The psychologization of Humanitarian aid. Skimming the battlefield and the disaster zone.

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Abstract

Humanitarian aid's psycho-therapeutic turn in the 1990s was mirrored by the increasing emotionalisation and subjectivation of fundraising campaigns. In order to grasp the depth of this interconnectedness, this paper argues that in both cases what we see is the post-Fordist production paradigm at work; namely, as Hardt & Negri put it, the direct production of subjectivity and social relations. To explore this, the therapeutic and mental health approach in humanitarian aid is juxtaposed with the more general phenomenon of psychologization. This allows us to see that the psychologized production of subjectivity has a problematic waste-product as it reduces the human to *homo sacer*, to use Giorgi Agamben's term. Drawing out a double matrix of a de-psychologizing psychologization connected to a politicizing de-politicization, it will further become possible to understand psycho-therapeutic humanitarianism as a case of how, in these times of globalisation, psychology, subjectivity and money are all interrelated.

Introduction

In January 2010 Haiti was hit by a devastating earthquake. Already on day three a humanitarian NGO was providing children with pencils and paper to let them come to terms with their bereavement and fears. In humanitarian aid the psychosocial dimension has become essential. For the Red Cross, to take one example, psychological support is not a speciality but is integrated into all activities; even first aiders are trained to "treat the wounded, not only the wound."[1] Beyond the food, shelter and bandages, the surplus of the wound, the human, is taken care of. This psychosocial dimension takes centre stage in the 'developed', Western countries too. The 'imploring eyes' of the Afri-

[1] IFRC, *Psychological Support: Best Practices from Red Cross and Red Crescent Programmes* (Geneva: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2001), 8.

can Child are the obvious example of how potential donors are interpellated as subjective-emotional beings. However, at another level subjectivity seems to be the end-goal and not only the means to make people donate. Already in 1993 Moore remarked how in charity the "feelgood factor" had come to replace compassion.[2] Consider for example the yearly Red Cross fundraising campaign *Music For Life* – also called *Het Glazen House* (the Glass House) – run by the Flemish radio station Studio Brussels (similar to *Serious Request* of the Dutch radio station 3FM). Three popular DJ's live for five days in a kind of glass house, mimicking circumstances in the South as they subject themselves to pseudo-starving and life on a limited ration of 'smoothies'. In the square in front of the glass house, a crowd gathers to sing, to dance and to support them. Money is raised by selling music requests. After days the DJ's are led to a stage accompanied by loud cheering and camera flashes. As the TV reporters probe their psycho-emotional status, tears flow. The end goal is thus not only the cardboard cheque unveiled by the selected dignitary but, foremost, it is the production of emotions and good feelings. In other words, the aim is the production of the surplus of subjectivity. In this way, the fundraising event mirrors the rise of the psychosocial in humanitarian aid, with its emphasis on individual and psychological aspects of the human condition. To truly grasp this interconnectedness, this paper will argue that in both cases what we are seeing is the post-Fordist production paradigm at work, the direct production of subjectivity and social relations.[3] To explore this thesis, I will juxtapose the therapeutic and mental health approach of humanitarianism with the more general phenomenon of psychologization. This will allow us to see that the psychologized production of subjectivity has a problematic waste-product, insofar as it reduces the human to *homo sacer*, to use Giorgi Agamben's term.[4] In this way it will become clear how, as the Glass House event already showed, in these times of globalisation psychology, subjectivity and money are interrelated. To introduce this psycho-economics, let us first turn to what generally is regarded as the origin of the psychotherapeutic turn in humanitarianism.

[2] As glossed by: E. Burman, "Innocents Abroad: Western Fantasies of Childhood and the Iconography of Emergencies," *Disasters* 18, no. 3 (1994).

[3] M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Empire*.

[4] G. Agamben, *Homo sacer*.

The crisis in humanitarianism in the 1990s

The psychotherapeutic turn in humanitarian aid is commonly situated in the 1990s. Vannesa Pupavac, for example, contends that trauma eclipsed hunger in the 1990s as the issue most flagged by international aid agencies.[5] The first time *Médicins Sans Frontières* (MSF), for example, involved psychiatrists and psychologists was in Armenia after the December 1988 earthquake. In subsequent MSF-projects in Palestine, mental health became one of the primary activities.[6] For social anthropologist Didier Fassin (administrator of MSF in 1999-2001) the Israeli–Palestinian conflict was the first time in history that a humanitarian crisis was described in terms of subjectivity:

> Where previously the language evoked in defending oppressed peoples was that of revolution, current usage favors the vocabulary of psychology to sensitize the world to their misfortune. Yesterday we denounced imperialist domination; today we reveal its psychic traces. Not so long ago we glorified the resistance of populations; we henceforth scrutinize the resilience of individuals.[7]

Pupavac understands this psychosocial turn in relation to crisis in which humanitarianism found itself in the 1990s. The critique that aid undermines local economies, feeds the villains and fuels conflicts led to "a demoralized humanitarianism and a demoralized humanitarian aid worker."[8] Mark Duffield looks at the crisis in humanitarianism from a Foucauldian-Agambian perspective. According to Duffield, biopolitics, the taking care of the health of populations, has become a global issue wherein global governance is "power over the life of populations conceived as existing globally rather than nationally or territorially."[9] Jenny Edkins argues that in this way humanitarian interventions could not but be caught up in a "tightening of a global structure of authority and control."[10] Duffield discusses how NGO's had to realize that humanitarian aid is *de facto* entangled with biopolitics. Drawing on Agamben, Duffield contends that the claimed neutrality of humanitarian projects could no longer be maintained as a comforting shield, but actually draws NGO's into biopolitics:

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[5] V. Pupavac, "War on the Couch: the emotionology of the new international security paradigm."

[6] Médecins sans Frontières, "Dossier Freud in the field," *Messages* 142(2006).

[7] D. Fassin, "The humanitarian politics of testimony. Subjectification through trauma in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 3 (2008): 532.

[8] V. Pupavac, "Psychosocial interventions and the demoralization of humanitarianism," 497.

[9] M. Duffield, *Carry on killing: Global governance, humanitarianism and terror*, vol. DIIS Working Paper 2004/23 (Copenhagen: Danish institute for international studies, 2004), 6.

[10] J. Edkins, *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 2003), 212.

