internationally with Marginalised Communities*. New York and London: Routledge.

Turnbull, D. (1993). *Maps Are Territories: Science Is an Atlas: A Portfolio of Exhibits*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

UNHCR (2021a). Operational Data Portal. Refugee Situations. Available at: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179

UNHCR (2021b). UNHCR Hands Over the Management of the Cash Assistance Programme for Asylum Seekers in Greece to the Greek Government. Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/gr/en/23535-unhcr-hands-over-the-management-of-the-cash-assistance-programme-for-asylum-seekers-in-greece-to-the-greek-government.html

UNHCR (2020). Figures at Glance. Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html

UNHCR (2018). Site Profiles August – September 2018. Available at: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179

UNHCR (2016). UNHCR Viewpoint: 'Refugee' or 'Migrant' – Which is Right? Available at:https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html

UNHCR (2006). Operational Protection in Camps and Settlements. A Reference Guide of Good Practices in the Protection of Refugees and Other Persons of Concern. Geneva: A UNHCR publication.

van Dijk, T. (2003). Critical Discourse Analysis. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen & H. E. Hamilton (Eds.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (pp.352-371). Oxford: Blackwell.

van Dijk, T. (1993). Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Discourse and Society, 4*(2), 249-283.

V. H. (2018). The Prison Within the Prison within the Prison: The Detention Complex of Moria Camp. Available at: https://dm-

aegean.bordermonitoring.eu/2018/09/23/the-prison-within-the-prison-within-the-prison-the-detention-complex-of-moria-camp/

Vanheule, S. (2011). Lacan's Construction and Deconstruction of the Double-Mirror Device. *Frontiers in Psychology 2,* 1-9.

Vighi, F., & Feldner, H. (2007). *Žižek: Beyond Foucault.* Hampshire, UK and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and Langua*ge (A. Kozulin, Trans.). Massachusetts: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Watters, C. (2001). Emerging Paradigms in the Mental Health Care of Refugees. *Social Science and Medicine 52*, 1709-1718.

Welch, M., & Schuster, L. (2005). Detention of Asylum Seekers in the US, UK France, Germany, and Italy: A Critical Review of the Globalizing Culture of Control. *Criminal Justice 5*(4), 331-335.

Woolgar, A. (Ed.) (1988). *Knowledge and Reflexivity: New Frontiers in the Sociology of Knowledge.* London: Sage.

Wright, C. (2021). Lacan on Trauma and Causality: A Psychoanalytic Critique of Post-Traumatic Stress/Growth. *Journal of Medical Humanities 42*, 235-244.

Yang, M. (2012). The Specter of the Repressed: Žižek's Symptom, Trauma Ontology, and Communist Trauma. *International Journal of Zizek Studies 6*(1), 1-21.

Zupančič, A. (2000). *Ethics of the Real*. London: Verso.

Žižek, S. (2018). Happiness? No, Thanks! Available at: https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/happiness-no-thanks/

Žižek, S. (2008). *Violence*. New York: Picador.

Žižek, S. (2002). *Welcome to the Desert of the Real! Five Essays on September 11 and Related Dates*. London: Verso.

Žižek, S. (2000a). *The Ticklish Subject*. London and New York: Verso.

Žižek, S. (2000b). *The Fragile Absolute – Or why is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting for*. London and New York: Verso.

Žižek, S. (1994). *Mapping the ideology*. New York: Verso.

Žižek, S. (1989). *The sublime Object of ideology*. New York: Verso.

Appendices

## Appendix 1: Table of sites, population, and timescale of research

Region/ Organisation	Field Study	Population at the time of the research (approximately)	Timescale	Distance to the closest city
Preveza, Epirus, Greece **ARSIS (National NGO)**	Refugee camp of Filippiada Camp Permanent Structure	600 refugees	2 weeks 09/11/2018-25/11/2018	2.6km to Filipiada (Health Center) 17.5km to Arta(hospital) 58km to Ioannina(hospital)
Ioannina, Epirus, Greece **ARSIS**	Refugee Camp of Katsika Camp Permanent Structure	900 – 1000 refugees	2 weeks 26/11/2018-09/12/2018	8.3km to Ioannina
Ioannina, Epirus, Greece **ARSIS**	Refugee camp of Doliana Former Music School (Building Structure)	100 refugees	2 weeks 10/12/2018-21/12/2018	40.1km to Ioannina
Ioannina, Epirus, Greece **ARSIS**	Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni Camp but belongs to the urban accommodation project	30 minors	1 month 05/02/2019-05/03/2019	~5km to Ioannina
Lesvos, Northern Aegean Sea, Greece **MSF (International NGO)**	Refugee Camp/HotSpot of Moria & MSF's Moria Clinic MSF's Mytilene Clinic	6.500 - 7.500 refugees	1 month 18/03/2019-13/04/2019	8.7km to Mytilene

