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After Asylum: Hermeneutic Composability in Former Refugee Narratives

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In this study I examine a corpus of former refugee narratives published by the nonprofit Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) on their website in 2011. In order to investigate the relationship between the constituent parts and the narrative as a whole, I use critical discourse analysis to examine the strategic use of person, quantified temporal phrases, broader thematic elements, and the constitution of "former refugee narrative" as a genre. I conclude that the RCOA dominates temporality and maintains authority over the narratives through specifically applied quantification yet captures the necessary subjective and emotional material of the refugee experience to achieve the authenticity the co-narratives need to be well-received by the public. Thus, by manipulating hermeneutic composability, the RCOA evidences an objective, authoritative portrayal yet captures a subjective experience worth telling, and by manipulating

intertextual gaps they appeal to the Australian nationalism implicit in the contemporary political climate.

Introduction

As nationalist, center- and far-right political movements gain prominence in Europe and the United States, restrictive approaches to immigration and border control have again moved to the forefront of both national and international discussions of asylum. Australia has not remained immune from the recent intensification of these discourses. In April 2017, for example, Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Immigration Minister Peter Dutton revealed two substantial changes to migration policy and border patrol in the country that included the abandonment of temporary work visa programs, the "tightening" of English language tests for immigrants, and the requirement of an English language and "Australian values" test for citizenship (Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2017a, 2017b; Massola, 2017a, 2017b). Prime Minister Turnbull himself stated that the changes would place "Australian values at the heart of citizenship processes and requirements" (Massola, 2017b).

The stances reflected in these changes, however, are far from novel in the Australian context. As Clyne (2005) details in his historical analysis of exclusionary language used by Australian politicians in reference to asylum seekers, a foundational platform of former Prime Minister John Howard's victorious 1996 election campaign and subsequent administrations (1996-2007) was an opposition to the oppressive "political correctness" that he believed ran counter to mainstream Australian values. Under this guise, members of the Howard government condemned the current asylum seekers as immoral and illegal "queue jumpers" with values fundamentally in conflict with core tenets of Australian national identity such as fairness and "the 'Aussie battlers' who patiently wait their turn to work honestly and hard while other less

deserving people get it for nothing" (Clyne, 2005, p. 184). In one controversial incident in October 2001 the Howard government wrongly claimed that some asylum seekers, en route to Australia by boat, threw their children overboard to blackmail the Australian government in order to stay in Australia (Clyne, 2005, p. 181). Though soon shown to be false, the "children overboard affair" allowed the Howard government to instill the moral dichotomy between Australians and asylum seekers echoed in current Prime Minister Turnbull's recent statements (Clyne, 2005).

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), it seems, has existed specifically to contest stances just like these since its founding in 1981. A "non-profit, non-government organization," the Refugee Council of Australia defines itself as "the national umbrella body for refugees and the organisations and individuals who support them" (RCOA, 2013). The RCOA seeks the "development of humane, lawful and constructive policies towards refugees and asylum seekers" (RCOA, 2014b) and centers its work in the areas of policy, support for refugees, support for its members, and community education and administration. Advocacy remains important to the RCOA, which aims to "represent its members and advocate on behalf of refugees and asylum seekers" (RCOA, 2014b). Most important for this study are the RCOA's goals of community education and awareness raising, as the RCOA cites misinformation and lack of awareness about refugee issues as key factors in the formation of negative opinions (RCOA, 2014b). Through the development of resources, including their website, they provide "up-to-date factual information on refugee and asylum issues" in order to assist the public "in responding to myths and misinformation" and "increase media sensitivity towards refugees and asylum seekers" (RCOA, 2014b).

For this reason, the RCOA published personal stories of refugees in Australia, in which

they "provide an insight into the refugee journey and highlight their achievements in Australia" (RCOA, 2014b). At first glance, these 11 stories, first published by the organization in April 2011 and now residing on the "Refugee stories" page under the "Get the facts" headline, appear to simply narrate the refugee experience for the broader Australian public, a previously stated key goal of the organization. These narratives prove much more complex, however, and a closer look reveals that the RCOA rigidly structures each: They simultaneously tell the narratives in both the first and third person, with sequential paragraphs nearly always alternating between indented, greyed-out direct quotes from the refugees typologically distinguished by extra-large quotation marks (italicized in forthcoming examples), and anonymous third-person narration in standard script (standard script in forthcoming examples).

In this study, I examine these "personal stories of former refugees who have found a new life in Australia" (RCOA, 2014b) that, as the following analysis will illustrate, specifically court these "Australian values" so emphasized in 20th and 21st century Australian politics. Written as co-narrations between the refugee and the organization, Bruner's (1991) conceptualization of *hermeneutic composability* surfaces in a very salient way: each narrative exists and has meaning as a whole, yet is composed of very explicit and distinct parts. In order to investigate the relationship between the constituent parts of the narratives and their relationship to the whole and the construction of meaning, I originally proposed several open-ended research questions: What linguistic and narrative differences exist between the refugee-authored portions and those written by the organization? How do these differences affect the understanding of the individual's narrative as a whole, and why are they employed? Do enough shared features exist across the series of narratives to constitute "former refugee narrative" as a genre? Using critical discourse analysis, then, I determine that hermeneutic composability occurs via temporality, chronological

events, and thematic elements in the co-narrations. As a result, the RCOA maintains authority over the narratives yet captures the necessary subjective and emotional material of the refugee experience to achieve the authenticity required for positive reception by the public. This ultimately establishes both *adequation* and *distinction* between the reader and the refugee, processes which, in the case of these narratives, simultaneously foreground "socially recognized sameness" yet emphasize salient difference, respectively (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 383-384). It is specifically this hermeneutic composability, then, that allows the organization to create a new genre of "former refugee narratives" distinct from other stories of migration and the refugee experience in order to serve its goals and appeal to the Australian nationalism implicit in the contemporary political climate and reflected in Prime Minister Turnbull's statement and policy changes.