> The insistence that humanitarianism is 'neutral' and separate from politics, means that humanitarians can only grasp human life as bare life. By excluding the political, humanitarianism reproduces the isolation of bare life and hence the basis of sovereignty itself.[11]

Duffield concludes, quoting Agamben, that despite the best intentions, humanitarians maintain "a secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight" (Agamben, 1998). This radical interconnectedness and interpenetration of the new security terrain is at the heart of the crisis of humanitarianism.[12]

But to answer the question as to why this crisis effected a paradigm shift which resulted in the psycho-social becoming central to humanitarian aid, we must go beyond both Pupavac and Duffield. Let us turn to Pupavac first. She concurs that the psychosocial turn can be understood as a response to the crisis in humanitarianism as it attempted to "bring back the human in the face of the bureaucratization of aid, foregrounding how people and communities personally experience disaster or conflict."[13] However, should we not understand this in biopolitical terms? One can argue that this attempt to escape the grip of biopolitics led exactly to *psycho-politics* as a yet more sophisticated form of biopolitics. It is crucial to see that global governance defines the scope of biopolitics in areas and in ways which as a matter of course belong to the scope of the psy-experts. This is how we can interpret Duffield's observation that direct territorial control based on juridical and bureaucratic authority is replaced by mutable and networked management and regulation of economic, political and social processes:

> People in the South are no longer ordered what to do—they are now expected to do it *willingly* themselves (emphasis original).[14]

Psycho-politics is obviously the best way to accomplish these biopolitical goals. Placing the focus on self-reliance and sustainable development, the psycho-social dimension and thus psycho-social techniques necessarily enter the scene. However, here we have to go beyond Duffield's classic Foucauldian perspective, for, as it considers power processes as dispersed and as lacking agency, it does not allow us to grasp the inequality between the South and the North and especially the latter's sovereign use of psycho-political technologies (and the political-economical aspects of all this). Here Pupavac's argument that the psychosocial turn in humanitarian aid is related to Western society's own change in outlook is very helpful. She shows how the Western pathologization of

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[11] M. Duffield, *Carry on killing: Global governance, humanitarianism and terror*, DIIS Working Paper 2004/23: 13.
[12] Ibid., 16.
[13] V. Pupavac, "Psychosocial interventions and the demoralization of humanitarianism," 497.
[14] M. Duffield, *Global governance and the new wars* (London: Zed books, 2001), 34.

war, for example, is rooted in a wider psychologization affecting the West itself. Lacking strong convictions themselves, Pupavac writes, donor countries find it difficult to imagine people believing in causes worth fighting for and thus declare populations at war as dysfunctional.[15] Pupavac points to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the consequent demise of ideological alternatives as the origin of this position. In conjunction with increasing social atomization, she argues that this led to a therapeutizing of public discourse which blurred the political with the therapeutic.[16] The psychologization of the West thus seems to have led to the psychologization of the South. But, to fully grasp the interconnectedness of these two processes, we have to engage in, not so much a biopolitical or a psycho-political understanding but, rather, in a truly *psycho-economical* approach. One could, after all, understand the psychologising of the South as an export of psychological resources in order to realize a surplus. The crucial point here is to grapple with how subjectivity came to play a central role in late-capitalist modes of production. As exemplified by the Glass House fundraising event, psychologised humanitarianism reveals how today the tears, the emotions, the overflow of subjectivity, all constitute the surplus-value to be economized and capitalized. But before we can engage fully in a psycho-economical critique of psychologization, we have first to flesh out two central and interrelated paradoxes of the psychologization of humanitarian aid. The first paradox stems from the fact that one cannot *not* psychologise. The second from the fact that psychologization boils down to psycho-education.

Psychologization and how you cannot not psychologise

The first thing to notice is that the therapeutic turn, with its stress on trauma, did not solve the crisis in humanitarianism, with manifold critiques of psychologization and therapeutization emerging very quickly. Derek Summerfield, for example, argued in 1997 that "the globalisation of western psychological concepts and practices risks perpetuating the colonial status of the non-western mind."[17] Defenders of the trauma approach counter-argued that psychologists and psychiatrists are dealing with universal realities. Sound science and evidence-based research (e.g. on the Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome) are posited as transcending all cultural and anthropological differences.[18]

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[15] V. Pupavac, "Psychosocial interventions and the demoralization of humanitarianism."

[16] V. Pupavac, "War on the Couch: the emotionology of the new international security paradigm."

[17] D. Summerfield, "Legacy of war: beyond "trauma" to the social fabric," *The Lancet* 349, no. 9065 (1997): 1568.

[18] See for example F. de Vries, "To make a drama out of trauma is fully justified," *The Lancet* 351, no. 9115 (1998).

But the remarkable thing is that when Summerfield answers this by arguing for the historicity of diagnoses such as PTSD, he takes recourse to signifiers such as *suffering*, *distress*, *problem-solving* etc.,[19] apparently assuming the validity of universal categories. His carefully chosen terms from everyday life (*misery*, *distress*...) betray the resolve to evade psychological language but they risk postulating a similar kind of universalization. In every critique of the psychologization of humanitarian aid, this danger of falling into yet another mode of psychologization is always immanent. Summerfield, for example, eventually ends his critique of the neo-colonial mindset with which he characterises the discourse of trauma with a plea for a "wiser and truer use of the term psychology."[20] Similarly, Dag Nordanger argues against the "western trauma discourse" and advocates the acknowledgement of "local folk psychology."[21] For Pupavac the critique of trauma relief needs to acknowledge that the trauma programmes themselves raise issues; we could even say that the trauma programmes are themselves *traumatic* for those subjected to them:

> When all the psychological terms are stripped away, we appear to be left with individuals or communities' own responses being displaced or instrumentalised by outside professionals, informed by presumptions of the vulnerability, incapacity and irrational nature of recipient populations. (...) The very intrusion into the personal sphere may inadvertently corrode the sense of intimacy necessary for cohesive family and community bonds, which are so important in mediating and overcoming trauma. Since stress and anger can be a spur to action, psycho-social intervention may disempower people in the long-term.[22]

That is to say, through the critique, Pupavac cannot help but slip into psychological discourse, drawing as it does on the same language as the psychotherapeutic programmes themselves. Pupavac cannot but consider therapeutic governance to be detrimental to a population's *mental health*.[23]

Even a return to the human rights approach to opposing therapeutic governance does not seem to be able to evade the paradox of therapeutizing. Inger Agger, for example, endorses the opposition to therapeutic discourse from psychologists and psychiatrists in exile from the military dictatorships in Chile and Argentina and supports their

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[19] D. Summerfield, ""Trauma" and the experience of war: a reply," *The Lancet* 351, no. 9115 (1998).