Appendix 2: Visual representation of each site in map and its correspondent distance
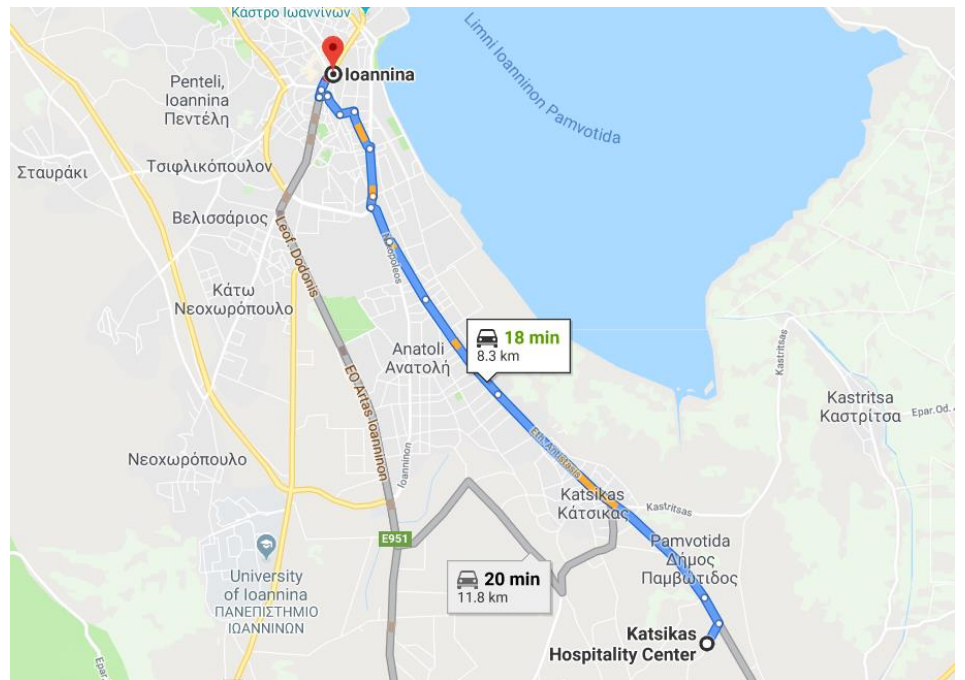
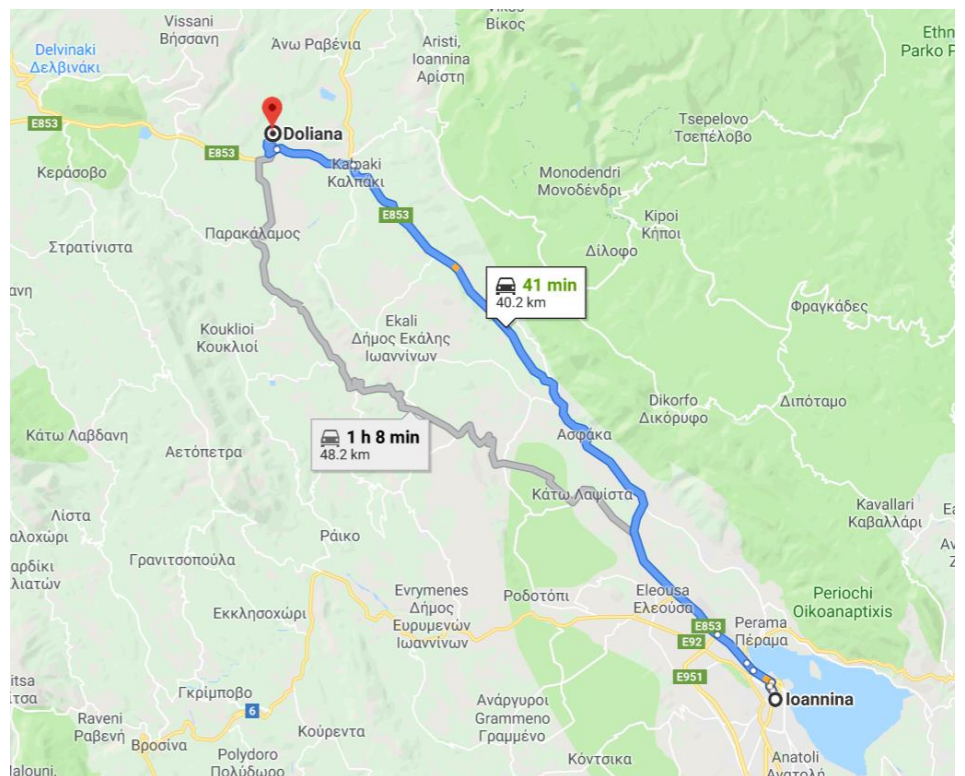Map 7: Ioannina, Epirus, Greece
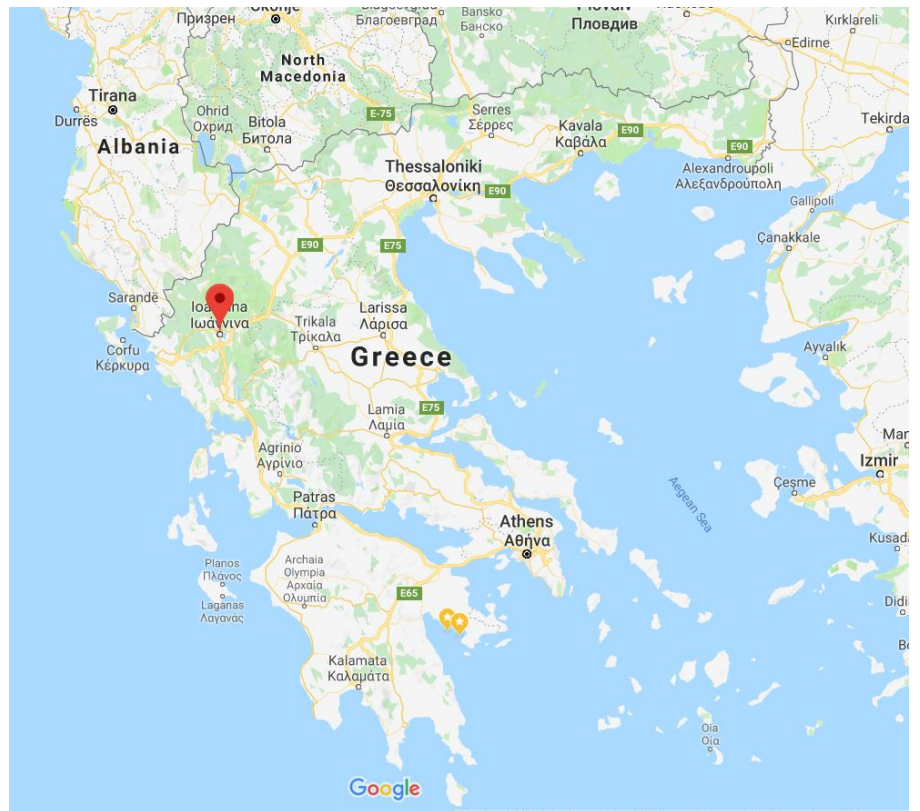
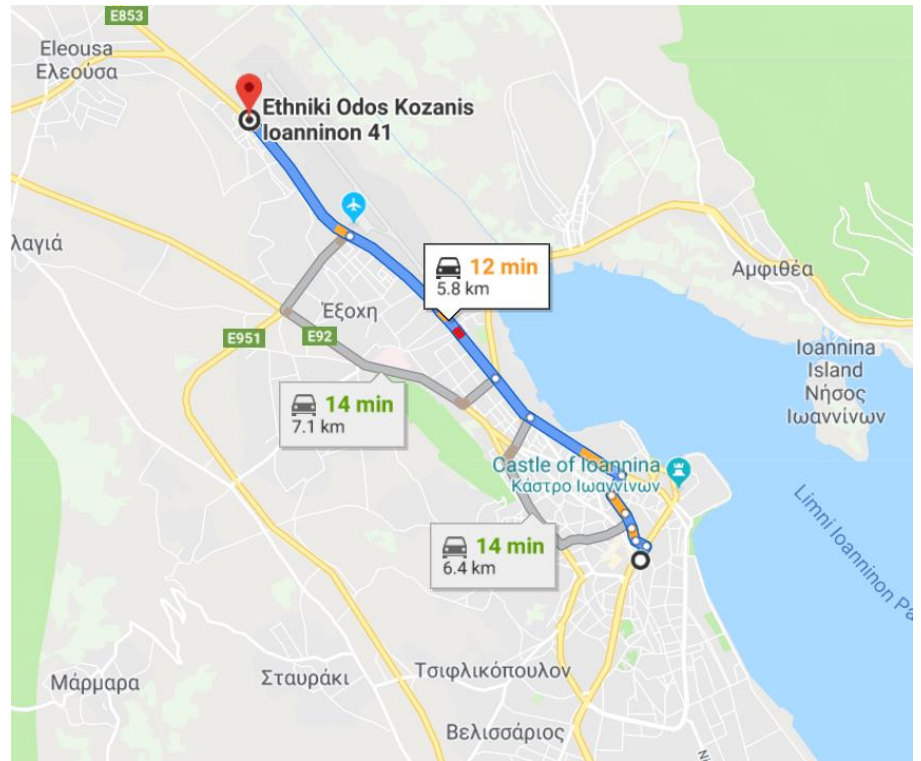Map 2: Distance from Ioannina to the refugee camp of Filipiada, Greece
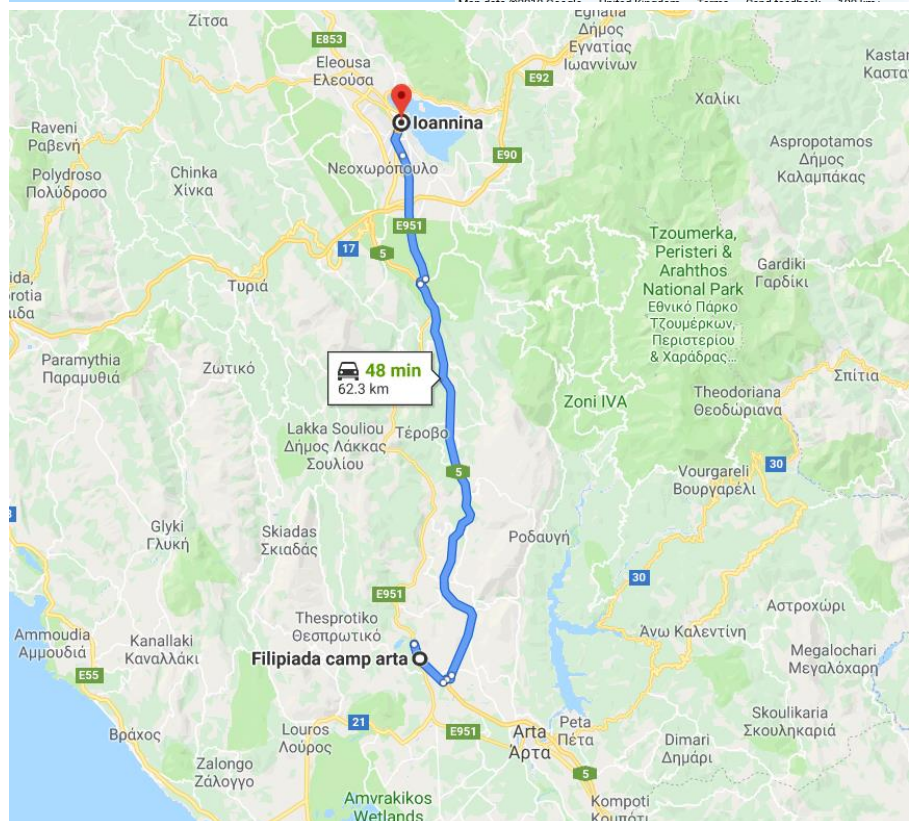
Map 3: Distance from Ioannina to the refugee camp of Katsikas (which is named as 'Katsikas Hospitality Center')
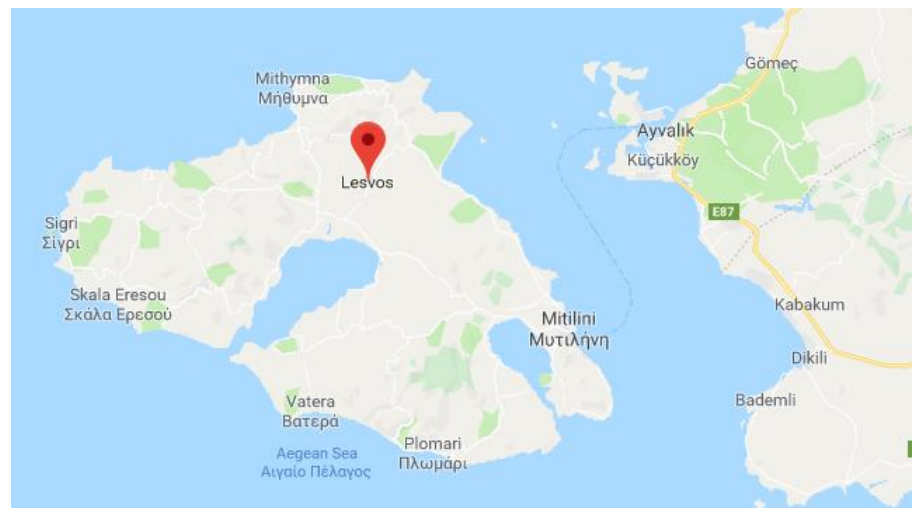

