

POP-UP NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:
(RE)PRODUCING COLONIAL HELPING RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Pop-Up Non-Governmental Organizations: (Re)Producing Colonial Helping Relations

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This qualitative study engages a postcolonial lens to examine the (re)production and disruption of neocolonial, racist power relations in Pop-Up Non-Governmental Organizations' (PUNs) transnational helping relationships. Recognizing the historical and contemporary use of representations to further colonizing, racist goals, the analysis examines the use of text-based self-representations and refugee representations. This study utilizes five critical discourse analysis tools on four PUN websites' texts through which the PUNs self-describe, share their work, and seek support. In analyzing these websites, this research aims to identify how the four PUNs navigate the inherent power imbalance between their Northern organizations and the Southern refugees they seek to support. Ultimately, the analysis presents evidence that, although the four PUNs endeavour to disrupt colonial practices, the websites' representational practices (re)produce colonial, racialized helping relations. It is hoped that this research will support others working from White, Northern perspectives to reflect on their approach and consider alternatives.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

My MRP examines the (re)production and disruption of unequal power relations found in self-representations and refugee representations created by pop-up Non-Governmental Organizations (PUNs). I define PUNs as small, registered or unregistered, volunteer organizations from the Global North responding to crises affecting people from the Global South. I analyze PUNs that originated on Lesbos island, since I have experience within their framework: I, a White, Northern social worker, managed a response team on Lesbos with the aim of supporting the safe arrival of people crossing the Aegean Sea from Turkey to Greece.

This study focuses on PUNs which respond to the colossal physical, emotional, economic, and legal exposure refugees face when attempting to enter the European Union from Turkey, due to systemic forces outside of the refugees' control. For example, refugees face the United Nations' (UN's) incapacity to provide a decisive humanitarian response (Amnesty International, 2016), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) deployment of ships to the Turkey-Greece water border (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2016), or even television cameras recording the most "dramatic" (personal) moments of their landing.

While they are the central subjects of this drama, refugees' voices are rarely heard; and when they are, their words are filtered through the interpretive lens of a, usually Northern, third party who represents the encounter according to their own location and bias. Consequently, these parties may fuel inequitable – and, I argue, neocolonial, racialized – power relations in their representations. My research aims to examine the extent to which PUNs (re)produce and disrupt racialized, neocolonial power relations.

The ensuing chapter of this MRP considers the available empirical literature focused on Northern representations of Southern refugees and Northern helpers' self-representations. The

following chapter conveys the influence and guidance postcolonial theory has provided to this study. I then introduce the study's methodology, critical discourse analysis, and the specific analytic tools I employ. The findings chapter explores the results of applying each analytical tool to the data, which is followed by a discussion informed by my postcolonial framework. I then consider the implications of this study on transnational helping relationships and social work practice. Finally, by looking back on my research process and results, I propose areas for improvement and growth.

As a final note, I wish to acknowledge that I am painfully aware that the implications of this study can be applied to the social work profession working internationally and within my home nation. I believe that whatever we call ourselves - social workers, humanitarian aid workers or activists, - we have a duty to disengage from and advocate against oppressive responses to social justice issues. For instance, White social workers who "help" asylum seekers or Indigenous peoples in postcolonial Canada also operate with neocolonial, racialized power imbalances in their relationships. The establishment and funding of social work models in Southern countries by Northerners imposes similar power imbalances between Northern and Southern countries, as well as Southerners who identify as professional social workers and those who do not. It is my hope that the representational practices of PUNs, described in this study, will provide valuable insight for people operating within our neocolonial, racialized "helping" profession of social work internationally and in Canada.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This review examines literature that exposes the creation, (re)production, and disruption of neocolonial, racialized representations of refugees and self-representations by Northerners. I first analyze empirical studies that reveal representations in Northern media, politics, and internationally operating humanitarian organizations (Capdevila & Callaghan, 2008; Clark-Kazak, 2009; Cooper, Olejniczak, Lenette, & Smedley, 2016; Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008; Gale, 2004; Huot, Bobadilla, Bailliard, & Rudman, 2015; Johnson, 2011; Olivius, 2016). I then review literature that considers the effects of representations on the subjectivity of Northern social workers, citizens, and newcomers (Lacroix, 2004; Park & Bhuyan, 2012; Pedersen & Thomas, 2013). The review ends with studies that scrutinize representations by activists (Fozdar & Pedersen, 2013; Mahrouse, 2009).

Dominant, Northern Representations of Refugees

There are numerous studies which examine Northern media, Northern politicians and Northern organizations representation of refugees. While holding vastly different objectives, the media, politics and humanitarian aid organizations create refugee representations which are widely available for Northerners' consumption.

Media. The included studies concentrate on textual and visual representations in newspapers from Northern, refugee destination countries: The United Kingdom (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008) and Australia (Cooper et al., 2016; Gale, 2004). The articles acknowledge critical discourse analysis (CDA) in their design or methodology and, therefore, endeavor to examine the power relations (re)produced through representational language.

The studies' results are presented with varying degrees of critical analysis, which can be attributed to each study's distinctive interpretation of CDA. Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) use

CDA to identify the troubling conclusions newspaper readers may reach based on negative imagery, such as “emotionally charged metaphors (e.g., *flood/river/tide/wave of refugees; hordes/gangs of refugees*)” (p. 22, emphasis in original). This contrasts with the use of CDA by Cooper et al. (2016), who commend the media for their “positive” and “humanising” representations (p. 6). Despite the common methodology, the studies’ results point to opposite ends of a spectrum: to negative and positive representations.

Alternatively, Gale (2004) problematizes not only negative representations of refugees, such as the *dangerous* refugee described in relation to the protection of borders, but also positive representations, such as the *vulnerable* refugee described in relation to Australia, a “humanitarian nation” (p. 334). Gale’s (2004) contention, that multiple forms of refugee representations produce concerning binaries between Australian nationals and refugee-Others, is made possible through a critical framework. Gale’s (2004) framework explicitly views the dominant concepts of whiteness and nationalism as (re)productions of colonial, racist ideologies. For instance, Gale (2004) links the concept of border protection, with its focus on national sovereignty, to “long-held Christian traditions of a British settler identity”, in contrast to “the ‘illegal’, non-western, non-Christian refugee” (p.334). By problematizing ostensibly positive representations, Gale (2004) demonstrates that uncritical acceptance of *any* representations of refugees allows potentially neocolonial, racist views to proliferate. For instance, Cooper et al.’s (2016) study presupposes that representations that are not explicitly negative are necessarily good. Therefore, although PUNs often work to directly combat dominant, negative representations, I recognize the need for a well-designed, clearly articulated framework and design in order to elucidate the ways PUNs positive representations succeed or fail in this regard.

Political sphere. The reviewed studies of political documents attempt to reveal constructed representations of refugees which legitimize racist, neocolonial political policies and practices. Examining a political speech as text, Capdevila and Callaghan (2008) investigate the (re)production of racism in a speech explicitly described as being not racist by its author, former United Kingdom Conservative Michael Howard. Huot, et al. (2015) explore how refugees and asylum seekers are constructed by “Bill C-31: Protecting Canada’s Immigration System Act” (Bill C-31).

Both studies use forms of discourse analysis to examine linguistic representations. Huot et al. (2015) demonstrate how Bill C-31 first creates representations of refugees as threats to Canada and then uses these constructs to justify the Bill’s recommendations. The authors note, for example, that claimants entering Canada through an irregular arrival (in a way outside of Canada’s immigration laws) are represented as strangers with unconfirmed identities. Irregular arrivals are then situated as a problem for the Bill to solve based on the logic that strangers are threats to national security and the integrity of the refugee system. With threat established, the Bill justifies recommendations such as the expansion of governmental powers (Huot et al, 2015).

Capdevila and Callaghan (2008) employ a Foucauldian discourse analysis with actor network theory to describe key actors (themes) in Howard’s speech and the way the themes contrast representations of refugees and national subjects in ways that legitimize racist, anti-immigration rhetoric. For example, the authors note that Howard’s speech contrasts the “genuine immigrant”, who successfully integrates and is therefore represented as a form of British national identity, with a “never explicitly named...specter of the dangerous, threatening immigrant” (Capdevila & Callaghan, 2008, p. 12). Thus, both studies indicate how governments foster hatred

against and fear of racialized bodies, while erasing explicit concepts of race from their arguments.

Studies of political representations of refugees move beyond an examination of the representations' effects to explore the motivations behind those representations. This focus may provide insight into the often politically charged texts of PUNs. Like politicians, PUNs need support and funding in order to function; accordingly, the literature on political representations of refugees serves as a reminder that PUNs may, knowingly or unknowingly, use similarly crafted representations to elicit support from followers.

International humanitarian organizations. Literature analyzing refugee representations by Northern-founded humanitarian, development, and non-governmental organizations (NGO) whose missions include supporting Southern refugees may provide insight into PUNs' representations, since PUNs share a key characteristic: working outside of the home Northern nation to aid Southern refugees. Clark-Kazak (2009), Johnson (2011) and Olivius (2016) analyze representations of refugees by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); Johnson (2011) and Olivius (2016) include representations by NGOs (although not NGOs meeting my definition of PUNs) whose mission is informed by key UN documents. Each study provides a unique focus: the role of visual representations of female refugees (Johnson, 2011), the changes to representations of male refugees in light of organizational endorsement of gender equality policies (Olivius, 2016), and the demographic accuracy of visual representations of refugees' age (Clark-Kazak, 2009). By analyzing the ways refugees are constructed, the studies also engage with the purpose behind the given organizations' representational practices. For instance, Clark-Kazak (2009) not only details what demographics are represented, but also consider the reasons specific ages are over or underrepresented.

I believe the studies each use a constructivist lens, referring to representations' power to construct what is real in the world. Johnson (2011) argues that representational themes of racialization, victimization, and feminization are used to attract donations for the agencies' work. For instance, Johnson (2011) argues that the UNHCR's focus on the global South racializes refugee issues. The author notes that this focus reflects the organization's focus on "repatriation and 'preventative protection'", in which the refugee does not enter the global North, in contrast to the previously heralded solution of resettlement and integration (Johnson, 2011, p. 1016). Olivius (2016) maintains that representations undermine the goal of representing gender equality by depoliticizing gender. For example, Olivius (2016) maintains that the representations construct refugee societies as "traditional and backwards" (Olivius, 2016, p. 64). Like Olivius (2016), Clark-Kazak (2009) concludes that representations contradict the UNHCR's stated goals (in this case, mainstreaming age) through a process of Othering. Clark-Kazak (2009) points to the conflation of children with terms indicating passivity, such as vulnerability and protection. Clark-Kazack (2009) argues that these are essentialist categories that reduce children to traits that support the desired discursive outcome of a given organization. In each case, the constructed colonial, racialized representations prove the necessity of humanitarian intervention.

Like media, humanitarian organizations create and reproduce dominant representations of refugees and, like political representations, these may lead to or inhibit policy changes. PUNs may generate and use their representations of refugees for stated or unstated goals which may be equally problematic and in need of examination. Moreover, the representational practices of international humanitarian organizations provide insight into the goal-driven nature of representational practices, which may apply to both the self-representations and refugee representations found on PUN websites.

Representations: Services and Individuals in Northern Countries

Park and Bhuyan (2012) examine United States' social workers' representations of undocumented immigrants. Lacroix (2004) examines how refugee claimants' subjectivity may be socially constructed by dominant representations found in Canadian refugee policy. Pederson and Thomas (2013) aim to discover how representations of refugees as either similar or different affects prejudice towards asylum seekers amongst citizens of Australia. In each case, the Northern subjects are framed as I frame PUNs: as having the opportunity to resist dominant representations, but who may, perhaps unknowingly, (re)produce those representations.

Park and Bhuyan (2012) ascertain representations of undocumented immigrants as outsiders. Pederson and Thomas's (2012) positivist study presents clear results, noting that emphasizing similarities and differences between Northerners and refugees did not reveal prejudice, but the subjective importance attributed to those similarities and differences did. However, Pederson and Thomas (2012) do not attempt to interpret or deconstruct these results. I recognize a more nuanced approach that allows for participants' voices to be heard in the results of Lacroix's (2004) post-structuralist study. Lacroix's (2004) study notes that refugees understand their identity in multiple ways, with fluidity of identity across personal, community, and professional relationships. I believe Lacroix (2004) was able to uncover the complexity of refugees' self-identification due to her carefully constructed framework, which she describes as a "framework for understanding *refugeeness*" (p. 149, emphasis in original). Specifically, the exploration of "conscious thoughts and emotions" by Lacroix (2004) is an attempt to ensure the interviewees are given the opportunity to accurately self-represent (p. 147).