[20] D. Summerfield, "'My Whole Body is Sick ... my Life is not Good'," in *Forced Migration and Mental Health*, ed. D. Ingleby, *International and Cultural Psychology* (New York: Springer US, 2005), 110.

[21] D. O. Nordanger, "Coping with Loss and Bereavement in Post-war Tigray, Ethiopia," *Transcultural psychiatry* 44, no. 4 (2007): 558.

[22] V. Pupavac, *Therapeutising refugees, pathologising populations: international psycho-social programmes in Kosovo*, vol. Working paper No. 59, New issues in refugee research (UNHCR, 2002), 3-4.

[23] V. Pupavac, "War on the Couch: the emotionology of the new international security paradigm," 164.

claim that people do not suffer from mental illness or PTSD, but that they are "suffering from the dictatorship."[24] However, not only do signifiers such as "treatment," "coping strategies" and "healing" still pop up in Agger's discourse but, moreover, the only shift proposed seems to be a turn from psychotherapy to socio-therapy. Here Agger endorses the Red Cross's policy of making a "shift from a trauma approach to a community-based approach," focusing "on healing through already existing cultural and spiritual belief systems."[25] But what is gained by trading the psycho-engineer for the socio-engineer who promotes "natural support networks" and "coping strategies"? Ultimately, what we can discern here is the same Olympian vantage point from which the academically informed promote the cultural approach as the least traumatic and beneficial. Eventually, this allegedly more sophisticated access to the universal and "real" problems, paradoxically boils down to bypassing all socio-cultural dimensions.

Consider for example Agger's plea to build on "local cultural resources such as traditions, and human resources such as traditional healers, elders, women groups, teachers, and key people within religious communities."[26] She cites Wessels for whom it is sadly often local people themselves who view their own approaches as inferior, believing that the modern, Western methods are better: "This deeply ingrained sense of inferiority is one of the worst residues of colonialism and is itself a major form of psychological damage."[27] On the contrary, to put it bluntly, is not this *let them have their dances and voodoo-rituals* the ultimate residue of colonialism as it places us, sophisticated Westerners, once again in the superior position of being able to judge? Wessells and others end up taking the ultimate meta-perspective, a meta-psychologizing one, where they criticize the locals' inferiority complex and assume to assess the real psychological damage caused by their breaking with traditions. Here the question to ask is whether this ethnographic God's eye view, which places "culture at the centre in any type of psychosocial assistance,"[28] risks endorsing precisely the oppressive conservative currents evident in local societies (the traditional healers, the religious communities...)? Is it perhaps the case that they feel that the more progressive and truly political movements will not be the ideal partners? Here of course the deadlocks rapidly present themselves. What if these traditional "local cultural agencies" turn out to repress women, children and homosexuals? I will return to these problematic political entanglements below, but first I will

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[24] I. Agger and S. B. Jensen, *Trauma and healing under state terrorism* (London: Zed Books, 1996), 70.

[25] I. Agger, "Therapeutic approaches to the treatment of refugees – A historical perspective," (2002): 17.

[26] Ibid., 18.

[27] M. Wessells, "Culture, power, and community: Intercultural approaches to psychosocial assistance and healing," in *Honoring differences: Cultural issues in the treatment of trauma and loss*, ed. K. Nader, N. Dubrow, and B. Stamm (Philadelphia, PA: Brunner/Mazel, 1999), 276.

[28] I. Agger, "Therapeutic approaches to the treatment of refugees – A historical perspective," 18.

turn to the second paradox of psychologization evident in psycho-social humanitarian aid, the paradox of psychologization as psycho-education.

Psychologization is psycho-education

The paradox that critiques of psychologization cannot avoid ending up psychologising can perhaps be tied to the fact that the processes of psychologization are already are, paradoxically, de-psychologizing.[29] Just consider how the hegemony of neuro-organic models have turned the psychological into a non-category in both the theories and the praxes of mainstream psychology. For mainstream psychology, the psyche is but the function of chemical substances and brain waves. In this way, psychologists themselves, wittingly or not, promote de-psychologization. But even where there is more distance towards the neurochemical perspective – where there are, for example, attempts to account for the psychological in terms of cognition or behavioural and evolutionary patterns – even there it is hard to discern a true subjective or properly psychic dimension. Is psychology as a science not by definition bound to end up with the human being being reduced to an automaton governed by forces from which it itself is exempt? Reduced to either neuronal or behavioural laws, the psychologised subject in the end remains de-subjectivized and, thus, also de-psychologized. Psychology appears unable to account for this paradox of non-subjectivity. This is why the critiques of psychology are, more often than not, paralysed by the same deadlock. In their attempts to safeguard the dimension of subjectivity, they are bound to end up in the same psychologising/de-psychologizing stance that they criticize.

The fact that the psychological and subjective dimension is a central problematic in today's scientific field is nowhere as evident as it is in the idea of "psychological first-aid" in trauma relief. Definitions of what this "psychological first-aid" would mean, rarely get much further than the idea of getting people to talk. Psychological first-aid encompasses foremost forms of help or support which can hardly really be called psychological at all, such as providing information and securing basic needs.[30] Here it is

[29] This is almost mathematics; wanting to de-psychology what is actually already de-psychologization, one cannot but engage in psychologising.

[30] "Psychological first aid: whether among the general population or among aid workers, acute distress following exposure to traumatic stressors is best managed following the principles of psychological first aid. This entails basic, non-intrusive pragmatic care with a focus on listening but not forcing talk; assessing needs and ensuring that basic needs are met; encouraging but not forcing company from significant others; and protecting from further harm. This type of first aid can be taught quickly to both volunteers and professionals. Health

clear that the fact that the psychological is effectively a non-category turns psychological aid into a logical impossibility. The most common attempt to evade and negate this impasse, it could be argued, is by turning psychological aid into psycho-education. Consider for example how Jones, Greenberg & Wessely plead that "large-scale community outreach and psycho-education about post-disaster reactions should be included among public health interventions to promote calming."[31] So while the wound can be treated directly, the treatment of the wounded has to pass through knowledge-distribution and education. This also is the main tenet in a Red Cross "good practices" report:

> The Colombian Red Cross set up a radio programme following a natural disaster to teach people about the psychological aspects of disasters. This method proved useful in terms of disseminating information related to the disaster, developing understanding, and reaching out to target groups. In general, teaching survivors to understand the psychological mechanisms behind their worries and difficulties helps them to cope with their feelings.[32]