Map 4: Distance from Ioannina to the refugee camp of Doliana (there is no public transportation that reaches this camp – no indication of camp online)
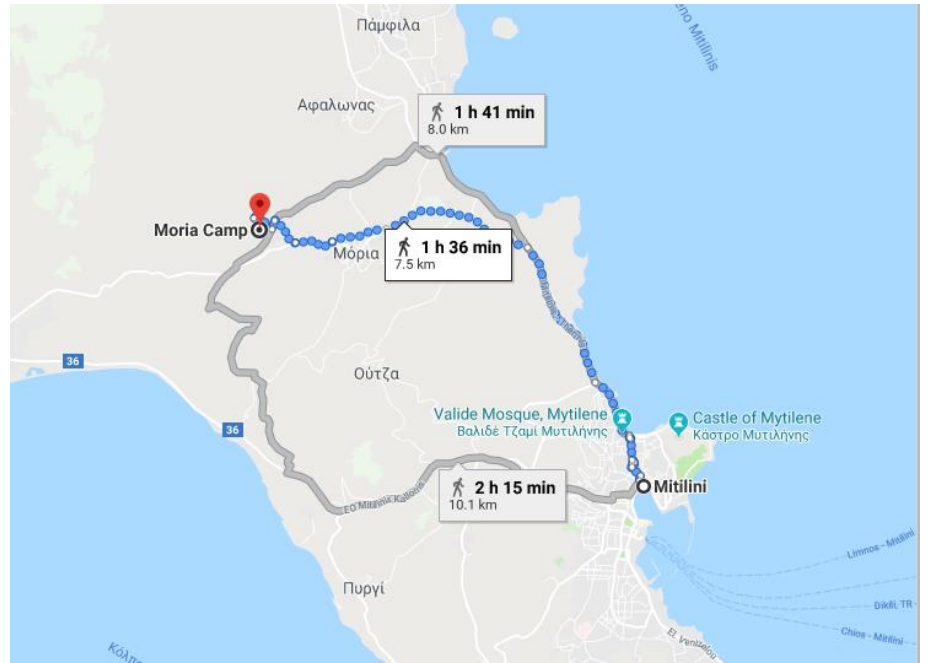
Map 5: Distance from the Safe Zone in the camp of Agia Eleni to the city centre of Ioannina (no indication of camp online)