Studies analyzing subjectivities serve as a reminder that dominant representations, including research studies that represent and analyze participants' views, may further oppress

those participants (and may not be accurate to reality). Without a critical framework that acknowledges racialized, colonial legacies in helpers' representations of refugees and refugees' self-representations, new studies will merely add to the already numerous racialized, neocolonial representations produced in academic research. Framing these studies as teachings for research on PUNs, I note that this study must take into account the role of the representors as (re)producers or disrupters of problematic, dominant representations.

Representations: Northern Activists

Literature regarding PUNs and PUN-like organizations from Northern countries include a plethora of first-hand accounts and ethnographic studies examining Northerners working with or in solidarity with refugees (Alberti, 2010; Cabot, 2013; Rygiel, 2012; Zahos, 2016). These positive portrayals of PUNs and PUN-like organizations contrast with studies that problematize supposedly positive representations. Therefore, I note a systemic gap in literature that study PUNs from a critical lens. As a result, this review includes the analysis of North-South power relations found in empirical studies that examine representations, such as those created in first-hand activist accounts. Mahrouse (2009) explores Canadian activists' representational practices through citizen journalism in Southern war zones, and Fozdar and Pedersen (2013) examine discursive interactions regarding asylum seekers on an online blog.

Mahrouse (2009) examines the self-represented narratives of activists' racialized roles in representing Southern Others. Her study is framed in postcolonial, feminist theory (Mahrouse, 2009). She argues that activists, under the guise of neutrality and "exceptionalism", often unknowingly, "reproduce power relations rather than challenge them" (Mahrouse, 2009, p. 667, p. 670). Fozdar and Pederson's (2013) discourse analysis reveals polarized discourse between those in favor and those against asylum seekers. However, Fozdar and Pederson (2013) do not

critique the ways in which pro-asylum bloggers speak for and represent asylum seekers. I attribute this to Fozdar and Pederson's (2013) lack of an explicit or critical theoretical framework; by situating her study in postcolonial theory, Mahrouse's (2009) critique problematizes positive representations, as well.

PUN members may be compared to the pro-asylum seeker bloggers in Fozdar and Pederson's (2013) study, as both PUN members and pro-asylum seeker bloggers often have strong views against dominant, negative representations of refugees. Moreover, like the pro-asylum seeker bloggers, PUNs often claim to operate in solidarity with refugees. However, Mahrouse (2009) identifies how a discourse of solidarity often shrouds racialized, neocolonial power relations: the mere statement that one is in solidarity does not negate systemic power imbalances. Therefore, these studies provide valuable lessons regarding how PUNs and their representations may be perceived by the public and studied by myself and others.

Summary

The available literature does not adequately capture the unique positionality and complex power relations involved in PUNs' representational productions. First, there is a lack of studies examining representations by PUNs and PUN-like organizations. There is also limited literature critically examining the role of North-South power relations in representations in a holistic way. Specifically, there is a dearth of studies that engage critically with positive representations, highlight context in analysis, and consider representors' motivations. Finally, while there are numerous studies examining representations of refugees by Northerners, there are limited studies that explicitly seek to examine self-representations of the Northerners who create those representations. I aim to begin filling these gaps by framing my analysis of PUNs' representations of refugees with theory and methodology that attend to these concerns.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework

My research analysis is informed by postcolonial voices to expose the perpetuation and resistance of colonialism and racism in contemporary, transnational “helping” projects. The term *postcolonial* refers to the legacy of colonialism in contemporary society. While distinct from colonialism, the postcolonial exists “in the wake of it, in the shadow of it, infected by it” (Hall, as cited in Drew, 1999, p. 189). Postcolonial theorists produce counter-discourses which contain significant resistance and possibilities for change (Bhabha, 1985). Accordingly, postcolonial theory provides a lens to examine a broad spectrum of issues with the understanding that colonial powers continue to “structure inequitable relations between the formerly colonized and colonizers” (McEwan, 2009, p. 23). In this section, I discuss the suitability of a postcolonial framework given my positionality. I then detail how this framework supports the critical analysis of PUNs’ representations of refugees. I conclude with a brief description of limitations.

Placing Myself

The first time I witnessed the arrival of refugees in Europe, the sheer number of people on the beach was shocking: volunteers were running around two rubber dinghies from which people of all ages were exiting. I could hear screams and searched for the parent wailing over their child’s body, just as I had seen in photos before choosing to volunteer. I finally located the cause of the noise: the volunteers. I backed away, almost into the camp’s supervisors, who pointed out how many of the volunteers were putting emergency blankets on children (incorrectly) despite the fact that dry clothes and warming stations were only a few meters away. Recognizing the negative effects of the volunteers’ Northern, White privilege on the beach, I resolved that if I were to stay a volunteer on Lesbos, I would find ways be actually helpful.

Mahrouse (2014) argues that the recognition that volunteering is a racist, colonial act does not always mean that *not* volunteering is better than volunteering. Certainly, white, Northern volunteers must recognize that the help they “can offer is not heroic or revolutionary...but rather is a terribly troubled role put in place through white supremacy and made necessary only because of the urgency of certain global crises” (Mahrouse, 2014, p. 149). In such situations, the onus is on the White, Northern bodies to use their power in the most ethically useful ways possible.

Mahrouse’s (2014) reasoning may also be applied to my use of postcolonial theory in this MRP. A main tenet of postcolonial theory is that our discourse is shaped by our positionality. Postcolonial theory assesses dominant, Eurocentric discourse; postcolonial theory is developed by people from the global South. Thus, Spivak (1988) critiques White academics who benefit from using postcolonial theory within a system that favours the practices of White colonists. I write from this problematic positionality: as a White graduate student at a Northern institution who has chosen to work for a PUN. Moreover, by showcasing PUNs, I am again highlighting a White, Northern perspective which overshadows the experiences of refugees. Therefore, I do not claim to be participating in the project of postcolonial theory; I am not producing counter-discourse.

Yet Said (1993) argues that colonialism affects the lives of the colonizer and the colonized in ways that are inseparable. I use this research as an opportunity to begin a process of unsettling both PUNs’ and my own neocolonial, racialized refugee representations. As Ahmed (2000) maintains, the fact that help is provided is not at issue, but rather *how* that help is offered by those from a position of privilege. This research is directed at and to White, Northern helpers such as myself. I hope it will help me to interrogate my own experience working for a PUN.

Describing the connection between self-reflection and critical social work practice, Heron (2005) argues that “the possibility of resisting the reproduction of dominant power relations rests on an analysis of one’s subjectivity and subject positions” (p. 341). Similarly, my aim is to contribute to a possible reality in which PUNs’ material support is not only actually helpful, but also enacted in ways that disrupt the reality of racialized, neocolonial power and urges a dialogue on ethical action.

Postcolonial Concepts and PUN Representations

Postcolonial theory supports the analysis of PUNs’ representations in ways that were missing from the majority of reviewed empirical studies. I draw on postcolonial theory to highlight colonial legacies in helping relationships, problematize all representations of Southerners by Northerners, and account for the positionality of representors.

Colonial legacies in helping relationships. Historically, the violent reality of colonialism has flourished under the guise of compassion and kindness. Kipling’s (1899) poem *The White Man’s Burden* speaks to this colonial discourse of compassion. The “burden” of the White Man is his superior knowledge of the racialized Others’ best interests and his duty to benevolently help the colonized, or soon-to-be colonized. This discourse of help continues to legitimize Northern actors’ earnest belief that they are doing good, despite the fact that “domination may be reinscribed at the moment of helping” (Heron, 2005, p. 341). Recognizing this, Razack (2004) links Kipling’s (1899) racialized legitimization of colonial pursuits in *The White Man’s Burden* to the modern “civilizing mission” of Northern peacekeepers operating in the global South (Razack, 2004, p. 156).

Similarly, as a PUN volunteer, I realized that although neocolonial attitudes and actions were unmistakable in PUNs’ work, they habitually remained unarticulated and unexamined in

deference to the dominant discourse of compassionate helping. Correspondingly, of the empirical studies reviewed, only Gale (2004) and Mahrouse's (2009) studies examine colonial legacy in refugee representations. A postcolonial lens insists that, even when a form of help is clearly necessary, the power of the helper must be problematized.

Problematizing all representations. Postcolonial theorists view binary oppositions, such as the "self" versus the "Other", as a tool of Northern domination (McEwan, 2009). Loomba (1998) maintains that colonizers have, across time and continents, fabricated similar stereotyped dichotomies through their representational practices: "thus laziness, aggression, violence, greed, sexual promiscuity, bestiality, primitivism, innocence and irrationally are attributed...by the English, French, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese colonists to Turks, Africans, Native Americans, Jews, Indians, the Irish and others" (p. 107). The creation of such "us" versus "them" binaries functions to legitimize Northern helping interventions with Southerners; the Northerners position themselves discursively as the solution (or binary) to Southerners problems.

Yet the Othering power of binaries must not be solidified if they are to operate effectively for the Northern colonist. As Bhabha (1994) details, colonial helping relationships are justified through the notion that the Other may become like the Northerner, transcending the binary categories and negative stereotypes of the "Other". Of course, the Northerner and the Other may never be one-and-the-same; the Northerner is always considered a higher subject in the colonial mindset. Hence Bhabha's (1994) concept of "mimicry", in which the Other may become a colonized subject by imitating the Northerner, without ever attaining the Northerners status as superior colonizer (p. 86). Born in a French colony, Fanon (2008) acknowledges the reality of such racial categorization and valuation; he contends that the color of his skin is read to signify certain characteristics, in accordance with racial constructs. Thus, Fanon (2008) speaks to a

recognition and rejection of his body being read, even in supposedly positive ways. Hence, his eloquent retort to the comment, “Look how handsome that Negro is”: “The handsome Negro says, ‘Fuck you’, madame” (Fanon, 2008, p. 94).

Postcolonial theorists argue that overtly racist categorization and valuations have been replaced with a discourse that meticulously erases race, while still legitimizing racist acts. As Ahmed (2000) argues, the Other is often constructed as a stranger, devoid of race but still *different* enough to sustain an “us” versus “them” dichotomy. Hall (as cited by Media Education Foundation, 1997) understands race as a floating signifier, wherein the characteristics that denote race are fluid and variable over time. For Ahmed’s (2000) Other, the floating signifier of race is embodied as an ambiguous stranger; he or she may be conjured as a “threat” when useful or as a “vulnerable” entity if that better suits the purpose of the White, Northern subject (p. 22). Butler (2006) describes this Othering process as a “derealisation”, in which bodies are viewed as little more than the characteristics dominant powers attribute to them (p. 33).

In my experience volunteering in Greece, PUNs and their members usually acknowledge their governments’ problematic, racist policies and argue that, in reality, we are all equal. Postcolonial analysis challenges PUNs’ logic that it is a racist, backwards (colonial) act to discuss issues of race and identity by exploring how a discourse of equality overlooks the power imbalances inherent in neocolonial helping relations. Moreover, I have noted that numerous empirical studies do not recognize that ostensibly positive refugee representations could have negative effects. By recognizing that *any* representation may be Othering, this study aims to expose the shadows and infections of colonial racialization in PUNs’ logic.

Problematizing the Representor. The postcolonial perspective I employ draws upon Said’s (1978) notion that the objects of study should be the Northerners and their representations

of the Other. Said's (1978) *Orientalism* provides a robust critique of imperialism and western representations of the East. While my research is not framed by Said's (1978) *Orientalism* in its entirety, I do centre Said's (1978) concepts of "the Other" and "othering" in my theoretical framework. Said (1978) asserts that it is only colonized bodies that are meticulously categorized; a white body simply *is*, in relation to the constructed Other. Whilst the racialized Other is crafted into the ambiguous stranger, the white Northerner simply replaces the colonist; she is a compelled helper, always above racial categorization, who is serving those in need.