In other words, psychological first aid is basically the practice of teaching psychological theories to the target population. This is effected variously through the use of audiovisual media as well as the distribution of what are referred to as *patients leaflets*. In the following quotation from such a leaflet it is clear that what is expected from the survivor is a *theoretical* understanding; the internalisation of the psychological theory is supposed to be healing:

> A talking treatment called cognitive behaviour therapy can help people who have PTSD. This kind of therapy is a short, practical treatment. It focuses on helping you understand your thoughts and feelings, and find practical ways of coping with them. You'll probably be offered around 10 sessions lasting an hour or so, with more sessions if you need them.[33]

Psychological first-aid thus manifests, remarkably, as the administration of psychology itself. In this way certain characteristics of psychosocial aid can be understood as the typical strategies for attaining educational compliance. The Red Cross guidelines for psychosocial humanitarian aid at times even read like a propaganda manuals, complete with newspeak. It is, for example, recommended to sometimes call a psychosocial centre

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workers are cautioned to avoid widespread prescription of benzodiazepines because of the risk of dependence" (The Sphere Project, *The Sphere Project. Humanitarian charter and minimum standards in disaster response* (Oxford: Oxfam publishing, 2004), 293.

[31] N. Jones, N. Greenberg, and S. Wessely, "No plans survive first contact with the enemy: Flexibility and improvisation in disaster mental health," *Psychiatry* 70, no. 4 (2007): 362.

[32] IFRC, *Psychological Support: Best Practices from Red Cross and Red Crescent Programmes*: 6.

[33] BMJ, "Patient leaflet: post traumatic stress disorder," (2010).

an *information centre*, as was done in Macedonia were people felt resistance against the psycho-social discourse.[34] Where a Danish project in Bosnia & Herzegovinia served food to the children during workshops, the report, rather bluntly, states: "[e]ating highly nutritional food together forms part of the children's social activities."[35] The ghost of Pavlov seems to hover here. Pleasurable activities such as excursions and expressive activities such as singing, dancing, and drawing are also seen as ideal vehicles for the psycho-educational discourse: This *sing, dance, draw, cope and enjoy*-discourse – which is not only reserved for children but also implemented with adults – is extremely patronising, reducing, as it does, the social to a de-politicised, schoolified, if not outright infantilised, event.

Psychosocial humanitarian aid is thus not only about handling and manipulating subjectivity from an expert-academic position, it is also about establishing the discursive matrix of psycho-education to which the target population must comply. A surgeon or a physiotherapist primarily implements techniques or uses chemical substances to influence bodily processes. The patient can be completely oblivious of the theory behind these practices. This scheme cannot be transferred to psychology, as there the techniques are invariably applied by introducing the patient to the background knowledge. Psychology seems thus to work via psychologization. A trauma-patient has to be briefed; *you have experienced a shocking event and these are your symptoms*. In this way, together with the appropriate signifiers, normative models of subjectivity are introduced. This psycho-educational praxis results, as Erica Burman puts is, in a technology of emotional regulation "that normalises and circumscribes emotional expression in the very act of 'giving voice' to it."[36] Help thus manifests as the administration of normalising theories. The American Psychological Association, for example, describes the task of the psychologist at the site of a disaster as to help survivors to "understand how common what they're [sic] feeling is, whether it's anger, sadness or other strong emotions," and to "educate people that it is normal for disaster survivors to have an array of common reactions."[37] Central to psycho-education is, therefore, the transfer of what the academic perspective deems common, the norm.

But besides the imposition of a rather limited set of normativizing and normalising signifiers, the most important thing here is to understand the discursive positions in play. As aid becomes education, the beneficiaries are put in the position of pupils. They

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[34] IFRC, *Psychological Support: Best Practices from Red Cross and Red Crescent Programmes*: 7.

[35] Ibid., 40-41.

[36] E. Burman, "Emotions and reflexivity in feminised education action research," *Educational Action Research* 14, no. 3 (2006): 325.

[37] APA, "What do psychologists do at disaster sites?," (2010).

have to adopt an academic gaze with regard to themselves and their situation.[38] It is perhaps this that authors like Dider Fassin miss when they argue that the psycho-social discourse in humanitarian aid only produces a "particular form of subjectivation" through which the beneficiaries can also exist politically.[39] This misses the fact that psychologization is not just another set of signifiers which the oppressed can creatively use to seek subjectivation and politicization. It is clear that any creative and political attempt to escape psychologising discourse will be easily re-inscribed in the psycho-social hegemonic framework. Every political stance will be re-translated in terms of, for example, trauma and coping mechanisms. Moreover, in this virtual and neverending appropriation of subjectivity the psychological discourse decisively reassigns the positions; the particular forms of subjectivation will inevitably be forced into the preformatted discursive frame of psycho-education. The model of "what you experience" is strongly interpellative: even where "psychological distress" is granted culture-specific dimensions, this is only so against the background of a presupposed universal dimension. In being asked to behold oneself as the universal psychological human being, the subjective and political dimension Fassin wants to safeguard will again and again be appropriated by the theoretical and academic perspective. Are we thus to conclude unequivocally that psychologization serves a de-politization? Maybe things are a bit more complex. Just as one cannot *not* psychologise, perhaps it is also true that one cannot *not* de-politicize.

The politics of psycho-social humanitarianism: you cannot not de-politicize

Let us start with the idea that psychologization equals de-psychologization. This is discernable in the trauma approach which pathologises war itself. Postulating *cycles of violence*, war is explained as resulting from earlier, undealt with trauma. Without the right treatment, the victims of war remain vengeful because of their "traumatisation".[40]

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[38] It is only here that the quite enigmatic and paradoxical advice of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health becomes understandable; "continue to educate yourself and family about normal reactions to a disaster" (Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, 1995-2010). Once you have adopted the psychological gaze, you have become your own psychologist and thus you can only do what psychologists do; educate. Thus educate yourself and be your own psychology teacher.

[39] D. Fassin, "The humanitarian politics of testimony. Subjectification through trauma in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."

[40] D. Summerfield, "Effects of war: moral knowledge, revenge, reconciliation, and medicalised concepts of" recovery"," *BMJ. British medical journal (Clinical research ed.)* 325, no. 7372 (2002): 1105.