Map 6: The island of Lesvos and its distance from Turkey

Map 7: Distance from the camp (hotspot) of Moria to the city of Mytilene

Appendix 3: Participant information sheet

The role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece

Participant Information Sheet (PIS)

This PIS should be read in conjunction with <u>The University privacy notice</u>

You are being invited to take part in a research study as part of my doctoral research focusing on the role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether you wish to take part. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Who will conduct the research?

Artemis Christinaki,
The University of Manchester
Ellen Wilkinson Building, B2.2.
Oxford Rd., Manchester M13 9PL
<u>artemis.christinaki@manchester.ac.uk</u>

What is the purpose of the research?

The aim of the present study is to investigate the role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece.

Why have I been chosen?

You are (or have been) a humanitarian aid worker (psychologist, social worker, case worker, and/or animator) working in the refugee camps of Greece. You have been chosen among 35 other humanitarian aid workers, who have been invited in an interview.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

You would be asked to arrange an interview meeting, which will be audio recorded in a time and place suitable for you. Each interview should take approximately 1 and a half hour.

In this meeting, the researcher is planning to ask you a number of questions concerning the diverse forms of psychosocial support and how are they being formulated and delivered in the refugee camps.

What will happen to my personal information?

To undertake the research project, we will need to collect the following personal information/data about you:

- Name
- Surname
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- Refugee camp
- Position in the refugee camp
- Participant's experience in the refugee camp

We are collecting and storing this personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 which legislate to protect your personal information. The legal basis upon which we are using your personal information is "public interest task" and "for research purposes" if sensitive information is collected. For more information about the

way we process your personal information and comply with data protection law please see our <u>Privacy Notice for Research Participants</u>.

The University of Manchester, as Data Controller for this project, takes responsibility for the protection of the personal information that this study is collecting about you. To comply with the legal obligations to protect your personal data the University has safeguards in place such as policies and procedures. All researchers are appropriately trained, and your data will be looked after in the following way:

Only the research team (myself as the researcher and my supervisors) of the University of Manchester will have access to participants' personal identifiable information. Consent forms will only hold personal information such as participant name and signature but will be kept separately to other data such as interview transcriptions. Consent forms will be kept in a locked cabinet in a locked room in the University of Manchester, where only myself has access to and they will be destroyed as soon as the project comes to an end.

Concerning interviews, they will be audio recorded in one-to-one interview sessions, arranged in a time and place suitable for the participants. Audio recordings, as soon as they will be completed, they will be transferred onto an encrypted and password protected laptop and deleted from the recording device. Transcribed data will be stored in a personal encrypted, password locked laptop and University of Manchester Research Data Storage via a university password protected account, which is backed up by the University automatically.