Moreover, the white Northerner recognizes herself as possessing certain qualities which make her worthy of attention, praise, and respect. The helper is recognized by herself and her Northern counterparts as "exceptional" for her compassionate work (Mahrouse, 2014, p.74). The Southerner becomes a mere object for the exceptional, Northern subject to prove her worth (Thobani, 2007). The tragic nature of this subject position is that the PUN volunteer does not realize the punch line; she does not recognize that her privilege is perpetuating a racialized, colonial legacy. Like the signifier of race, the meaning and actions that constitute 'help' may change over time, in relation to the fluctuating goals of the colonizer. I aim to problematize the Northern helpers' positionality in the text of PUNs by raising PUNs to the level of racial categorization wherein whiteness is seen as an effect of racialization which has an effect of what bodies are comprised of and capable of.

Summary

In this section, I have briefly described the nature of colonial helping relations and the ways in which colonial attitudes and actions continue to pervade modern helping relations. I have considered the role of Othering binaries, mimicry, and supposedly positive representational practices in the ongoing subjugation of Southerners. Moreover, I have presented arguments

detailing how the de-historicizing and de-racializing of North-South helping relationships does not erase Northerners' power to categorize; it only shifts the categories from being explicitly racial to the realm of the ambiguous.

I use these postcolonial concepts as a framework to guide this research. In this study, I question the ways in which colonial, racist legacies may remain in PUNs' modern, transnational 'helping' relationships. Based on the identified gaps in the literature, I wish to place PUNs under the scrutiny of a postcolonial lens to understand the effects of *all* representations of refugees and self-representations produced by PUNs, with a focus on the representors conscious or unconscious motivations. As such, I developed the following research question to guide this study: How do PUN websites' text-based representations of refugees and self-representations reveal the (re)production and disruption of neocolonial, racialized power relations?

Chapter 4. Methodology

Using a qualitative research design, I perform a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of four websites of PUNs whose response to the refugee crisis originated on Lesvos. CDA methodology is uniquely positioned to explore the discursive (re)production and disruption of neocolonial, racialized power relations revealed by PUNs' texts-based representations; CDA seeks to identify and problematize unstated, potentially veiled hegemony in discourse, recognizes a dialectical relationship between discourse and social reality, and urges a self-reflexive approach to research (Wodak & Meyer, 2001).

Contextualizing the Research Process

Different forms of knowledge may be valued in CDA research and may be combined to produce a "broader understanding" of the discourse under analysis (Jorgenson & Phillips, 2002, p. 4). Following this logic, I recognize this study as a multiperspectival CDA analysis, which does not subscribe to a particular version of CDA, but instead is guided by a combination of the core principles of CDA methodology and the major tenets of postcolonial theory. By consciously selecting the theory, methodology (and methods) that will be used in this study, I aim to produce a "coherent framework" from which data analysis occurs (Jorgenson & Phillips, 2002, p. 4).

Engaging in a qualitative research process, the CDA researcher explicitly guides her investigation toward societal critique and transformation by integrating theory into her analysis more intensely than most other forms of research (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). Since critical discourse analysis does not adhere to a specific theoretical framework, the researcher determines her goals in advance and brings a correspondingly critical approach to her study (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). For instance, I use postcolonial theory to support my study to be critically attentive to both "general, conceptual questions and the historically specific moment" (Hall,

1999). Moreover, by describing my theoretical alignment, this study attempts to avoid a problem I critiqued in the literature review: that numerous investigators (including some CDA analysts) do not state their orientation.

CDA's focus on context extends beyond theoretical underpinnings; the analyst also examines and shares her own positionality (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). A focus on positionality is consistent with the concept of self-reflectivity in anti-oppressive social work; the social worker questions "the world", "my world", and the "correspondences and contradictions between those worlds" (Kondrat, 1999, p. 465). For instance, I scrutinize my ability to operate from a decolonizing perspective as a Northern scholar.

CDA itself benefits from scrutiny of its positionality. CDA originates from a group of predominately white, Male scholars from Northern institutions; Wodak and Meyer (2001) describe the emergence of CDA from the gathering of a "scientific peer group", including scholars Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen, Teun van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak (p. 4). Applying Spivak's (1988) critique of White, Northern people who decide they are qualified to represent Southerners, I believe that CDA scholars must recognize that, even when critiquing dominant discourse, speaking for Southerners does not support a critical, and certainly not a decolonizing, process.

I write as a Northerner with the goal of providing insight into the ways Northerners represent themselves and others in helping relations. With this focus, and vigilance against colonial creep in my research approach, I hope to reduce the (re)production of colonial relations in this study. But as a White, Northern social worker working from within a White, Northern academic institution, the (re)production of racialized colonialism is likely to occur. From this

troubled place, I take up Mahrouse's (2009) call to acknowledge this and not give up on trying "help" in better, more disruptive ways.

Contextualizing Discursive Representations

Philips and Hardy (2002) assert that "our talk, and what we are, are one and the same" (p. 2). The recognition that discourse is shaped by people in a shared, social reality points to a key component of CDA: by analysing language as social practice, CDA recognizes the power of discursive representations to contribute to, maintain, or disrupt unequal power relations both within documents and in the social world (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Thus, CDA examines not only the discursive representations, but also the relationship between discourse and social reality, wherein one cannot exist without the other and each effect and are effected by the other (Wodak & Meyer, 2001).

CDA identifies discourse as both "constructed in and constructive of social institutions" (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002, p. 11). In line with my search for both resistance and conformance to dominant representational practices, CDA views discourse as constructive "both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258). Corresponding to postcolonial theory's recognition of colonial legacies, CDA also maintains that all discourse is produced and interpreted in a historical context, outside of which it cannot be examined (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Thus, CDA does not view language use as neutral; the people behind the texts are viewed as producers, reproducers and, perhaps, transformers and resisters of dominant discourses.

Yet discursive power is often hidden in discourse. Van Dijk (1998) argues that social worldviews often remain cloaked in language. Hence, postcolonial scholar Fanon's (2008) disgust at being called handsome, a term that might be understood as a compliment without an

understanding of a context mired by power inequality. CDA attempts to bring to light the unarticulated power relations present in discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2001).

Examining Representations

Considering the lack of CDA studies of PUN-like organizations, I purport that CDA researchers may not consider activist texts as prospective creators, reproducers, or resisters of dominant discourse which are worthy of study. Perhaps this is because PUNs lack the perceived professionalism of the material produced in established spheres such as the media and humanitarian organizations. Indeed, the air of authority produced through dominant Northern establishments gives these realms an air of authority that CDA is perfect to unsettle.

Data selection and collection. Websites provide a rich example of PUNs' public representations, both through formal inclusions such as mission statements and informal features such as weekly updates. The data on PUN websites also capture the organization as it desires to be perceived, eliminating concerns about PUN members performing in accordance with their perceived notions of my expectations as researcher.

I used purposive sampling to ensure that the websites chosen both fit my definition of a PUN and had the required characteristics for this study's objectives (Wood & Kroger, 2000). For this study, I have specific criteria for my subjects, established through my definition of PUNs and my stated interest in examining a specific type of PUN, which operate in a particular location with a specific goal. I employ criterion sampling, a subset of purposive sampling, to choose subjects which fit my criterion (Palys, 2008).

Employing purposive sampling, I searched for the websites of registered or unregistered NGOs, founded by members from the North for the purpose of providing support to refugees in Greece. Due to my language limitations, I excluded websites in languages other than English

(but included websites with the same material in multiple languages). Finally, I selected the websites of PUNs that I had working knowledge of during my time on Lesvos to allow for contextual insight based on my on-the-ground experience.

I then mapped each website to illustrate links between pages, copied the text and images of each website into documents, and created screenshots of each page to capture the overall layout. I excluded videos from my data captures, but note where they existed on the pages. I completed this process from February 14-19, 2017. I then further purposively selected from the data to ensure it was relevant to this study. Specifically, I do not examine any blog features. These sections were clearly produced from the perspective of an individual, rather than expressing the collective response of a PUN. I also removed sections that presented external news articles about the PUNs, as media voices are again outside the scope of this study. Finally, one website included a separate but linked website regarding environmental clean up of beaches. I excluded this entire website since it too is outside the scope of a focus on PUNs refugee representational practices, rather than environmental practices. I included the remaining sections of the PUN websites, which provide descriptions of the organization and its work and the possibilities to volunteer and donate.

For this analysis, I compiled the data from the four PUN websites and took measures, detailed in my findings section, to ensure the types of representation included are representative of the PUN sites as a whole, rather than as single entities.

Data analysis. Consistent with this study's theoretical and methodological underpinnings, I purposively chose analytical tools to reveal PUNs' representational strategies. Consequently, each included analytic tool has a purpose, in accordance with the type of information it will uncover.

In advance of data analysis, , I chose analytical tools that work to uncover how and for what reasons refugees are represented. Reisigl and Wodak (2001) describe how “more or less accurate and more or less intentional” discursive strategies are used to support specific aims (p. 73). By choosing my tools in advance, I created a toolkit to begin unearthing potential hidden meanings in the data, in accordance with my research question. Moreover, I am able to start analyzing the similarities and differences of specific representational practices as applied to Northern PUNs and Southern refugees. The data analysis begins at the level of words and phrases that are used to represent and describe PUNs and refugees. Next, I consider how colonial logic is (re)produced or disrupted through the PUNs’ use two discursive strategies: authorization and moralization (Vaara & Tiernari, 2008). Finally, I include an analysis of the four websites’ webpage headings to reveal any purpose that may connect the representations to the PUN websites' overall logic and layout.

I begin with tools that function to uncover the use of basic descriptors: nouns and adjectives. I note PUNs’ nomination strategies wherein individuals or groups are “named and referred to” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, xiii). For instance, I have used the term *refugee* throughout this paper to denote a specific type of person. Nomination will help uncover how PUN’s name these same people, as well as how they self-represent. I then examine how PUNs use predication strategies to capture the “traits, characteristics, qualities and features attributed to” the represented social actors (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, xiii). Predication reveals the attributes discourse-producers give to those they have nominated. For example, a PUN may self-describe as skilled or selfless, and these terms allow the reader to imagine the PUN in different ways. Of relevance to this postcolonial study are issues of power: the nomination and predication of refugees are manufactured by PUNs in

accordance with their ways of seeing the world and this may lead to the (re)production of colonial, racialized power imbalances.

Next, I examine strategies to unravel instances where representational practices may be used to legitimize or delegitimize certain practices. Vaara and Tiernari (2008) describe two legitimization strategies relevant to my study: authorization and moral valuation. Authorization occurs when an appeal is made to “the authority of tradition, custom, law, and persons in whom institutional authority of some kind is vested” to justify an argument or conclusion (Vaara & Tiernari, 2008, p. 998). For instance, in this study I have appealed to well-established and acclaimed scholars to support my assertions. Moral valuations are an appeal to a specific type of authority; that of a “moral basis for legitimation”, such as an appeal to a specific value system or moral argument (Vaara & Tiernari, 2008, p. 998). For instance, I used the logic of a value system to reach the conclusion that I was a morally better volunteer than others volunteers “helping” refugees on a Lesbos beach. Searching for these strategies supports interpretation which recognize the (re)production or disruption of colonial, racial legacies; these tools seek to unearth the arguments used by PUNs to justify their helping interventions.

Finally, I examine paratextuality to interrogate the order and structure of the PUNs websites. Paratextuality, which refers to the order and format of text, has many parts (Genette, 1997). I examine paratextuality with the express goal of understanding how headings of each PUN webpage show what is considered important information to the PUN. For instance, the titles of this paper produce a logic by heading each unique section that I have chosen to include. In a similar manner, the titles used by PUNs will help unearth the goals of PUNs’ representational practices: the (re)production or disruption of colonial, racist legacies.

Summary

Employing these analytical tools within a CDA methodology provides an opportunity to view PUNs' texts-based representational practices from a postcolonial lens. I use analytic tools to examine the silos of refugee representations and PUN self-representations, the ways these representations interact to legitimize the PUNs' work, and the overall reason the representations are constructed as they are. Consequently, the analytic tools engage with the text at different levels; representations are examined in siloes through nomination and predication, interactions between self-representations and refugee representations are analyzed through authorization and moral valuation, and the texts' overall argument is perceived by exploring the websites' paratext. My aim is that, taken together, these tools will begin to reveal the methods behind the narrative presented to viewers on the PUN websites. In the following sections, I share and discuss the results I have acquired by utilizing these tools. To support the reader as they continue into the findings and discussion, a brief description of each analytic tool may be found in the glossary.