Therapy can then be said to actually prompt the victim to overcome the psychology of traumatisation. That is to say, the psycho-educational approach aims to pull someone out of his/her own psychology, drawing him or her into the observational position of the psychological gaze. Becoming your own psychologist enables you to control your own psychology, enables you to de-psychologise. What the pathologization of war shows us is that it is exactly where it compromises the psychological-subjective dimension that war and violence are de-politicized. Psychologization is de-politicization insofar as it de-psychologises.

But of course, if one cannot *not* psychologise, equally cannot *not* de-politicize. That is, de-politicization cannot but, in itself, be a political stance. This brings us back to Duffield's argument that it was in the crisis of humanitarianism that the politicisation of humanitarian assistance came to the surface.[41] For Duffield, globalisation led to, on the one hand, complex forms of economic and political integration within the main bloc areas, and on the other hand, ethnocentric or fundamentalist assertions or breakdowns outside the borders of the main bloc. It was in those crisis regions that, in contrast to former direct inter-governmental aid, humanitarian assistance became the West's favoured response.[42] This led to an increased role for Western NGOs and allowed aid policy "to reassert a form of sovereignty within the crisis regions."[43] This means that there are two levels of politicisation to be discerned. First, there is the politicisation of the NGOs which have become subcontracters within the machine of the donor governments. Duffield points, in this respect, to the dependence of NGOs on military protection and logistics (transport or large-scale commodity handling). Secondly, humanitarian aid is also involved in politicization on the level of the so-called failed or weak states themselves. As Duffield notes, relief aid agencies have to secure a negotiated access to conflict zones and this involves gaining the consent of warring parties or sectarian political entities.[44] The most important *political* effect of this double bind politicization of humanitarian aid is of course the de-politicization of the field. As Duffield puts it succinctly, what happens at the borders of the main bloc is only seen as a temporary phase in the transition towards liberal democracy, and not as the emergence of new types of "socio- political formation adapted to exist on the margins of the global economy."[45]

One can now argue that the psychologization of humanitarianism serves precisely to legitimate the twofold politicization of humanitarian assistance. If, for example, human-

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[41] M. Duffield, "NGO Relief in War Zones: Towards an Analysis of the New Aid Paradigm," *Third World Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (1997): 531.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid., 532.
[44] Ibid., 534.
[45] Ibid., 529.

itarianism has traded the perspective of long-term development for a focus on relief in war zones, then it is the psycho-social discourse which provides the scientific support for this political shift. Signifiers such as *development* or *underdevelopment*, *exploitation*, *social and economic convergence* become obsolete and are replaced with psycho-social concepts such as *capacity building*, *empowerment* and *resilience*. On the other hand, when it comes to the politicization of aid on the local level,with NGOs seeking partnership with warring parties or sectarian political entities, the psychosocial discourse again serves to cover over the NGO's problematic political stance. Take, for example, Nordanger's plea for a "deep respect for the subjective elements of psychosocial coping and the contextual limits within which these elements operate."[46] Concerning Tigray in Ethiopia, he advocates cooperation with the clergy and does so through mobilising a particularly very psychologising argument:

> Based on spiritual power alone, the church would not be able to preserve its authority in the long run if its guidance were not meaningful in people's perception. Most probably, people themselves preserve and reinforce the power of the church and other discursive authorities, as these authorities give credence to coping strategies, which under the socio-economic conditions may seem to be the only viable option.[47]

Faced with the choice of which side to take, Nordanger makes his decision on the basis of an essentialist psychology. His argument is that from a psychosocial point of view (thus invoking the idea of coping strategies) the support of the existing clerical power structures is to be preferred. The coalition between NGOs and local power bases is legitimated from a meta-psychological discourse. Claiming jurisdiction over what is local and genuine – and paradoxically articulating this in terms of the alleged universal categories of the psy-sciences – humanitarian aid is again thoroughly politicized. But again, this politicization entails a de-politicization in the field, as humanitarian aid, especially in its psycho-social turn, impedes and neutralizes the politicization of local people and groups.[48] The conclusion is that the psycho-social turn of humanitarian aid, redoubling psychologization and de-psychologizaton, serves as the foundation of a humanitarianism which is thoroughly politicized in exactly the same movement through which it depoliticizes. What remains to be done however, is to place these paradoxical dynamics of

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[46] D. O. Nordanger, "Coping with Loss and Bereavement in Post-war Tigray, Ethiopia," 560.

[47] Ibid., 559.

[48] As Palmary & Nunez argue, a political engagement with the South is often invalidated with the "home-grown" demand which often boils down to favouring the local elites which can hardly make a meaningful claim to local context. I. Palmary and L. Nunez, "The Orthodoxy of Gender Mainstreaming: Reflecting on Gender Mainstreaming as a Strategy for Accomplishing the Millennium Development Goals," *Journal of Health Management* 11, no. 1 (2009).

(de)psychologization and (de)politicization within a critique of biopolitical economy, or better, within a psycho-political economy. The psychologization of humanitarianism, that is, can show us how we can understand that subjectivity has taken centre stage in late-capitalist modes of production.

The psycho-economics of psycho-social humanitarianism: skimming the battlefield and ghouling the disaster zone

To understand the bio-political strategies and techniques of psycho-social humanitarianism let us take a closer look at an example, a peace education project for primary school children in Croatia. What we see here is a standard psycho-educational approach through which normativizing/normalizing psychological theory in introduced. It aims to get teachers and students to talk about "experiences of loss, separation and grief", "normalizing and validating" the "emotional reactions and possible symptoms like flashbacks."[49] In the project's manual it is easy to detect the structure of psychologization at work. For example, each group session starts with what one might call an academic interpellation:

> What we will be doing today: Observing our behaviour when we feel gloomy, angry or furious; we are going to practise some techniques to manage our rage and to get rid of our feeling of anxiety and aggression.[50]

This kind of introduction, repeated in each session, immediately prompts the children to adopt the position of observer, the position, that is, of the academic psychologist. This is then followed by some kind of activity, for example, role-play, drawing, singing etc., after which each session is concluded by a final round up: what have we learned?

> How did you feel doing this exercise? How did you feel when somebody invited you into the group or pushed you away from the group? How do you think a person feels when he doesn't belong (...) and was thrown out of the group by everybody? At the end let's explain why people gather in groups, why they form groups. Life needs to be secure and predictable. People like to be part of a group so

[49] D. Woodside, J. S. Barbara, and D. G. Benner, "Psychological trauma and social healing in Croatia," *Medicine, conflict, and survival* 15, no. 4 (1999).