No identifying characteristics will be revealed. If I (as the researcher) refer to any of the participants' responses in any of the transcripts and/or future publications, participants will be referred to only by an anonymous name (pseudonym) **or as they preferred and indicated in the interview meeting**. In this way pseudonyms could be used for the purposes of transcription and verbatim quotations used within publications. All identifiable references will be removed from the transcription and will not be included in the research. **During and at the end of**

the interview you will be also able to indicate to me any further data that needs to be anonymised, changed, or removed.

Kindly also notice that you have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information.

For example, you can request a copy of the information we hold about you, including audio recordings. This is known as a Subject Access Request. If you would like to know more about your different rights, please consult our <u>privacy notice for research</u> and if you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email <u>dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk</u> or write to The Information Governance Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL at the University and we will guide you through the process of exercising your rights.

You also have a right to complain to the <u>Information Commissioner's Office</u>, Tel 0303 123 1113.

Will my participation in the study be confidential?

Your participation in the study will be kept strictly confidential to the research team.

Also, in terms of confidentiality, the data will be stored in a personal encrypted, password locked laptop and University of Manchester Research Data Storage via a university password protected account.

Written data (such as consent form) will be stored in a locked filing cabinet/drawer in a locked room it the University of Manchester in accordance with the University of Manchester retention schedule. Consent forms will be retained as essential documents until the project will be completed. As soon as the project will be completed, they will be destroyed by a shredder machine located in the university.

Transcribed data from the interview's audio recording will be anonymised to protect the identity of the interviewee, and I will consult with you about how you

would like to be described. During and at the end of the interview you will be able to indicate to me any further data that needs to be anonymised, changed, or removed. We can agree a timeframe for the review of transcriptions and any other feedback required following the interview.

The transcription will be performed only by me, and transcribed data will be disclosed only to the research team of the University of Manchester. As stated in the previous section as soon as the interview audio recording comes to an end, it will be transferred onto an encrypted and password protected laptop and deleted from the recording device. Transcribed data will be stored in a personal encrypted, password locked laptop and University of Manchester Research Data Storage, via a university password protected account.

Any personal or identifiable information will be removed from the final transcript and will not be included in the research. Transcriptions will be kept for 5 years after publication in line with the University of Manchester Research Data Management policy.

However, kindly notice that if there are concerns about the participant's safety, I may need to contact your care team (if there is any) or/and your professional body. In case there are concerns about the safety of others I may need to contact your employer/ professional body.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether to take part.

If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Also, in case you feel distressed during the interview, I suggest you stop the interview and take a break. If you continue feel distressed, then I suggest stopping the interview and contact any

close family members of yours or a friend. I will be able to offer you support anytime during the interview as well as by the end of it.

However, it will not be possible to remove your data from the project once it has been anonymised (specifically 3 months after recording) and forms part of the dataset as we will not be able to identify your specific data. This does not affect your data protection rights.

Concerning the audio recordings, participants once they give their permission to record the interview, they are not free to decline the recording as it is essential to their participation in the study. However, participants should be always comfortable with the recording process as well as the interview. If they do not feel comfortable, they are free to stop recording at any time and withdraw without giving a reason.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

Participants will not be paid for taking part in this research.

What is the duration of the research?

The duration of the research will be 2 hours (specifically 1and a half hour of interview and 30 minutes for reading the Participation Information Sheet, sign in the Consent Form and reviewing the transcript afterwards).

Where will the research be conducted?

In a time and place primarily suitable for you and in which both of us have agreed on.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

The outcomes of this research are expected to provide an in depth understanding about the role of psychosocial support along with the role of humanitarian aid

workers in the refugee camps of Greece. Therefore, the research may be published in:

- PhD thesis (Available online)
- Book publication
- Academic journals
- Conference papers and presentations

Who has reviewed the research project?

The project has been reviewed by the University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee.

What if I want to make a complaint?

Please contact Erica Burman, as my main supervisor in the first instance by emailing: erica.burman@manchester.ac.uk or by telephoning +44 161 275 3636

Minor Complaints:

If you have a minor complaint, then you need to contact the researcher in the first instance at **artemis.christinaki@manchester.ac.uk**

Formal Complaints:

If you wish to make a formal complaint or if you are not satisfied with the response you have gained from the researcher in the first instance, then please contact

The Research Governance and Integrity Manager, Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, by emailing: research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk or by telephoning 0161 275 2674.

Taking part:

If you are interested in taking part, it is important that I explain clearly so you fully understand the aims of the research and what it will involve. I hope all the information is clear and I look forward to your participation. If you have any questions, please email me at **artemis.christinaki@manchester.ac.uk**

This Project Has Been Approved by the University of Manchester's Research Ethics Committee

[2018-4734-7204**]**

Appendix 4: Consent Form

MANCHESTER
1824
The University of Manchester

The role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece

Consent Form

If you are happy to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below:

	Activities	**Initials**
1	I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet (Version II, Date 03/10/2018) for the above study, have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.	
2	I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to myself. I understand that it will not be possible to remove my data from the project once it has been anonymised (specifically 3 months after recording) and forms part of the data set. I agree to take part on this basis	
3	I agree to the interviews being audio recorded.	
5	I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books, reports, or journals.	

6	I agree that the researchers may retain my contact details in order to provide me with a summary of the findings for this study.	
7	I understand that there may be instances where during the course of the interview information is revealed which means that the researchers will be obliged to break confidentiality, and this has been explained in more detail in the information sheet.	
6	I agree to take part in this study	

Data Protection

The personal information we collect and use to conduct this research will be processed in accordance with data protection law as explained in the Participant Information Sheet and the <u>Privacy Notice for Research Participants</u>.

Name of
participant   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____

Name of
person
taking
consent   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____

[Copies of consent form: 1 copy for the participant, 1 copy for the research team
(original)]

Appendix 5: Interview Topic guide

Thank you for accepting my invitation and for being happy to take part in this project. Your participation makes a vital contribution to this research.