Chapter 5. Findings

PUNs' representations of refugees describe victims both in need and deserving of help: refugees are nominated and predicated as vulnerable, innocent people with legitimate needs. PUNs' self-representations depict PUNs as the optimal choice to support refugees: PUNs' self-nominations and self-predications depict autonomous, altruistic organizations with expertise. Authorization furthers the notion of PUN-as-expert, while moral valuation furthers the argument that refugees are in need of help. Drawing on specific examples from the four PUN websites, I outline how PUNs' use of nomination, predication, and argumentation construct and justify needs and solutions. Paratextuality reinforces the notion that these websites are created by Northerners, for Northerners who would like a conduit to support refugees arriving to Europe.

Representations of Refugees

Of the 30 pages of PUN sites relevant to this study, 25 pages nominated and predicated refugees and are thus included in the analysis of refugee representations. Three PUN websites had one page without refugee representations, and one PUN website had two pages without refugee representations. The pages without refugee representations were specific to volunteer recruitment and events held for Northerners in Northern countries.

To begin a process that captures nominations which are more likely to be universal to PUNs, rather than unique to one PUN, I include nominations and predications found on two or more PUN sites. Since my research examines not just the number of times refugees are nominated, but the specific ways in which they are nominated, I focus on common nouns and exclude pronouns such as "they" or "them" from this analysis to capture the specific ways PUNs nominate refugees. Employing this selection criteria, I found 343 nominations of refugees, with a total of 14 unique nouns used.

These nouns fit, with some overlap, into seven main types of representation. The least common nomination category, which also appeared on the least number of sites (two sites) are nominations related to the life status of refugee. Refugees were more commonly nominated as “lives” (eight instances) and twice nominated as “deaths”. Universalizing and gender nominations occurred across three sites. Universal nomination is the only category with a single nomination within it: the terms “person” and “people” were used 52 times to nominate refugees. Gender-related nominations are “men” (three instances), “girl” (7 instances), and “women” (40 instances). The nominations overwhelmingly denote female gender (94 percent). It is also relevant to note that two of the three instances of *men* were used in specifically negative ways. For instance, one site posed the rhetorical question, “Is it true that is almost only men, as it has been portrayed in the Norwegian media?”. The question was rhetorical as the PUNs explicitly-named focus was to support women and children.

Found on all four sites, the most common nomination was the term *refugee*, used 130 times. *Asylum seeker* was used a total of four times. The term *resident*, in relation to legal residence in a refugee camp, appeared 10 times. Nominations of family include five unique nominations, the most of any category. While the term *family* was used 52 times, the terms *child/children* was used slightly more (55 times). “Mother” (11 instances), “baby” and “babies” (five instances) and “parents” (two instances) further evoked the notion of family. Nominations that focus on the youthfulness of the refugees are “child” and “children” (55 instances), “girl” (seven instances), “baby” and “babies” (five instances). Each of these nominations also belong within another category: either Family or Gender. In some cases, the nominations of age and family were in line with the PUN’s explicit mission of helping families and children. However,

these nominations were found across all four sites, which includes PUNs whose mission statements are not explicitly tailored to the support of families and children. (See Figure 1).

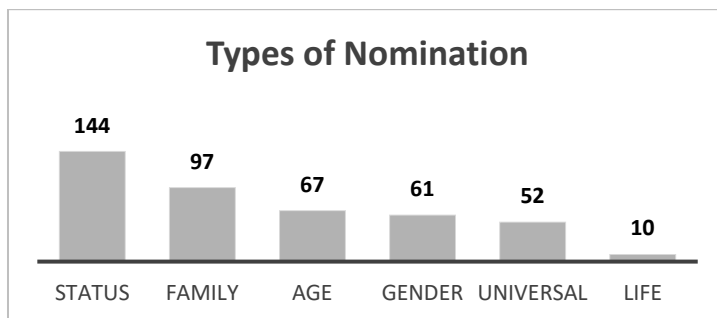


Figure 1 – Types of Nomination

The search for refugee predications did not reveal a small number of specific words, but it did reveal numerous categories within which each specific word fit. As with the analysis of refugee nominations, the categories of predication noted here were found on at least 2 of the 4 PUN websites, for a total of 383 predications. Since I begin at the level of category, rather than individual words, I present these findings according to the number of instances of each category. I found a total of 14 categories.

Two categories of predication were found on only two sites. First, there are nine instances of explicit predications of the refugees in need, such as the statement that refugees are “in desperate need of a bit of humanity”. Second, there are five instances in which a PUN bequeaths positive, strengths-based traits to refugees. For example, one PUN described women travelling with children as “protectors and providers” and another PUN described a girl walking with “determination in her eyes”.

Seven types of predication were found across three PUN sites. Female gender, which accounted for 17 percent of refugee nominations, accounted for eight percent of the predications. The next category predicated the precarious situation of refugees (26 instances). Terms such as “vulnerable”, “separated” and “at risk” are commonly used. Also with 26 instances are

predications that predicated refugees by the tough situation they experience, such as “displaced” or “stranded”. Predications of family (22 instances) commonly related to “family separation” (nine instances) and the potential for “family reunification” (nine instances), while young age (18 instances) was predicated in ways that re-stressed the age assertions previously noted by nominations, such as the “small child” or the “3-year-old girl”.

The life status of refugees was predicated six times. Unlike nominations of life status, which focused more on “lives” than “deaths”, predications had a distinct focus on death. For instance, refugees were predicated as “drowned” or “lost at sea”. Finally, refugees are also predicated by nationality (three instances). In every case, the nationality was Syrian, which is the country refugees accepted as legitimate by European Union legislation.

The most common type of predication found across four sites predicated refugees as refugees helped by PUNs (98 instances). For instance, refugees were described as “saved by” PUNs and “welcomingly received” into Europe by their volunteers. The other types of predication found on all sites occurred between 31 and 39 times. Refugees were predicated by number (39 instances), such as “the number of refugees” and “3500 lives”. In all cases where a number was given, it was to describe a large number, rather than a small number of refugees.

Next, actions taken by refugees in situations where it seemed they had no other choice were predicated in 35 instances, for example, “fleeing”, “trying to adapt”, “struggling” and “dodging”. Close behind, with 36 instances, were descriptions of refugees in the specific act of “landing” and “arriving” on European soil. Finally, the four PUN websites included a total of 31 instances where refugees were described according to the negative actions taken against them. For instance, refugees were described as being “at the hands of smugglers” and “not granted status” by governments. (See Figure 2).

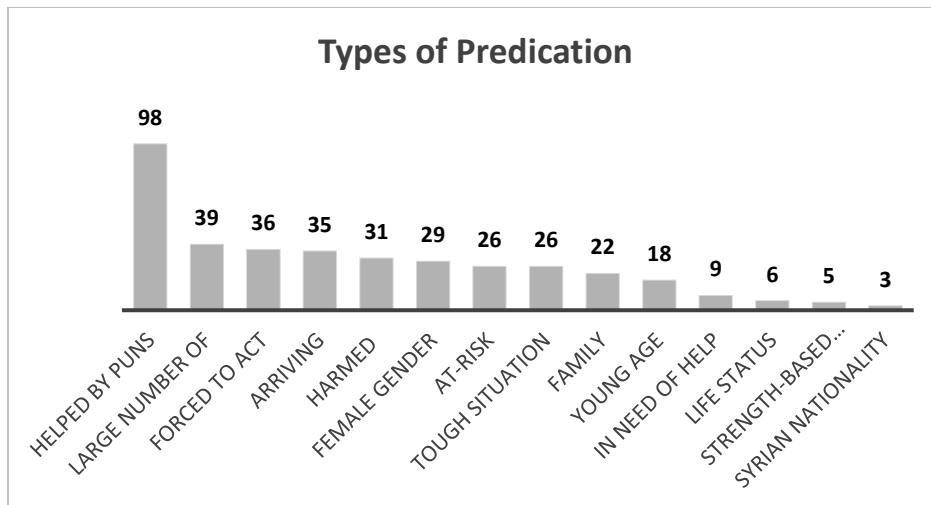


Figure 2 – Types of Predication

Taken together, the data on refugee nominations and predications reveals several overarching schemes that, either consciously or unconsciously, evoke specific impressions in the reader. Taken together, nominations and predications of refugees (NPRs) by PUNs represent refugees as victims. Specifically, refugees are nominated and predicated as vulnerable, innocent, and legitimate.

Almost half of the nouns used to nominate refugees fall under the category of vulnerable (43 percent), followed by the categories of innocence (33 percent) and legitimate (24 percent). (See Figure 3).

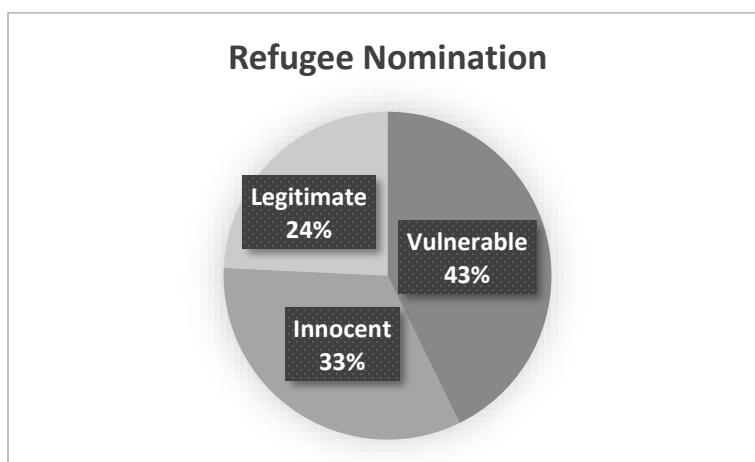


Figure 3 – Refugee Nomination

The majority of predications are in the category of vulnerable (53 percent), with 23 percent regarding innocence and 24 percent speaking to legitimacy. (See Figure 4).

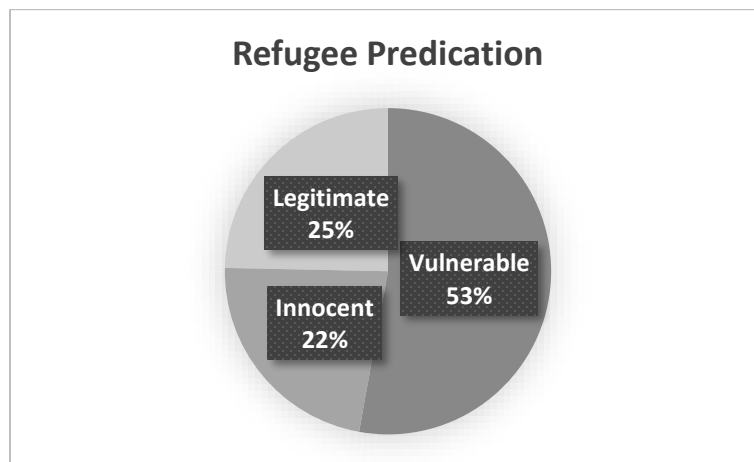


Figure 4 – Refugee Predication

In both cases, the three schemes are not discrete. Predications overlap between the categories of innocence and vulnerability, while nominations overlap through all three categories. For instance, the nomination “child” and predications “small” and “young” fall into the categories of innocence and vulnerability.

Vulnerability. The nomination of refugees as vulnerable occurred in 43 percent of refugee nominations. Predication of vulnerability was even more common, appearing in 53 percent of the predications. The vulnerability typified through PUNs’ refugee representations illustrate demographics alluding to defencelessness (such as “child”, “baby” and “girl”), status which is socially precarious (such as “women”, “asylum seekers” and “refugees”), and actions or inactions that show an inability to support oneself (such as “at the mercy of”, “stranded” and “struggling”).

The term *refugee*, employed 130 times, appeared the most in this category. The nomination of status reminds the reader of the precarious nature of the nominated refugee; the refugee is not yet an accepted member of society and therefore in need of support. This was also

seen in the term *asylum seeker*. Hence, the refugee is predicated as in a tough situation, still “seeking” and “hoping” to be accepted.

Female gender accounted for 17 percent of refugee nominations and eight percent of predications. The representation of gender was skewed, with female gender represented in 94 percent of the cases. This appeals to the reader’s association of female gender with vulnerability, in accordance with stereotypical notions of female gender roles.