[50] M. Uzelac, "Za Damire I Nemrie, Opening the Door to Nonviolence - Peace Education Manual for Primary School Children," (Zagreb: NGO MALI KORAK - Centre for Culture of Peace and Nonviolence 1997), Part 2: Workshop 8.

> that they can feel wanted and needed. What do you think, what other reasons are there[51]

Here the model is: *now that you know, how do you feel?*[52] Now you know how people as psychological beings (are supposed to) think and feel, how do you – looking at yourself as a psychological being – think and feel? Doubtless the children will, more or less, comply and deliver the signifiers which have been introduced. In this way the psycho-educational stance is the self-fulfilling prophesy par excellence. But what is more important here is that psycho-social techniques, via this (re)production of psychology, aim at the production of subjectivity. *What have we learned today* is a very mandatory interpellation to produce a surplus of psychological feelings and cognitions which is then considered to be the very human condition laid bare: throbbing and pulsating psychological life. Questions such as *how did you feel doing this exercise?* are thus very coercive in their forcing the subject to offer his or her subjectivity to the therapist in charge of collecting these surplus-values.

The conclusion which forces itself here is is that we consider the therapist as the ultimate late-modern capitalist. The exploitation of the South suddenly thus emerges in a totally different light, as humanitarian aid appears as the very paradigm of psycho-political economics. To understand this let us return to Pupavac's idea that the modern Western subject in this supposed post-ideological era lacks strong convictions and is subjected to social atomization and caught up in a therapeutization of the public discourse.[53] For Pupavac this late-modern condition is, furthermore, responsible for the typical Hobbesian imagery of ubiquitous war and conflict through which the West pictures the South:

> The notion of a continuum of violence underlying the rationale of psycho-social programmes overlooks how individuals in violent situations continue to evaluate what violence they consider acceptable or unacceptable. Effectively, the psycho-social model resurrects the Hobbesian spectre of war of all against all as the perpetuation of abuse of all against all.[54]

Haunted by the Hobbesian imagery, the West considers conflicts in the third or fourth world as reflecting the natural struggle for power. It imagines the human condition laid bare, the human being stripped of its thin layer of cultural varnish. In others words, the West, de-politicized, de-ideologized and thus seemingly bereft of subjectivity, seeks

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[51] Ibid., Part 3: Workshop 12.

[52] J. De Vos, " 'Now That You Know, How Do You Feel?' The Milgram Experiment and Psychologization."

[53] V. Pupavac, "War on the Couch: the emotionology of the new international security paradigm."

[54] V. Pupavac, *Therapeutising refugees, pathologising populations: international psycho-social programmes in Kosovo*, Working paper No. 59: 12.

throbbing, pulsating life elsewhere. The psychologising of humanitarian aid testifies to the hole in our own psychology and our attempt to re-psychologise. The psychological gaze, launched inevitably from a point outside, a point beyond psychology, eventually attempts to produce psychology and subjectivity with the object of our interest, the object of our care.

The new humanitarian worker does not dispense food packets but, rather, knowledge, knowledge which pretends to cover the field of being, the very ontological sphere. Formerly the beneficiary only had to receive food and shelter. In an albeit limited way, he/she was still free to think and say what he/she wanted. The contemporary psycho-social approach is, in contrast, much more total. The receiver has to produce the right emotions, feelings and cognitions, collected by the third-party enabler of empowerment. If the old humanitarian worker could find job satisfaction out of a certain paternalism, the new humanitarian claims the unselfish and professional position of being the mere servant of a body of knowledge, dealing with the universals of mankind. But one should always be suspicious when the third-party position of mere enabler is claimed, for then the question becomes, what drives and what fuels the servant psy-worker if not the production of emotions, the blossoming of resilience, the coming to terms with trauma, the letting go of racial prejudices, the beautiful tears? The image which imposes itself here is that of the humanitarian worker skimming the battlefields and ghouling the disaster zone for subjectivity; the one who gathers the broken people and brings them together in a tent to subject them to some therapeutic programme through which psychology can be reproduced. It is a rather distressing image in which, as Duffield calls them, "the best of people – the idealists, the rebels and the driven,"[55] while trying to escape the straitjacket of western de-ideologized life, become caught up in, to use Agamben's phrase, the production of bare life. It is thus that they maintain "a secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight."[56]

Duffield's borderlands thus have a quite specific function for the late-modern West; they feed the imagery of the other space, the non-liberal, non-democratic zone where warlords reign, where illegal trade runs rampant and any moment a tribal conflict can explode into a chaotic dispersed war. The borderlands function as a heart of darkness, offering a glimpse of the human being as it really is, beyond the thin layer of civilization; the fantasmatic *homo psychologicus* driven by a rather simple interplay of genes and Darwinian principles, topped by some old cultural-religious idiosyncrasies (themselves nothing more than residues of phylogenetics). "Little do they know we are bringing the plague." Thus runs the comment attributed to Freud when, together with Jung, he sailed

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[55] M. Duffield, *Carry on killing: Global governance, humanitarianism and terror*, DIIS Working Paper 2004/23: 13.

[56] G. Agamben, *Homo sacer*.

to the USA for the first time.[57] The crucial difference today is that it is the psychosocial worker himself, on board a military C-130, who is ignorant, unaware that he or she is carrying the plague, through his or her psycho-social and neutral professionalism. Or as Slavoj Žižek claims, the refusal of any higher Causes in the so called post-ideological era is the biopolitical move at its sharpest. As we consider the ultimate goal of our lives as life itself, this stance cannot but become caught up in the production of *homo sacer*, "the dispensable object of the expert caretaking knowledge."[58] The psy-worker, convinced he is merely tapping into scientifically proven universals, reduces the other to bare life, to *homo sacer*.

The Hobbesian spectre of the war of all against all not only invokes how the fantasies of Academia are the basis for the bio-political technologies of global governance, but it also suggests that if one tries to understand the contemporary Leviathan one should no longer look for the social contract which constitutes the State, but for the learning contract which establishes the sovereignty of Academia. The new sovereign wears Academic clothes and enrolls everyone in the psy-class. When empowerment, resilience and other signifiers from the academic psy-complex become the credo of humanitarian aid, aid becomes power, and this reveals how Academia comes to play the central role in the biopolitical and psycho-political economy. Not only does it deliver the rationale (the fantasies of the *homo psychologicus*) and assign the positions (turning everyone into a pupil of psychology) but it also economizes and capitalises the surplus-value of subjectivity.