Also, I must emphasise that you are free to withdraw from the interview at any time without giving a reason.

Do you have any question or any comments about this process that you would like me to clarify before we start?

Happy to turn on the recorder?

Before we start, I would like to outline the structure of the interview. The main thematic areas, I would like us to discuss are your role and training as an aid worker, the camp, and the refugee crisis, as well as the notion of psychosocial support.

So, to move onto the first area for discussion…could you tell me 'How long have you been working as a humanitarian aid worker…?'

Role & Training

1. How long have you been working as a humanitarian aid worker?
2. What is your professional/ disciplinary background?
3. What is your role as an aid worker in the refugee camp?
4. Have you received any kind of training before or during your work in the field?

Since you are based in a refugee camp…

Camp

5. How would you describe a day in the camp?
6. Could you share with me some of your experiences of working in the refugee camp?
7. How would you describe refugees' experiences/life in the camp?

I would like us now to move onto the main area for discussion which is the role of psychosocial support in the refugee camps…

Psychosocial Support & Practicalities

8. What, in your experience, does 'psychosocial support' involve?

9. What are your thoughts around the term 'psychosocial support'?

10. How do psychosocial support activities address or engage with refugees' lives?

11. How receptive are refugees on the psychosocial support programme?

12. Do you know how refugees understand the notion of 'psychosocial support'?

Issues & Reporting System

13. How do psychosocial activities engage with men, women and children?

14. To what extent are the approaches similar or different?

15. Is there any specific protocol or/and reporting system in case you identify an incident?

16. Could you perhaps indicate to me a) a typical and b) an exceptional experience arising from your work here?

Would you mind if I ask you briefly what is…?

'Refugee Crisis'

17. What is your perception about the so called 'refugee crisis'?

18. Do you think that there is any relationship between 'refugee crisis' and the way 'psychosocial support' is implemented?

At this point, we reach the final area of our interview and in this way, I would like to ask you…

Agency and Psychosocial Support

19. How do you think 'psychosocial support' could be improved? Is there any room for change?

20. Do you alter plans according to the local realities?

21. Are you able to design yourself any type of activities or amend any of these plans? If so, what ideas inform your design?

22. Is there any type of permission you should seek?

23. How have you dealt with any concerns you have encountered in working with refugees, either in the course of psychosocial support activities or around this process?

24. What mechanisms have been put in place for addressing your efficiency and wellbeing as an aid worker?

25. So, if you were to it, sum up in a sentence or a phrase, how would you describe your experience of working in the refugee camp?

Final Reflections

26. We have reached the end of my questions but are there any other issues that you would like to discuss before we end?

Thank you very much both for your time and for the experiences you shared with me. In case you would like to contact me for any additional issue you could find my contact details in the Participant Information Sheet. Also, if you have some reflections either during or after the interview and you want, some part of what you said, to be excluded from the material for analysis, you can let me know and I will cut it out.
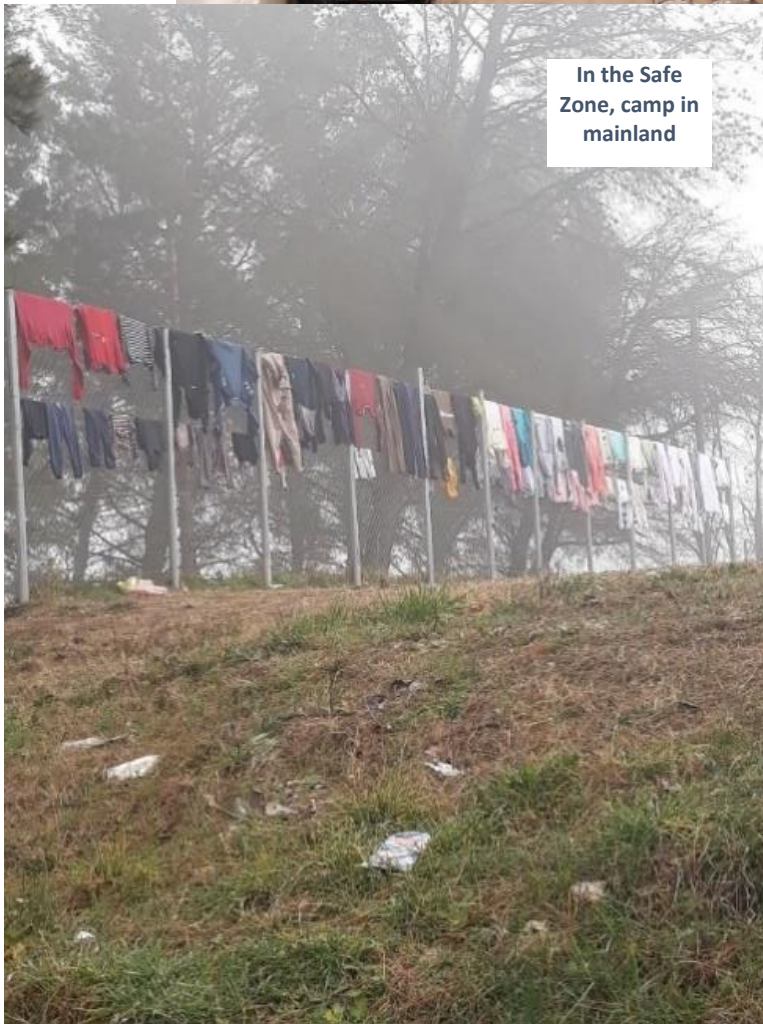
Enjoy the rest of your day!