Young ages are also commonly accepted to indicate vulnerability. PUNs nominated refugees as young through the nouns Child/Children, Girl, and Baby/Babies. Young age was predicated in ways that re-stressed age assertions provided by nominations: for instance, the “small child” and the “3-year-old girl”. There were no age-related predications to describe nominations of older adults, such as “parents” and “mothers”. Thus, the PUNs evoke vulnerability by focusing on representations of young persons who are not yet able to take care of themselves.

The precarious life status of refugees is suggested by refugees nominated as “lives” and as “deaths”. While nominations were more often of “lives” rather than “deaths”, predications had a distinct focus on death. For instance, refugees were predicated as “drowned” or “lost at sea”. By noting the precarious nature of refugee’s life status, the PUN websites invoke a vulnerability which generates a sense of urgency to act in order to protect “endangered lives” or avoid more “tragic deaths”.

In addition, some predications of refugees evoke vulnerability in ways not produced through nominations. Several predications allude to refugees’ general vulnerability through terms such as “at risk”. Other predications of refugees’ “in need” add to the explicit predication of vulnerability.

Refugees were also predicated in ways that focused on refugees' vulnerability due to the negative actions and events occurring against them. First, PUNs predicate refugees according to negative actions taken against them. For instance, refugees were described as being "at the hands of smugglers" and "not granted status" by governments. Second, PUNs refer to refugees by the difficult situation they are in due to the actions of those bad people. For instance, refugees are predicated as being in a tough situation through terms like "displaced" or "stranded".

On the other hand, the most common type of predication, found on all four PUN sites, described the positive actions taken by PUNs to support refugees. For instance, refugees' vulnerability and need for support is implicit in predications which depict refugees as "saved by" PUNs or "welcomingly received" by PUN volunteers.

Innocence. Nominations and predications of innocence comprise 33 and 22 percent of refugee representations, respectively. The concept of innocence is produced through representations which allude to family life, demographics which stereotypically allude to blamelessness, and terms that universalize the experiences of refugees.

Innocence is suggested through nominations and predications that refer to family, since family life is generally understood as good and virtuous. The terms "family" and "child" or "children" account for the majority of nominations, with "mother", "baby" or "babies", and "parents" providing additional allusions to family. Predications of family commonly related to "family separation" and the potential for "family reunification".

Overlapping with family are the nominations and predications of young age and female gender, which are also included under the category of vulnerability. I include these types of nomination under innocence as well because they describe a person who is conventionally used to illustrate goodness and pureness.

In addition, nominations of family, female gender, and young age were sometimes predicated with positive, strengths-based attributes that further evoke innocence. For example, one PUN described women travelling with children as “protectors and providers”. Such predications further allude to goodness.

Also evoking innocence is the universalizing gender of “person” and “people”. The terms were used 52 times to nominate refugees and produce the notion of innocence through the concept that they are no different than us. There were no similar findings amongst predications.

Legitimacy. Below I discuss the ways in which legitimacy is enacted, through nominations and predications regarding legality and crisis.

Legality as legitimacy. 24 percent of refugee nominations fall under the category of legitimacy. These nominations refer to refugees’ official status as “refugees” or “asylum seekers”. These terms indicate that refugees are legally recognized. In addition, there are 10 instances of refugees nominated as residents. The nomination “resident” evokes the notion that refugees are legally allowed to be where they are and are not simply squatting or using resources.

Moreover, when refugees are described as acting in ways that might contravene the idea of legality, the PUNs are careful to predicate these actions as being conducted in moments where no other option, except, perhaps, death, exists. For example, refugees are forced into “fleeing”, and “dodging”, all while “struggling” and “trying to adapt”. Thus, their actions are legitimized.

Crisis as legitimacy. 25 percent of predications refer to legitimacy, slightly surpassing the number of predications referring to innocence. The notion of a crisis is evoked through predications which list the colossal numbers of refugees arriving to Europe, such as “the number of refugees” and “3500 lives”. Closely related are predications which describe refugees’ specific act of “landing” and “arriving”, alluding to the ongoing nature of the crisis.

Representations of PUNs

To study representations of PUNs, I first analyzed each page of each website. Since all pages included representations of PUNs, all 31 eligible pages were included in this analysis. I include both nominations of the organizations themselves as well as the individuals within them, as this is similar to the way refugees are nominated (as groups and as individuals).

My analysis of PUNs' self-nomination focuses on representations which are found on at least 2 of the 4 PUN websites analyzed. I chose this selection criterion to help ensure the results described a message common to the analyzed PUNs. Since this study focuses on the specific meanings which can be derived from PUNs' nominations, I exclude pronoun nominations such as "we" or "our". I exclude such neutral representors as they do not hold any specific meaning for analysis. I do, however, analyze the predications which are attached to any such pronouns. Compared to predications of refugees, predications of PUNs were limited. Therefore, I include specific examples of predications, rather than types of predications.

Employing the above selection criteria of nominations, there were 118 instances of organizational nomination. Overwhelmingly, with 106 instances, PUNs were nominated by the organizations' name. The three other nominations are the term "organization", "NGO" and "group". People working within PUNs were nominated 60 times. Individuals were nominated overwhelmingly in the plural: as "volunteers", "coordinators" and members of a "team" (See Figure 5).

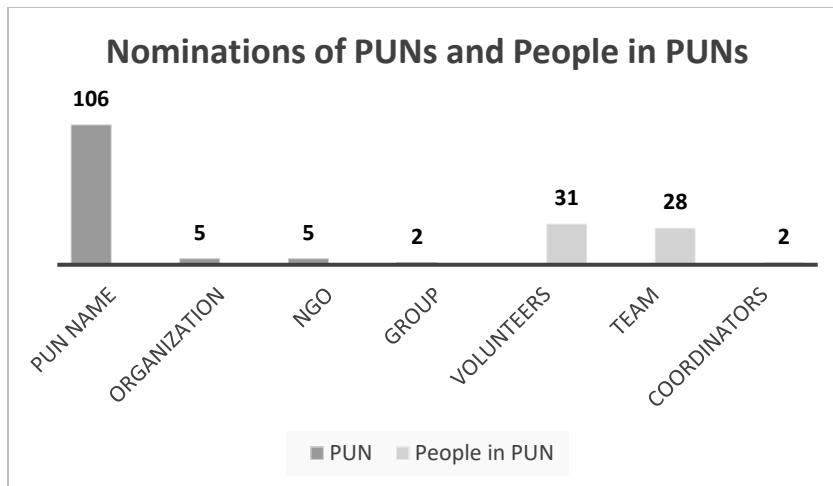


Figure 5 – Nominations of PUNs and People in PUNs

Three words were used to predicate PUN organizations a total of nine times: humanitarian, registered and non profit. Predication of individuals within organizations occurred slightly more (29 instances) and I therefore join the representations within categories, as I did with predication of refugees. The categories include predications of individuals within PUNs according to the program they are involved in (such as a “sea rescue team” or “protection team”). They are also predicated as skilled (such as “experienced” or “professional”) and selfless (such as “tirelessly contributing” or having “big hearts”). Finally, there were limited predications of individuals within PUNs as being of a large or small number. (See Figure 6).

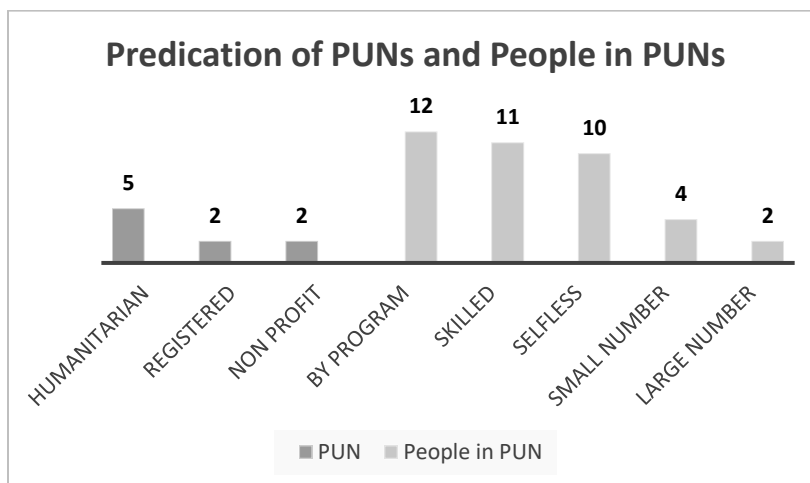


Figure 6 – Predication of PUNs and People in PUNs

From the results of my analysis of PUN’s self-nomination and self-predication, I found three main categories: PUNs self-described as expert (“registered”, altruistic (“humanitarian”) organizations that are autonomous from larger, established organizations such as Doctors without Borders (“small”). 76 percent of nominations of PUN organizations stressed the PUN’s autonomy from larger established organizations. Nomination of altruism (17 percent) and the expertise of the PUN (seven percent) were limited. (See Figure 7).

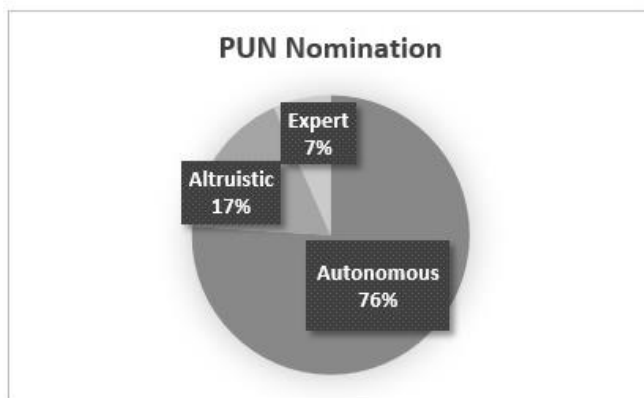


Figure 7 – PUN Nomination

PUN predication revealed an almost opposite pattern; the majority (67 percent) of adjectives predicated expertise of the PUN, while only 25 percent predicated altruism and eight percent predicated autonomy. (See Figure 8).

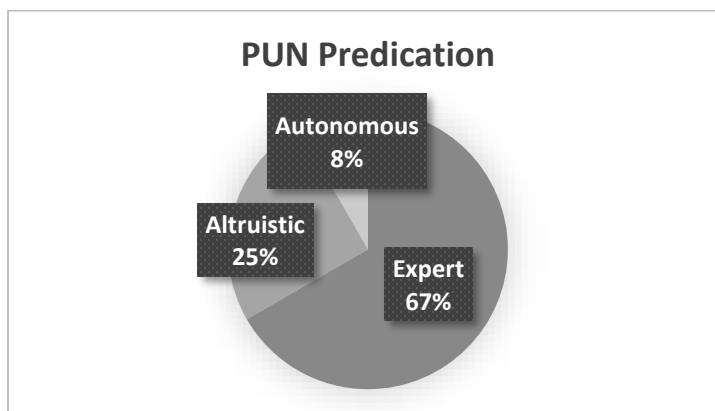


Figure 8 – PUN Predication

Expertise. Expertise was nominated via terms that suggested the professionalism of the organization through the terms “NGO” and “organization”. Individuals were predicated as “coordinators”, evoking a similar notion of expertise in the field. However, this term was not commonly used (2 instances). Thus, the majority of expertise nominations focused on the professionalism of the organization, rather than the individuals working within it. Predications of expertise appealed to established notions of Northern organizations supporting people in need. For instance, all the PUNs self-described at least once as “humanitarian”, “non profit”, and “registered”. Individuals were predicated by the program and operations they were involved in. These names often provided the people in PUNs with an air of expertise. For instance, being on the “protection team” or “sea rescue team” assumes technical skill and experience. Indeed, individuals were also endowed with specific traits denoting expertise, such as “skill” and “experience”.

Altruistic. Altruism was nominated most commonly through the term “volunteer” in individuals within PUN organizations. PUNs’ altruism was predicated through the notion that PUNs are selfless with money, describing themselves as “non profit”. Individuals within the organization were predicated as altruistic through descriptions pointing to traits such as volunteers’ “big hearts”. Interestingly, the people in PUNs were described as both “small”, as a predication of “team”, and “large” as a volume of overall volunteers. These predications were interchanged in accordance with the goals of the PUN: to describe an elite team or to depict an impressive level of response.