Conclusions: psychology, subjectivity and money

The psycho-social turn in humanitarianism reveals the structure of what Hardt & Negri call the biopolitical economy. Just as Hardt & Negri argue that there is no longer an outside to the logics of biopower, so we can argue that there is no longer an outside to psychology. As a totalizing discourse, *psycho-biopower* is able to devour everything and spit it back out as psychology. However, globalisation does not effect a complete homogenisation. According to Hardt & Negri, there are still determinate and concrete places of exploitation to be discerned. They argue that we "need to understand exploitation on the basis of the specific sites where it is located and specific forms in which it is orga-

[57] As cited in: S. Fairfield, L. Layton, and C. Stack, *Bringing the plague: toward postmodern psychoanalysis* (New York: Other Press, 2002), 1.

[58] S. Žižek, "Homo Sacer as the object of the discourse of the university."

nized."[59] If one can regard psychologization as a central and *specific form of exploitation*, then the *specific sites* are Duffield's borderlands. The psychologization of the West is founded on a psychologization of its wastelands. That is where psycho-social humanitarian aid is caught up in the exploitation of subjectivity in a (de)psychologising/(de)politicizing matrix.

This allows us to question Hardt & Negri's other central thesis; namely the idea of immaterial production. While Hardt & Negri rather unproblematically welcome the post-Fordist direct production of subjectivity and social relations – considering it an opportunity for direct and absolute democracy – our critique on psycho-social humanitarian aid forces us to question this rather optimistic view. Their basic idea is that post-Fordist production is no longer aimed at the production of material goods but, rather, at the production of relationships and ultimately social life itself.[60] Moreover, this production is no longer exclusively owned by those who possess capital. Rather, for the first time in the history of capitalism, traditional ownership is bypassed by the *multitude*, producing communication, affective relationships and knowledges which can "can directly expand the realm of what we share in common."[61] Discerning here a road to absolute democracy beyond any form of representation, Hardt & Negri take their distance from the Agamben's gloomier analysis and his claim for a more structural *aporia* in modern democracy. In particular, they reject Agamben's analysis in which Western democracy is underpinned by the close structural bond between sovereignty and the production of bare life. Hence they refute Agamben's central example of the Nazi-camp as the paradigmatic site of production of bare life and *homo sacer*. For Hardt & Negri the motif of the camp embodies precisely the attempt to "destroy the enormous power that naked life could become and to expunge the form in which the new powers of productive cooperation of the multitude are accumulated."[62] Uncoupling bare life and sovereignty, Hardt & Negri claim that the production of social cooperation is "no longer the result of the investment of capital but rather an autonomous power, the *a priori* of every act of production." [63] The direct production of subjectivity and social relations is, from Hardt & Negri's perspective, something with takes place outside the traditional capitalist scheme of creating surplus value through investment.

But does not our analysis of psycho-social humanitarian aid contradict this? For today's humanitarian camps reveal that the blossoming of subjectivity is not a spontaneous process, it is the result of a production process in which a surplus is created via the

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[59] M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Multitude* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), 102.
[60] Ibid., 109.
[61] Ibid., 114.
[62] M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Empire*: 384.
[63] Ibid., 366.

investment of academic psychology. Given the clearly de-psychologizing and de-politicizing effects, contra Hardt & Negri, we do, thus, still end up with *homo sacer*. Naked life is not raised up to the "dignity of productive power" as Hardt & Negri would have it.[64] Rather it is the result of the expropriating inclusive/exclusive discourse of psychosocial humanitarian aid which reduces humanity to the disposable object of expert care. If Hardt & Negri claim that in the new global order there is no outside, they miss the fact that this is only realised by an Agambian inclusive exclusion of bare life. There psycho-social humanitarian aid reveals itself as one of the central *modi operandi* in the encapsulation, in an envagination-like movement, of the outside borderlands which it then capitalizes on by putting bare life into a sterile culture.

However, we should also attempt to surpass the limits of Agamben's analysis. The difficulty with Agamben is that when he reintroduces sovereignty and couples it to the figure of *homo sacer*, he claims that in these late-capitalist times we are all potentially *homines sacri*. Here two things remain unclear with Agamben. The first is the question concerning the way in which we are all potentially *homines sacri* – as most examples given by Agamben and his commentators concern *homo sacer* as a peripheral figure and do not address the fact that everyone is, or can become, *homo sacer*. The second problem is that it is not clear how exactly we should think sovereignty in the new global order. If the Guantanamo-detainee or the "unlawfull combatant" can be connected in a straightforward way to the American president, as the sovereign who is above the law, it remains unclear how, distinct from this, we should think of the sovereignty in the case of us all being potentially *homines sacri*. Our analysis of psycho-social humanitarian aid perhaps addresses both these issues. To begin with the question of sovereignty, instead of Hardt & Negri's multitude bypassing any representation or sovereignty, we found Academia as the instance of sovereignty involved in the production/appropriation of subjectivity. Perhaps we can put it this way; if feudal society had its king and modern democracy its state and representative democracy, then the multitude has Academia as its sovereign. It is, furthermore, exactly here that we are all potentially *homines sacri*, insofar as we become the object of the expert, caretaking, psychologising discourse, producing and expropriating our own subjectivity. Post-Fordism is not about the simple and direct production of subjectivity and social relations, today our subjectivity and social relations are monitored, controlled and managed as we find psy-workers everywhere, from kindergartens, through the workplace, right up to retirement homes. This is what a closer look at the psychosocial turn in humanitarian aid shows. The supposedly spontaneous production of social relations and subjectivity in the West cannot but be

[64] Ibid., 366.

mirrored by a blunt psychologization and an alienating production of subjectivity at the borders and in the folds of the Empire.