Appendix 6: Photographs as a self-reflexive technique

In the hotspot; 'prison within prison', Moria

In the Safe Zone, Moria
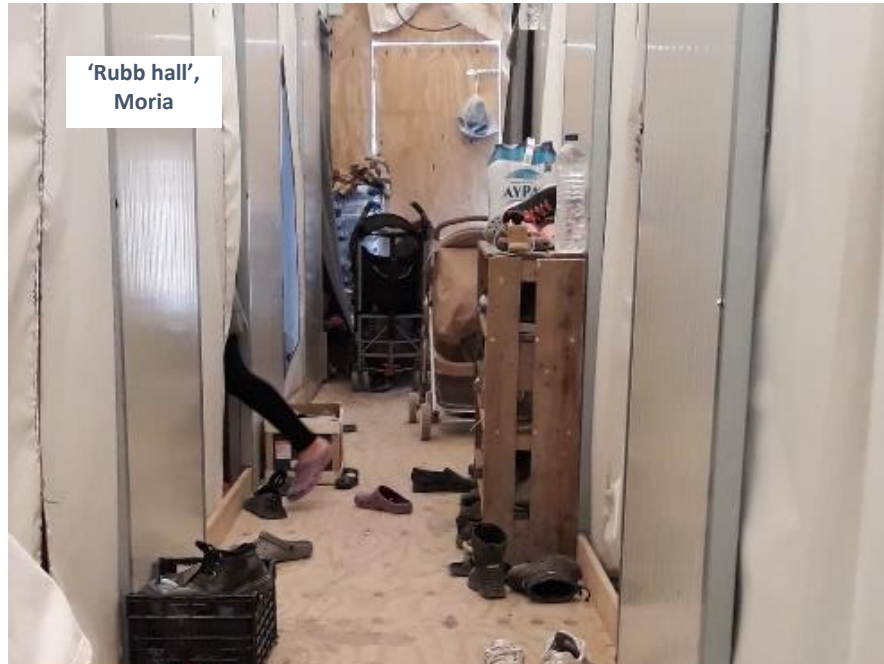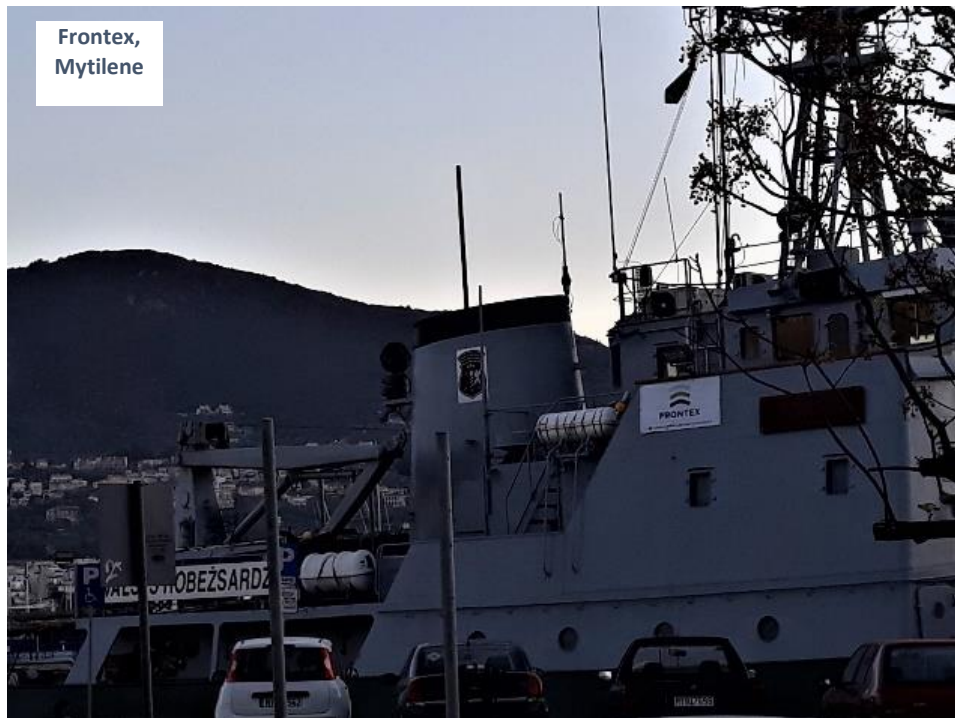
'Rubb hall', Moria