Autonomous. Each PUN clearly differentiated itself as a unique entity through their distinctive organizational names. These unique names distinguish the PUNs from larger organizations and governmental responses. Individuals were separated from larger institutions

again through the use of the term “volunteer” and groups of volunteers working on “teams”. No predications of PUNs found on two or more sites evoked autonomy. However, people within PUNs were predicated by their program or operation in ways that detailed the autonomy of the organization from larger institutions, as the programs were self-run and often described as filling geographic gaps in the relief efforts. For instance, there were descriptions of teams predicated as being “local” in nature. Other PUN members were predicated by their specific area of operation, such as a team operating on the “North Shore” of Lesvos.

Discursive Strategies

As I found a plethora of examples of authorization and moral valuation, I include only those types I found on at least 3 of the 4 PUN websites to provide an account of strategies common to most PUNs that were examined.

Authorization. PUNs’ use of authorization echoes the strategies of promoting expertise used by PUNs in self-nomination and self-predication. Of the 149 instances of authorization, the majority appear in parts of the text which include a direct appeal to Northerners who are not yet involved with the PUNs’ efforts, such as the Volunteer page and the Donate page. The forms of authorization are references to the PUN as liaison, the PUNs’ operations, the PUNs’ documents and social media, the PUNs’ partnerships, and the PUNs’ location (See Figure 9).

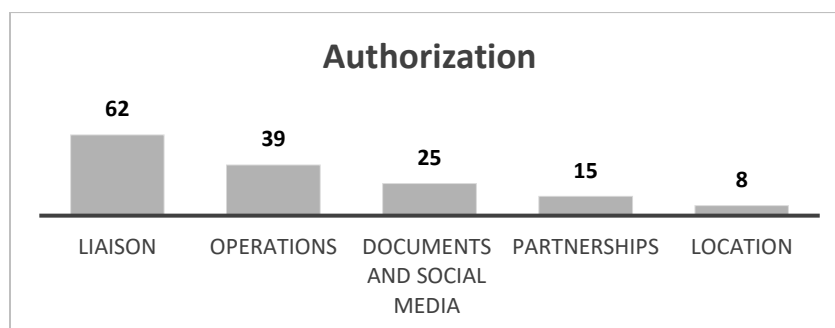


Figure 9 - Authorization

Liaison. Accounting for 42 percent of authorization examples, PUNs self-described as a liaison between Northerners and refugees. The organizations positioned themselves as on-the-ground experts on the situation in Greece who can “recommend” certain actions taken by Northerners. PUNs also provided “specific requirements for volunteers” who would be appropriate to join the PUNs’ work. PUNs were explicit in requests for support, which made up just over half of the total instances, from the vague, “we need your support” to the blunt, “we need money”.

Operations. While PUN operations were used as predications in 10 instances, they also are mentioned throughout the text in other settings. These terms, created to name different programs and operations undertaken by the PUNs, serve to legitimize the PUNs’ work. For instance, an “Eco Relief Project” sounds far more official than “people picking up trash on the beach”. Moreover, a term such as “Eco Relief Excursions” appeals in a similar way to more established notions, such as voluntourism, in which Northerners are supported by an official Northern organization to help others. Thus, the PUNs’ naming of operations appeals to the authority of a modern, but established, Northern tradition: voluntourism to legitimize their work. Moreover, voluntourism itself appeals to the power and authority of being a Northern organization to entice Northerners to join (pay) their organization for the opportunity to work with Southerners (Mahrouse, 2014).

Documents and social media. PUNs made a total of 25 references to external documents and platforms run by the organization. As one PUN neatly summarizes, further information may be found on “social media, and internal and external documentation”. Other PUNs mention “newsletters” and “annual reports”. These external sources of information, echoing the documents of established NGOs, serve to further legitimize the PUN as a credible organization.

Partnerships. References to partnerships are the most explicit appeal to authority found on the four PUN websites, as they directly reference well-known organizations. For instance, one organization mentions that "we work with organizations such as UNHCR, Doctors Without Borders, NRC, International Red Cross, etc." A subset within partnerships counters this logic slightly, by noting partnerships with local organizations, such as the comment "we work very closely with the villagers" or "have local residents joining in". However, the tone of these secondary comments place the PUN in the authority position wherein locals are either supporting the organization or being supported by the organization. In contrast, PUN describes themselves as equals when referencing partnerships and relations with international organizations.

Location. References to location were used by the PUNs to describe a physical area of expertise. In this case, the PUNs use terms like "zone", "sites", and "regions" to describe areas they preside over. Moreover, the PUNs situate themselves as leaders in these areas. For instance, a PUN describes itself as the "humanitarian effort of the Southern shore", and another notes it is "the only stable volunteer NGO presence" in a particular region.

Moral Valuation. PUNs employ moral valuation in ways that legitimize their work with refugees. These moral valuations are similar to the ways the PUNs nominate and predicate refugees; the moral valuations refer to vulnerability, innocence, and the legitimacy of refugees' needs. Occurring 56 times, these traits are then used as a justification of the PUNs' existence and work. (See Figure 10).

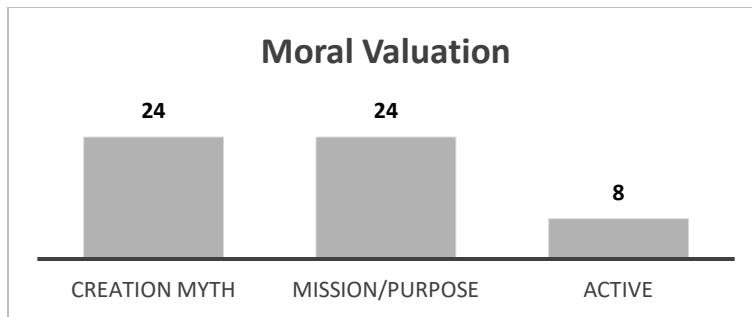


Figure 10 – Moral Valuation

Creation. Moral valuation was employed by all four PUNs in their depictions of their organization’s creation. One organization described their creation as a sort of morally induced birth: the organization was “born in response to the mass displacement of people fleeing war, families who are forced to risk their lives to get to safe lands”. Other organizations echoed this sentiment; one PUN described its beginnings as a chance encounter, when the founder was emotionally moved after happening upon “a family of Syrian refugees buying life jackets for their imminent crossing to Lesbos in an inflatable boat” while he was on holiday.

The creation myths also served to set PUNs apart from other organized Northern institutions. An explicit example of the use of this moral valuation to set the PUNs apart from other Northern organizations and approaches is one organization’s assertion that it was founded “not as an idea of a charity or aid organisation, but out of an acute need to see who the people really are, behind the steadily increasing numbers reported now and then on the news that summer.” The PUN’s creation myth projects a moral valuing system; the PUN seems to be *compelled* to help in accordance with their care for the people behind the numbers.

Mission. The description of each PUN’s mission or purpose echoed the themes presented in the creation stories. The PUNs’ moral assertions explain each organization’s specific niche of help: they “could not look the other way”, they visited a new area and “the place needed our presence”, or they were “driven by a desire to give a warm, dignified welcome” to arriving

refugees. Additionally, missions focus on the same individuals the PUNs continue to nominate and predicate: the most vulnerable, innocent, and legitimate refugees. Thus, the mission “to support the most vulnerable groups” or “to help children and their mothers upon their arrival in Europe”.

The PUNs’ missions also employed metaphors that attach a symbolic heroism and steadfastness to their organizations. For instance, one organization states its mission “Is To Act Like A Lighthouse - To Stand Firm In Harsh Conditions, Lighting The Way To Guide People In Need”. Self-predicating through the concept of a lighthouse, the PUN attaches prolific moral meaning to the organization. Lighthouses are life-saving structures, purposefully placed in dangerous areas to guide and support people. As the United States has the Statue of Liberty to symbolically light the way into New York’s harbour, the PUN has elevated itself to a similarly mythic level: as the light guiding refugees to safety.

Active. Although mentioned only eight times, references to the continued activity of the organization occurred on all four PUN websites. These mentions do not just note that the PUN is working, but that it is doing so tirelessly to meet a need that has not ended. For instance, one PUN notes that it “remain[s] active to respond to and help these families in desperation”, while another argues that “work in refugee camps has never been more important”. The mention of remaining active produces the idea that other organizations are *not* remaining active, setting the PUN apart as a morally strong organization.

Paratextuality

The PUN websites did not include an overall map of the pages, sub-pages, or links within texts. I created maps of each website in order to examine the overall logic the organizations applied to the connection of pieces of information provided on each page. An analysis of

paratextuality based on these maps reveals an overall logic shared by the four PUN websites. While each website has unique webpage titles and ordering and unique bells and whistles, like a page with a specially created video or a link to a gift shop, there is an overarching logic that applies to all four websites, based on page titles and the content found under those titles. (See Figure 11).

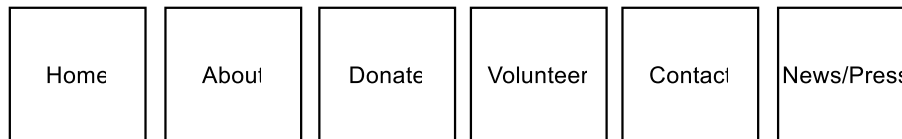


Figure 1 – Webpage Headings

These page headings suggest what the PUNs believe is most important about their work: first, that people understand what the organization is “about”; second, that website viewers understand how they may donate; and third, that viewers understand how they may volunteer. The contact sections of the websites are short and to the point; they provide brief contact information that legitimizes the page. The News and Press sections are not included in the scope of this MRP, but I include them here to show the overall logic. They are not included because they focus on external sources of information about the PUN, which the PUNs compile and share with readers, again serving a legitimizing function.

Taken together, each heading contributes to the argument that the PUN is an excellent conduit for Northerners to support Southerners. The About section provides information about the PUN’s work, often including sub-pages on programs offered to refugees. The donate page provides immediate options for Northerners to give their money to help PUNs help refugees. The volunteer page, which is most likely to have no representations of refugees, describes the work Northerners may engage in by actively becoming a part of the organization in Greece. Contact and News and Press pages serve an authorization function like the examples of authorization

found within the text included in my overarching analysis. Thus, any Northerner to visit the website should feel assured that the PUN is the perfect conduit from which they may help Southerners.

Summary

These findings provide rich data for analysis from a postcolonial lens with a focus on the disruption and (re)production of racialized, colonial power imbalances in transnational, helping relations. The analytic tools of nomination, predication, authorization, moral valuation, and paratextuality reveal specific, restricted constructions of refugees and self-representations of PUNs across all four PUN websites. The language used to represent refugees and self-represent is noticeably divergent: PUNs are represented through technical words and phrases while refugees are represented through emotional words and phrases. The paratextuality of the four PUN websites reveals that the websites structure is made to be navigated by Northern helpers. In these ways, refugees are represented as deserving victims in need of help while PUNs are constructed as the provider of solutions to refugees needs.

Chapter 6. Discussion

Neocolonialism necessitates a power imbalance, in which one actor has power over another, who is acted upon (McEwan, 2009). The representations of refugees and PUNs on PUN websites revealed exactly this: individuals and groups of people from the global South were represented as needing and deserving help by individuals and groups of like-minded people from the global North. I problematize supposedly positive representations of refugees based on how PUNs nominate and predicate them. Next, I deconstruct the positionality of the representors through an analysis of PUNs' self-nomination, self-predication, and use of authorization. I consider the effects of these representations being employed in moral valuations. Next, I examine how the paratext of the websites support the PUNs to gain Northern followers. I then examine the implications of these findings on helping relationships in both transnational helping and national social work contexts. Finally, I review and detail the limitations and strengths of my study and areas for further research yielded from this initial Major Research Paper.

Throughout this process, I borrow from Kipling's (1899) "A White Man's Burden" as a mechanism to illustrate the blatant legacies of racist, colonial ideology in the four PUNs' representational practices. For, just as Kipling's (1899) poem may be viewed as a symbol of a racist, colonial past, the PUN websites may be understood as a modern-day version of Northerners' taking up the White Man's Burden. It is a story with colonially imposed victims and heroes, rights and wrongs, and a clear idea of where knowledge and power does and, in the colonists' eyes, should be situated. In this way, I return to what is essential in postcolonial theory, as represented by the very meaning of the term *postcolonial*. That is, colonialism has not ended, but merely changed form. I do not assume that PUNs produce these representations to purposefully echo colonial helping relationships. In fact, if anything, I presume that they do so

unconsciously. I see this as a reflection of the deep entrenchment of colonial, racist legacies in modern-day, North-to-South helping relationships.