Here, at the end of this paper, we might perhaps be able to understand how in late-modernity psychology, subjectivity and money became interrelated. For, does the analysis of psycho-social aid skimming the battlefields and ghouling the disaster zones not allow us to understand anew Walter Benjamin's assertion that humanity came to view its own destruction as a spectacle?[65] Destruction at the borders of the Empire is what is supposed to unearth real and pulsating bare life, which has become the ultimate commodity in late-modernity. Benjamin's thesis means that the human being assumes a kind of extra-human observational position from which to contemplate humanity. Psychologization is, then, today's hegemonic discourse which serves both as a tool to lay bare real life and to allow us to take the outsider position. To understand the importance of the psychological in the spectacle, it suffices to look at psychotainment shows or reality TV in which the psychosocial plays a central role in the mediated production of subjectivity; the latter being the central aspect of the spectacle. Just recall *Survivor*, in which, cynically, the hunger-trope is a central catalyst to produce the – preformatted of course – subjectivities and Hobbesian social relations, a spectacle culminating in the pot of gold awaiting the participant who has proved to be the most complete and ingenious *psychologoid*. To understand this conflation of subjectivity, psychology and money, let us turn to Guy Debord:

> The spectacle is the other side of money: it is the general abstract equivalent of all commodities. Money dominated society as the representation of general equivalence, namely, of the exchangeability of different goods whose uses could not be compared. The spectacle is the developed modern complement of money where the totality of the commodity world appears as a whole, as a general equivalence for what the entire society can be and can do. The spectacle is the money which one only looks at, because in the spectacle the totality of use is already exchanged for the totality of abstract representation. The spectacle is not only the servant of pseudo-use, it is already in itself the pseudo-use of life.[66]

One is tempted here to replace *spectacle* with *psychology*. Psy-experts themselves often testify as to how psychology and money are interrelated, arguing, for example, that psycho-social programmes contribute to the nation's emotional wealth and social capital. In her analysis on the idea of emotional intelligence Burman thus rightfully contends that, emotions have become "a vital commodity" in, for example, the context of

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[65] W. Benjamin, *The work of art in the age of its technological reproducibility, and other writings on media*: 42.

[66] G. Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994), 33.

elections.[67] The analysis of psychosocial humanitarian aid suggests that the radical conclusion to make is that subjectivity has become the *ultimate* commodity, with psychology as the other side of money. In psychosocial humanitarian aid, psychology reveals itself as, to put it in Debord's terms, the pseudo-use of life. Psychology aims at restoring the experience of the totality of the world, aims at making the society a totality once again. Psychology thus makes it possible to capitalise, to make profit at the very borders, at the waste-heaps of capitalism itself. Also, in the Marxist sense, psychology and money can be conflated, for psychology can be seen as a medium of exchange which permits a false equivalence between incommensurate objects. Furthermore, if anything can function as the framework for the commodity to be the congealing of social relations, then it is psychology. Psychology is the ultimate commodification, blurring out the social and economic contexts. This ossification of the social is realised by a whole array of psy-approaches, their seemingly wide theoretical difference withers away as we see that they all result in the objectification and the turning of subjectivity in a thingness, be it genes, neurotransmitters, evolutionary patterns, emotions, skills, brain areas, childhood traumas, cognitions, rapid eye movements ... each is a commodity in the psycho-political economy.[68]

The equation of psychology and money allows us to make one final step; namely, to understand how the Academy became the bank within this psycho-political economy. In Fordist times, the worker offered his or her labour-time to the market. Labour-time was a commodity which could be bought and sold on the marketplace. Thus, whilst working in a specific place for a given time, someone's labour-time could be sold/resold numerous times on the stock market. In post-Fordism, labour-time has traded its hegemonic place with subjectivity - or, put differently, labour-time takes the form of subjectivity. While in Fordist times it is the bank which functions as the virtual gathering place of all value, now it is the Academy. In the new global order the human being (not only the labourer as such) offers its subjectivity on the market (or it is expropriated from it in other ways), where it becomes a commodity, not on the stock market, but in the market of the spectacle. If in industrialist times the market could not function without the bank, today the economics of subjectivity cannot function without Academia. The difference is that in Fordist times the labourer was forced to bring his labour time to the

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[67] E. Burman, "Beyond 'emotional literacy' in feminist and educational research," *British educational research journal* 35, no. 1 (2009): 15.

[68] Also the fetish-aspect is present in the idea of psychological subjectivity as a commodity. As I have argued in my paper "On cerebral celebrity and Reality TV" a specific aspect of psychologization is that its subjects are aware of the fictitiousness of psychology. The psychologised being knows it is only theory and not life itself but, nevertheless, whilst adopting the psychological gaze, he or she takes psychology for life itself. As is well known, 'I know this is not X, but for me it means X' is the structure of the fetish.

market due to material dependency, in that he or she lacked access to or ownership of the means of production. In contrast, today it is important that everyone has access to the means of production and that is where everybody is subjected to the psycho-educational discourse. In Fordism everybody had to become a client of the bank, now everybody has to be engaged in life-long-learning. While capitalism was the first mode of social organization to capitalise on the capacity to produce, late-capitalism is the sophistication of this: it is ultimately the capitalization of the very capacity to be.

Epilogue

The fact that the fundraising event *Music For Life* this paper started out with is also referred to as *The Glass House* is significant. To begin with, the link with psychotainment shows such as Big Brother is immediately clear; "The Glass House" offers us the spectacle of subjectivity.[69] The gimic of starvation, as the DJ's have to survive on *smoothies*, carries echoes of the psychotaintment show *Survivor*. The Glass House gives us a glimpse of bare subjectivity, bare life. Not only does donating money restore the balance of this access to another's subjectivity but, moreover, the cheering we do, the songs we sing, the good feelings we produce, all of this adds to the spectacle of emotions and subjectivity being economized and capitalised. However, the signifier "glass house" is peculiar in yet another way, as in the same city-quarter, just two streets away, the redlight district of the town centres around a street called the "glass alley". Not only it is a typical 19th century street covered with a glass ceiling but, moreover, the 'glass' in glass alley refers to the practice of window prostitution. Does this not reveal some of the obscenity involved in the fundraising event? Similar to the idea of food-porn – the erotisation of cooking activities – the glass house of the fundraising event shows us the bare psychologised subject with its emotions laid out in the open. Here humanitarianism turns out to be not only about disaster pornography[70] but is also revealed as subjectivity- and psycho-porn.

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[69] It is also noteworthy that the release of the names of the residents of the house is as such a media event, including interviews with former occupants of the Glass House; selection has proven to be an important career step for the DJs in moving up in the field of television and celebrity.

[70] The term was coined by R. Omaar and A. de Waal, "Disaster pornography from Somalia," *Media and Values*, no. 61 (1993). We should understand this more and more literally. Consider how the charity TV commercials following the Haiti earthquake did not shun nudity (e.g. a naked little boy in the commercial of the World Food Program, http://www.wfp.org/videos/help-haiti and repeatedly women with bare breasts and torn clothes, etc., see eg. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDTtftKc9eY)