In the Safe Zone, camp in mainland

Arriving in Lesvos, and Moria

Spot, vest, investment, Moria

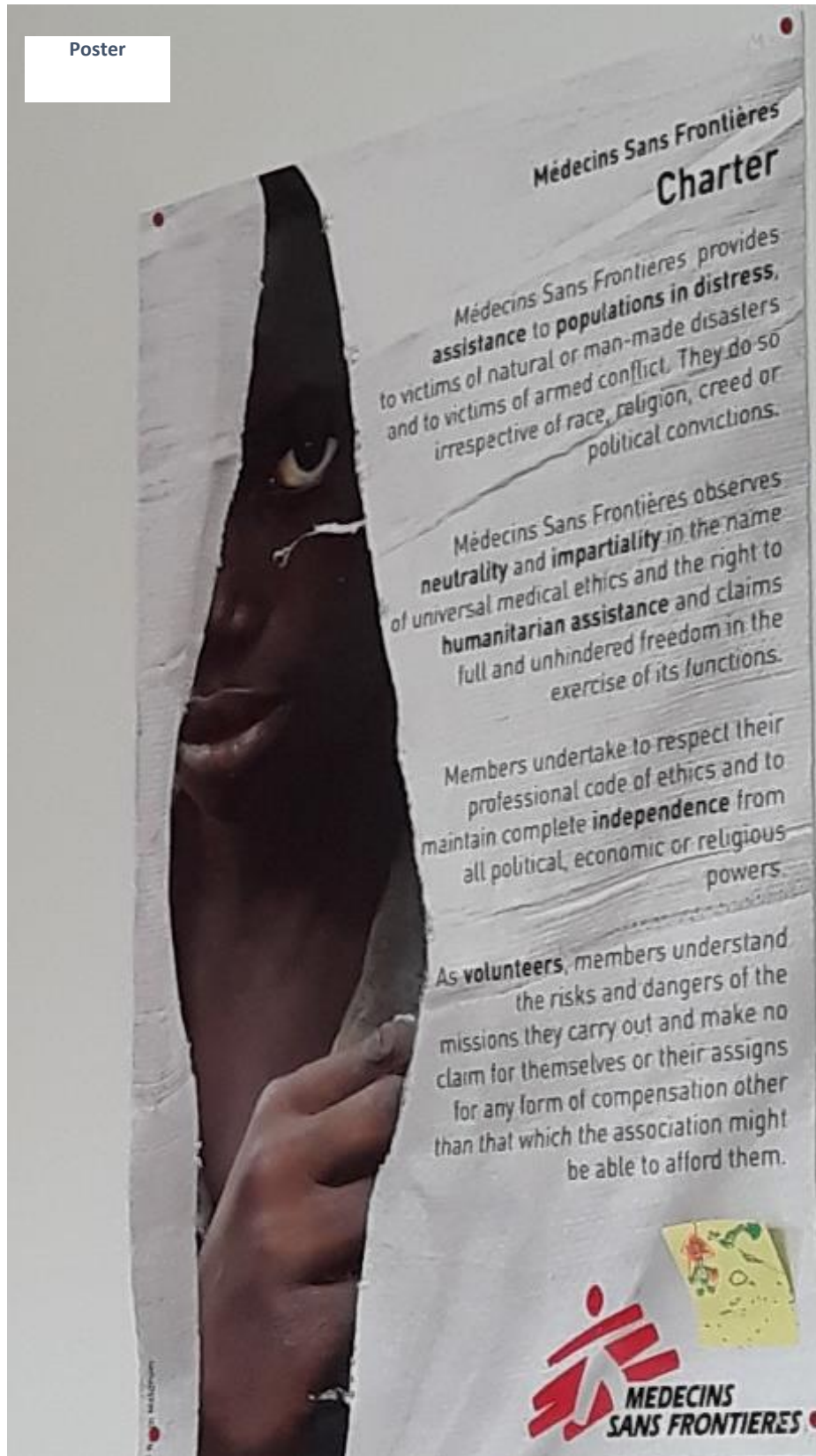Frontex, Mytilene

'Mapping the space', Moria

Poster

317

Appendix 7: 'Mapping' the 'hotspot' of Moria, in Lesvos, Greece

Appendix 8: List of research outputs and collaborative projects

Book contract

Postcolonial Psychoanalysis and Migration: Political Mechanisms and Subjectivity in NGO Refugee Work at the Edge of Fortress Europe. London and New York: Routledge.

Peer-reviewed journal outputs

Christinaki, A. (under review). Deconstructing Humanitarian Compassion: Ψ as Method. *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling*.

Christinaki, A. (2020). Crisis, Trauma, Refugees: Towards a Political Reading and Reconsideration (in Greek). *Misfit 1*, 39-46.

Christinaki, A. (2020). The Borders of Humanitarianism (in Greek). Review of Borders, Bodies and Narratives of Crisis in Europe. By Thanasis Lagios, Vasia Lekka and Grigoris Panoutsopoulos. *Misfit 1*, 94-97.

Conferences

'Medicalisation of Trauma: Towards a Critical Approach of Liberation'. Paper presented with Dr. Rubina Jasani at the Beyond Borders: Widening Perspective on Displacement Conference, SolidariTee, The University of Manchester, 30 January 2021.

'Inside a "Rubb Hall" in the Hotspot of Moria in the Island of Lesvos in Greece'. Digital Exhibition, Being (Im)mobile In A World of Movement, The University of Manchester, 2021.

'Ψ [psychology] as Method'. Paper presented at the Globalization, Borders, and New Geographies of Inequality Workshop, Lancaster University, 19 February 2020.

'Subjugating Time in a Refugee Camp: Time and Psychology in a "Measured" Relationship'. Paper presented at the International Society for Theoretical Psychology (ISTP), Copenhagen, Denmark, 19-23 August 2019.

'The Politics of Psychosocial Support in the Refugee Camps of Greece'. Poster presented at the Transcending Academic Boundaries: Creative Methods and Knowledge Sharing SEED PGR Conference, The University of Manchester, 22 May 2018.

Oral Presentations

'"Why flee" and the causes of migration'. Oral presentation in workshop organised by the Manchester Students for Global Health at the University of Manchester, 16 November 2020.

'How would a Lacanian discourse analysis understand the question of time in the context of migration?' Oral presentation in the Lacanian Discourse Analysis session, in Manchester Psychoanalytic Matrix, 11 March 2019.

'Experiences from the Field' Oral presentation at the School of Environment, Education and Development Specific Training for the first-year students at the University of Manchester, 20 November 2019.

Organisation of student-led events

Co-organiser of the Manchester Postcolonial Studies Group, The University of Manchester, March 2018 – March 2022.

Co-organise the PGR event on Pedagogic Encounters on Decolonising Knowledge, The University of Manchester, 3 June 2019.

Co-organise the event on Immigration detention: Get Informed and Take Action, The University of Manchester, 16 October 2018.

Journal Editor

Mylonas, N. & Christinaki, A. (Eds.) (2020). Bizarre Ideas: Refugees, Camps and NGOs (in Greek). *Misfit 1*.

Reviewer

Feminist Review, Sage Journals

Annual Review of Critical Psychology, Open Access

Misfit (in Greek)

Awards Obtained

Research

School of Environment, Education and Development (SEED) Studentship Award 2017-2020, University of Manchester £14, 553/year.

International Society for Theoretical Psychology (ISTP) Student Travel Award 2019, £300.

Teaching

Nominated for the Outstanding Teaching Award in the Faculty of Humanities Outstanding Staff Awards 2020-21.

Nominated for the Outstanding Teaching Award in the Faculty of Humanities Outstanding Staff Awards 2019-20.