Constructing the Victims

“Fill full the mouth of Famine, And bid the sickness cease” (Kipling, 1899).

The four PUN websites’ nominations and predications of refugees (NPRs) represent refugees in racialized and neocolonial ways. A discourse of victimhood is produced through the PUNs’ representations which reduce refugees to traits of innocence and vulnerability, erase race, and authenticate refugees in accordance with Northern knowledges and values.

Taking the lead from Gale’s (2004) study of refugee representations, this study attempts to problematize all representations; not just those that are unambiguously negative or racist. PUN’s NPRs of victimhood reduce refugees to the status of objects whose characteristics depends on each PUN’s agenda. This reduction is an example of the “derealisation of the human”, in which bodies are viewed as little more than the characteristics dominant powers attribute to them (Butler, 2006, p. 33). Clark-Kazak’s (2009) study of refugee representations by the UNHCR articulates the issue; the UNHCR’s representations of female gender and young ages are overwhelmingly used to evoke a problem, namely vulnerability, despite the UNHCR’s explicit goal of celebrating diversity (Clark-Kazak, 2009). Hence, the creation of a victim through NPRs is at the expense of the refugee’s agency. In essence, Ahmed’s (2000) stranger appears before the PUN, and the PUN chooses to craft the stranger into an innocent and vulnerable object. As Fanon (2008) asserts, not even a supposed compliment should go unscrutinised. Therefore, even though the PUNs’ representations are not blatantly negative, they do not act as disruptors to neocolonial discourse. Instead, they contribute to neocolonial discourse by reproducing the Othering of refugees.

The PUNs' NPR also erase race in ways that are racializing. The race and place refugees identify with are rarely mentioned directly through NPRs. In fact, the only concrete reference to race in the NPRs is the predication "Syrian", found 3 times across the 4 PUN websites. Yet, as postcolonial theorists argue, the absence of race and place from NPRs does not mean the PUNs avoid racializing refugees (Ahmed, 2000; Hall, as cited by Media Education Foundation, 1997). Hall (as cited by Media Education Foundation, 1997) describes race as a construct produced by those with power to further their dominating agendas across time and place. He delineates how a discourse of race has been produced in an attempt to prove the superiority of White, colonizing subjects over colonized Others (Hall as cited by Media Education Foundation, 1997). For example, anthropologists use craniometry, the measurements of skulls, to show that colonizers have larger brains than those they have subjugated (Thomas, 2001). PUNs' NPRs may serve a similar purpose to craniometry; "the small child", "female refugee", and the "most at risk" persons are representations that justify Northerners helping interventions in the eyes of other Northerners. This argument is supported by Hall's (as cited by Media Education Foundation, 1997) assertion that discourse of race is fluid and can therefore change over time. Thus, although race is not explicitly mentioned, the reduction of refugees to non-race-based traits that construct weak and helpless victims can be attributed to a legacy of racist colonialism.

Racialization is also accomplished through the numerous references PUNs' NPRs construct regarding refugees' similarity to Northerners. For instance, universalizing NPRs insinuate that PUNs help refugees because they are like "us". Furthermore, predications of refugees in the process of "landing" or "arriving", and place-based legitimizing through terms like "resident" contribute to the notion that refugees are like "us", or at least must be treated like "us", because they now inhabit on the same land mass as us. Similarly, the terms *refugee* and

asylum seeker describe a legal status that authenticates refugees by reference to Northern legal concepts. Such tactics are noted in Capdevila and Callaghan's (2008) study on politicians' representations of refugees. The authors show how the production of a binary between "us", including "good" refugees, and "them", "bad" refugees, simultaneously erases race and directly racializes refugees through the binary produced between "us" and "them" (p. 9). Thus, the legitimization of refugees through universalizing, "us-ing" strategies ignores the power imbalances which exist between Northerners and Southerners. PUNs do not appear to have disrupted the neocolonial, racialized discourse; they have merely focused on the "us" part, while reducing mentions of "them".

The power imbalance present in NPRs is perhaps best explained by the rejection of similar representational practices by refugees. As detailed in Lacroix's (2004) study, refugees reject the representations placed upon them by Northern agencies; the participants in Lacroix's (2004) study referred to themselves in the first person but referred to refugees in the third person, leading Lacroix (2004) to conclude that "refugee claimant subjectivity is something that is not theirs; it is something which has been imposed, which they will discard at the end of the process" (p. 158). Therefore, following the lead of Fanon (2008), who speaks to a recognition and rejection of his body being read, even in supposedly positive ways, by White colonists, I believe that NPRs by PUNs may and should be recognized and rejected by refugees and those who seek to work with refugees from the "terribly troubled role" of Northern helper (p. 149).

Constructing the Heroes

"Take up the White Man's burden, Send forth the best ye breed" (Kipling, 1899).

The nomination and predication of PUNs and their volunteers (NPPs) as expert, altruistic, and autonomous heroes erase race and demographics while simultaneously positioning PUNs

and their associated Northern helpers on a pedestal reachable only by those who subscribe to white, Northern concepts of strength, power, and success in helping relationships. Additionally, PUNs' self-representations reveal a discord between representational practices that associate PUNs with Northern concepts and representational practices that distinguish PUNs from Northern concepts. For instance, a PUN may self-describe as a "unique" organization while also referring with great pride to their partnership with an established, international humanitarian organization on the same webpage.

NPPs are conspicuously distinct from NPRs. The main difference is that demographic data is not assigned to PUNs through NPPs. As Said (1978) discerns, it is only colonized bodies that are meticulously categorized; a white body simply *is*, in relation to the constructed Other. Thus, the four PUNs are represented in ways that echo the construction of the colonist in Kipling's (1899) poem; PUNs and their volunteers are compelled helpers, always above racial or other demographic categorization. In the place of demographic categories and traits are nominations and predications which depict the PUNs as possessing qualities which make them worthy of attention, praise, and respect. To borrow a phrase from Thobani (2007), the PUNs recognize themselves as worthy of "exaltation" (p. 5). Moreover, this exaltation is in accordance with Northern standards of helping relationships. Therefore, the NPPs ally the PUNs with Northern concepts of greatness: the Northern value of freedom (to act with autonomy), with Northern knowledge (to act as experts), and as upholders of the Northern value of goodness (to act altruistically). As a result, the PUN helper-hero appears to be recognized by herself and her Northern counterparts as exceptional for her compassionate work (Mahrouse, 2014).

The employment of authorization on the PUNs' websites further solidifies the allegiance of the hero-PUN to the power of Northern values and forms of knowledge. The authorization

used on PUN websites serves two legitimizing purposes: to authenticate the PUN through its connections to Northern institutions and to self-endorse the PUN and its volunteers as a reliable conduit for Northern support.

Nawyn (2010) argues that NGOs supporting refugees in Northern countries reproduce colonial Othering and subordinating practices with their clients. Of specific relevance in Nawyn's (2010) study is that these NGOs are uniquely situated to resist and respond to issues of power in governmental policies relating to refugees. Similarly, PUNs are well-situated to challenge, resist, and change neocolonial power structures. Yet the use of authorization through Northern knowledges, organizations, and values counters this objective by remaining within, drawing connections to, and celebrating the work of Northern organizations working with Southerners. Essentially, the PUNs' uphold Kipling's (1899) remark, "Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom, The judgment of your peers!" That is, the PUNs rely on the authorization of their work in accordance with Northern concepts and Northern self-flattery.

In addition, self-authorizations, similar to NPPs, are used to assure Northerners that PUNs are an excellent conduit for their support to refugees, both through volunteering and donations. This is bolstered by the NPPs as altruistic experts; with authority and goodness shown, the PUNs may act as a powerful authority for other Northerners to engage with Southern refugees. Indeed, PUNs' websites are written and edited by a hegemonic community, namely Northern helpers. Yet, as Mahrouse (2009) notes, activists are often "presumed by others or by themselves to have an aptitude for objectivity and neutrality" (p. 660). Thus, by positioning themselves as experts, both through NPPs and authorization, the PUNs seem to reproduce the power imbalance inherent in colonial helping relationships.

Yet, in what is essentially an organizational form of cognitive dissonance, the connection to Northern values and knowledge is rejected through the PUNs' NPP of autonomy. The NPP of autonomy is particularly interesting in that it disassociates the PUN from the neocolonial state; asserting that the organization is *different*. A similar dissonance is noted by Mahrouse (2007) in the interview responses of transnational, Northern activists; the activists portray themselves as independent from the government and societal beliefs in their home countries.

I believe this dissonance also existed in my own work for a PUN. I, like many others, fully recognize that I was able to work on Lesbos because of my Northern, racialized privilege, but accepted this due to such a "presumption of independence and innocence" (Mahrouse, 2007). During my time on Lesbos, I barely had time for sleep, as I found ways to work that I believe to be truly helpful; I left the beach and lived in a tent in a remote, rocky area, guiding boats safely to shore and organizing transport for the refugees to reach the reception camps. Nevertheless, the power relations involved in "helping" relationships remained centered in my mind. In fact, the longer I worked on the island, the more I began to create an "us" versus "them" dichotomy between the volunteers doing "real" work and those who, I complained, came to Lesbos for "the wrong reasons" or shared their experiences in "the wrong way". I always compared these people to myself and my colleagues who were doing it "right". My logic was simple: I provided "real" help while recognizing my privilege as a Northern, White person. Therefore, I believed that I was above the repulsive volunteer behaviour I had witnessed on the beach my first morning.

However, reflecting on that first morning and the months of experiences to follow and looking at the findings of this and other research studies, I realize that there is more to the experience of "good" and "bad" help that my critique failed to capture. Most importantly to me is that, despite my explicit goal of acting in anti-racist, anti-colonial ways, I continued to hold

and utilize a position of power that erased the Other. This critique leads me to question whether my idea of *help* is any more valid than that presented by the volunteers on the beach. Mahrouse (2014) notes “the proud way” that activists describe their work as compared to that of “mainstream and hegemonic knowledge production practices” (p. 74). I recognize the same tension in my comparison of race-aware volunteers engaging in “real” help on Lesbos and the “average”, hegemonic volunteer. Mahrouse (2014) contends that this is just another “discourse of exceptionalism”, this time produced by the volunteer herself, rather than the dominant media or political representations of her work (p. 74). Reflecting on my actions, I agree. By replacing the derealisation of refugees with the derealisation of volunteers on the beach, I used my critical awareness of privilege to become the “Saviour of White Saviours”, creating another set of “us” versus “them” binaries (Straubhaar, 2015, p. 387). This, I argue, is also what occurs when PUNs situate themselves both as Northern experts and as above the negative aspects of Northern humanitarian responses.

Moreover, the recognition of my privilege is not enough to absolve me (or a PUN) from instances of neocolonial, racist dominance. Did I save lives while working on Lesbos? Yes. But, as a classmate reminds me, it is time to stop celebrating white mediocracy. Saving lives may seem like an exceptional act, but it is something that is done every second by people who have no other choice, in, for example, the countries that refugees were arriving from on Lesbos. The difference I see between my actions and those that are done by others is that I, with all of my White, Northern privilege, was able to make a choice to be in a situation where I was needed to save lives. As Ahmed (2004) warns, white racism and white privilege “may even be repeated and intensified” through such an acknowledgement (para. 58). Thus, a true critique implicates myself as well: the kind of person who believes that their recognition of their privilege is enough to

absolve them of any issues related to racial tensions or colonial legacies. This, I argue, is what is needed when PUNs focus on their autonomy from Northern structures.

The Moral of the Story is...

“Go bind your sons to exile, to serve your captives' need” (Kipling, 1899).

An analysis of moral valuation contributes to an understanding of whether or not the four PUNs (re)produce or disrupt neocolonial, racialized discourse. Said (1993) describes colonial pursuits as a binding of peoples from different societies, in which the Northern society is given power over the Southern society. The findings on moral valuation corroborate the evidence noted above, appearing to show that the overall goal of the PUNs' work is represented in ways that reproduce the colonial helping project. With much of the current literature describing a dialectic between those who positively represent refugees and those who negatively represent refugees (Fozdar, 2013; Lacroix, 2004; Park & Bhuyan, 2012), the use of moral valuation is often noted as a resistance tactic used by Northern supporters of refugees in direct response to critics of refugees (Fozdar, 2013; Mahrouse, 2009). Yet, while PUNs moral valuations do resist explicitly negative representational practices, they also reproduce the colonial helping relationship by constructing sentences in which the NPPs as hero-helper and the NPRs as victim-object produce a logical narrative to justify the PUN's neocolonial, racialized helping interventions. Indeed, the largest number of predications of refugees (98 instances) involved a description of how the refugee was helped by a PUN. This active-passive binary refuses the refugee even the option of mimicry, in which he or she may attempt to support herself by adopting Northern values (Bhabha, 1994). Instead, the refugee is reduced to an object with no ability for self-support. Hence, the refugee is reduced to evidence of the volunteer's greatness, an object for the exalted hero-Northerner to prove her worth upon. Certainly, as I note in the findings, the moral

valuations often go above and beyond simple logical connections, creating a mythical status for the heroic work of the PUN by contrasting, for instance, extreme victimhood against incredible heroism. Thus, Razack's (2004) quip that "it is not as monsters that we collude" in Othering, racist practices (p. 156). Rather, the Southern refugee must be reduced to a victim in order for the PUN to act out the neocolonial, racialized role of hero.

Gaining Followers

"Come now, to search your manhood" (Kipling, 1899).

Finally, the findings on paratextuality reveal that the websites exist to act as a conduit for Northerners to support Southern refugees. The PUNs' websites show the experiences of Southerners through the eyes of Northerners. Butler (2006) describes a "hierarchy of grief", in which the lives of those with power are valued over the lives of Others (p. 32). Such a hierarchy exists on the websites: the PUNs' experiences are given more attention by Northern parties than the lives and experiences of the people arriving as refugees. Within this hierarchy, events deemed worthy of grief are those that have been shared by volunteers. For, as Butler (2006) probes, "if someone is lost, and that person is not someone, then what and where is the loss, and how does mourning take place?" (p. 33).

For instance, the reports of refugees' deaths on Lesbos are framed by the accounts of volunteers who were present at the scene; the audience hears only of the volunteers' emotional anguish over the suffering and death of the refugee. This is the story of the volunteer "stealing the pain" of the refugee (Razack, 2007, p. 376). Accordingly, the screams of the volunteers on the beach and my own feelings of revulsion take the spotlight, be it on a PUN website or in this paper, disappearing the "pain and the subject who is experiencing it" and "leaving the witness in

its place” (Razack, 2007, p. 377). Indeed, an analysis of moral valuation has shown that refugees are mentioned only when it is useful in the PUNs’ argument for their cause.

Thus, the PUN websites appear to centralize the power to act around Northerners and their choices. This echoes Said’s (1978) assertion that Northern knowledge production is inseparable from Northern power to act. The Northern visitor to the PUN website is given what he or she needs to act, to take the spotlight and steal the pain of the refugee by joining the neocolonial, helping project. A pointed example of the influence PUNs have on potential Northern helpers can be seen in the Frequently Asked Questions sections of the sites I analyzed. Northerners often ask if they could stay for less than two weeks or whether they could bring their small children. These sound like the type of questions a person might ask before embarking on a cruise, rather than going to provide “humanitarian aid” to “the most at risk refugees”. Certainly, the paratext shows that the websites cater to such visitors: Northerners who are interested in the actions we may take; the volunteering we may do, and the donations we may give in order to elevate ourselves to the status of hero that the PUN has self-given through its NPPs. Indeed, we may come to care deeply for the victim manufactured through the PUNs’ NPRs. Yet, this is not the PUNs’ ultimate goal; they seem to be presenting an argument to Northerners, who may choose to click one of the main links on the page to learn more about how they may join the helping cause: by volunteering or donating.

Summary

PUNs’ helping responses appear to be premised on the racist, neocolonial valuing of Northern, White lives above Southern, racialized lives. The supposed disruptions, provided through positive representations and comparisons of refugees to Northerners, serve as a reminder that even representations which differ from the mainstream, negative representations may still

stem from colonial legacies. Instead, as Kipling (1899) depicts the White Man's Burden from a colonial lens, the PUN holds the privilege to represent refugees in whatever way he feels will help support his neocolonial intervention. Such power imbalances will never allow the helper to recognize those they help as persons with agency to resist their own oppression. Thus, while PUNs and their followers may aspire to help their fellow humans, they do so in ways which reduce their fellow humans to nameless, passive victims.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

By revealing colonial, racist legacies in PUNs' texts-based representations, this study has in-the-world implications for both refugees and transnational, Northern helpers. As my MRP supervisor describes in her thesis, employing a critical discourse analysis necessitates a belief that the text does something: that it "reflects or reproduces particular identities, qualities and social relations" (Preston, 2013, p. 274). Consequently, the results provide an opportunity for Northerners who wish to engage in transnational helping relationships to examine the underlying logic behind their goals, choices, and positionality. Ultimately, the results have implications that extend to all helping relationships, be it in humanitarian aid or intersectional social work.

PUN representations may have in-the-world impacts on the way PUNs think, operate, and help refugees. Vaara and Tienari (2008) describe moral valuation as a tool that has direct impact on people's lives. I agree; the services refugees receive and the aspects of their lives that are deemed worthy of support may be established through the PUNs' representational practices. For instance, in this study the missions of the organization were rife with moral valuations. This is significant, since missions are supposed to guide service delivery. Certainly, the types of programs offered by PUNs are directly related to serving refugees nominated and predicated as victims.

Moreover, PUNs' representational practices may influence the decisions of Northerners who are interested in helping Southern refugees. The PUNs in this study act as a Northern authority on Southern needs, while simultaneously authorizing their own work through Northern concepts and institutions. Thus, potential Northern volunteers may recognize the PUN as a Northern organization (us) that they can trust to act as a conduit to Southern refugees (them). In

addition, the PUNs' self-representations indicate that Northerners who wish to help refugees will become helper-heroes.

Uncovering the creation and reproduction of colonial helping discourse on PUN websites also provides an opportunity for learning, self-reflection, and change by Northerners who wish to help Southerners in ways that disrupt the colonial, racist legacies in helping relationships. The results of this study enhance the existing literature on transnational helping projects. Currently, the only studies on PUN-like organizations are ethnographic in nature, providing a self-congratulatory description of the unique and anti-hegemonic nature of PUNs' work (Alberti, 2010; Cabot, 2013; Rygiel, 2012; Zahos, 2016). I hope that this study illuminates postcolonial issues for Northerners who wish to work for PUNs or PUN-like organizations. I know that it has helped me to self-reflect on my own engagement and power in transnational helping relationships. PUNs may not create these colonial, racialized representations consciously. If this is the case, the results of this study will support those organizations to recognize the historical and current power issues involved in their own practice, as well as the ways they themselves are implicated in (re)producing those issues.

Furthermore, the possibilities for learning, self-reflection, and change transcend the PUN-specific experience. As a White, Northern social worker in Canada, I recognize critical parallels between the transnational work of PUNs and social work power dynamics involved in work where differences of culture, class, gender, and other intersections have powerful, often negative effects in helping relations. Anti-oppressive practice supports social workers to examine intersections of social positions while problematizing norms found in discourse and social reality (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). As more and more individuals and organizations in the social work field turn to anti-oppressive practice, I hope to see not only the acknowledgment of power

inequalities, but also serious attempts to address these inequalities within our social reality. For, as Mahrouse (2014) asserts in regards to volunteers, the recognition that an act is a racist, colonial act does not always mean that *not* acting is better than acting. White, Northern social workers, and those who work within White, Northern social work systems, must recognize that their actions as providers of help, in our postcolonial world, put them in a “terribly troubled role” (Mahrouse, 2014, p. 149). Taken together with the understanding that colonialism has not ended, but merely transformed, the need to disrupt neocolonial, racist activities in social work and other helping relations is clear. The process of completing this research has supported me to make some strides in this regard: I recognize that regardless of my anti-racist, anti-colonial intent, my actions within transnational helping contexts are inherently racist and neocolonial.

My goal moving forward is to follow Ahmed’s (2000) lead and scrutinize North-South helping relationships not for what we want them to be, but for what they already are. For instance, as a White, Canadian social worker who works with Indigenous Peoples in postcolonial Canada, the findings of this study are all too relevant in my day-to-day work. My goal is to use the learnings I have taken from this study as a launching pad from which I may disrupt colonization and perhaps even contribute to decolonizing work in Canadian social work practice. I believe that whatever we call ourselves - social workers, humanitarian aid workers, or activists - we have a duty to disengage from and advocate against oppressive responses to social justice issues.

Moving Forward

This study was limited by its structure: I completed this study as a requirement for a one-year Master in Social Work degree. However, my limited focus allowed me to produce a

coherent piece of work within the short time frame. In particular, this study benefits from strong congruence between my literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, and analysis.

Future research would benefit from a theoretical framework that incorporates greater intersectionality. From the beginning, I considered including a feminist lens and employing the concept of governmentality in my analysis. As the study progressed, I also recognized that a focus on specifically economic aspects of our neocolonial world might have benefited the study, considering the amount of effort PUNs spent attempting to raise funds and garner donations. However, given the brief timeline and size of this study, I chose to remain focused in my postcolonial framework. In future studies, I could also adapt the framework to be more disruptive in-and-of itself. In particular, I imagine framing the study in literature which disrupts the White, Northern lens that is inherent in my own work. I imagine including the work of postcolonial thinkers who have had experiences as refugees.

Future studies may also look at different types of data. Critical discourse analysis may yield relevant, illuminating results based on data from other forms of text-based discourse, such as PUNs' social media accounts or online donation pages. Additionally, a larger sample size of PUN websites may also reveal different results. I also think pairing text-based and image-based analysis of PUN websites would further illuminate both colonial legacies and disruptive practices. In addition, future studies could turn away from texts-based, organizational discourse and instead examine the responses of individuals through interviews. Throughout this study, I found my own individual reactions to be useful to compare and contrast to the results of the study. Therefore, I believe that interviews with individuals who have worked for or with PUNs could further illuminate the creation, reproduction, and disruption of racialized, colonial representational practices by PUNs.

While this research study filled a gap in the literature, providing a critique of PUN organizations that showed both the reproduction and creation of neocolonial, racialized power imbalances, I must reiterate that it is a small, limited study. In the process of writing the study, I have considered other potential research questions. In particular, while this study exposed the creation and reproduction of colonial, racialized representations, it included limited examples of disruption. Therefore, I would appreciate further research that examines possibilities for disruption in North-South helping relationships.

Final Thoughts

Drawing on postcolonial theory, this study has shown some ways in which colonial, racist legacies are (re)produced through the four PUNs' representational practices. I began from the premise that even when a form of help is clearly necessary, the power imbalance between the helper and the helped should be problematized. I have argued that de-historicizing and de-racializing North-South helping relationships does not erase Northerners' power to categorize; it only shifts the categories from being explicitly racial and colonial to the realm of the ambiguous. Finally, I have used the findings to problematize my own representational practices.

Overall, this research has contributed to my understanding of the ethical tensions involved in international helping relationships. I hope it will be helpful to others who hope to disrupt the colonial legacies apparent from the positioning of being a privileged helper. I would like to end by saying that I offer this critique with kindness and the hope that those who read this will, as I have tried to do, self-reflect, learn, and change. The onus is on the White, Northern bodies to decolonize as individuals and organizations. As part of this process, I urge White, Northerner helpers to recognize that power imbalances will always exist in the current structure

of transnational helping relationships. For no matter how you attempt to decolonize you mind, it will make little difference until entire structures are problematized and dismantled.

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Glossary

Authorization: An appeal made to “the authority of tradition, custom, law, and persons in whom institutional authority of some kind is vested” to justify an argument or conclusion (Vaara & Tienari, 2008, p. 998).

Moral Valuation: An appeal to a specific type of authority; that of a “moral basis for legitimation”, such as an appeal to a specific value system or moral argument (Vaara & Tienari, 2008, p. 998).

Nomination: The ways social actors are “named and referred to” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, xiii).

Paratextuality: The order and format of the text (Genette, 1997).

Predication: The “traits, characteristics, qualities and features attributed to” social actors (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, xiii).