Entextualization of Refugee Narratives and the Intertextual Gap

In order to discuss the narratives in this study, which are publicly exhibited as a written record of refugee experiences, it is important to first address the process of entextualization that has proved highly influential in the particular context of asylum proceedings. Bauman and Briggs (1990) characterize *entextualization* as the process of rendering oral discourse into a text that can be extracted from its interactional setting (p. 73). In this case the RCOA, very much like state agencies that grant or reject refugee asylum claims based on narrative testimony, extracts these narratives of undisclosed origin and renders them as resolute texts. All of the narratives in this study come from refugees who have already successfully navigated the asylum process and as

such, their narratives play no direct role in the outcome of asylum claims. However, the effects of the entextualization of the narratives in this study are in many ways comparable to those of narratives specifically used to determine this outcome, and as such it remains important to address this literature.

A foundational work in studies of language in the asylum process, Blommaert (2001) discusses the narrative inequality that results in asylum proceedings of Africans seeking refuge in Belgium. One of the first of many articles by scholars critiquing the use of linguistic analysis for the determination of origin of asylum seekers arriving in the global North without the necessary documents, Blommaert (2001) emphasizes the role that entextualization plays in the manipulation and distortion of the narratives elicited from asylum seekers to prove their national origin. Not limited to asylum interviews where origin is in question, however, entextualization also plays a key role in narrative elicitation throughout the entire asylum process, including tribunals and appeals (Vogl, 2013; Zagor, 2014; Smith-Khan, 2017). Above all, these narratives profoundly influence the futures of the asylum seekers, as state agencies ultimately use them as a basis to accept or reject claims of refugee status and thus the authenticity of the refugees' experiences as a whole.

Blommaert (2001) also argues that the de-contextualization of oral narratives and subsequent re-contextualization through transcription results in an institutionally-sanctioned text based on power asymmetries (p. 415). In these situations, Blommaert (2001) concludes, linguistic and communicative differences along with the context of talk are overlooked in favor of "preconceived criteria of textuality and narrative appropriateness" characterized by Belgian law and bureaucracy (p. 414-415). Jacquemet (2009) echoes this argument:

The bureaucrat brings to the entextualization process particular cultural assumptions of what the text should look like, what textual elements should be highlighted, and what statements are deemed not relevant enough to make the cut in the transfer from the verbal performance to the text. (p. 533)

The result is the entextualized experience of the refugee: a singular, written record of the "original" narrative from which the asylum seeker can only minimally deviate or be deemed disingenuous (Blommaert, 2001, p. 438), and moreover, a narrative in line with dominant linguistic and textual ideologies of what constitutes the authentic refugee experience (Jacquemet, 2009). State agencies then rely on these written records "as the basic and most lasting format of declaring 'truth'" while taking for granted socioculturally-specific ideologies of language, literacy, and communication in narrative consistency (Blommaert, 2001, p. 436).

Clearly, the institution occupies the privileged position in the entextualization process. Yet, as Blommaert (2001) concludes:

The asylum seeker is constructed as the responsible author for the whole intertextuality complex, despite the enormous differences in text-structure and text-modality, the genre and the code, the social space in which versions are being produced and used, and the power and authority attributed to different versions of the text. (p. 438)

In the specific context of Australia, Smith-Khan (2017) reaches a similar conclusion in her study of the credibility of refugee narratives in Australian asylum appeals. She illustrates that through various linguistic and discursive strategies, the institution positions the refugee as the sole author

of the final narrative in the tribunal despite the participation and influence of other actors such as interpreters, legal representatives, witnesses, experts, and decision-makers (Smith-Khan, 2017). The overall product of this entextualization process is a narrative contextualized away from the local, experiential, affective, emotional, and individualized positioning of the asylum seeker and towards generalizable categories and institutionally pre-established space-time frames (Blommaert, 2001, p. 441). As Jacquemet (2011) later describes, entextualization clearly proves one of the most powerful structuring instruments used by the nation state. By rendering talk into text, the nation state enters the refugee narrative into the institutional record that, as a result, produces a decontextualized account of the social world of the refugee in line with dominant ideologies of a singular, authentic refugee experience that also necessitate others to comply with these representations (Jacquemet, 2011, p. 481).

As a result, the production of a narrative from a linguistic asylum interview or credibility tribunal functions as, almost literally, a gatekeeping mechanism for the state (Corcoran, 2004). In the comments published along with Blommaert's (2009) noteworthy study of the process, Alexandra Jaffe notes that the linguistic asylum interview allows the state to determine when the connection between language, identity, and territory proves essential and when it proves separable, with the ultimate power to reinforce specific language ideologies including the homogeneity and territorialization of language (Blommaert, 2009, p. 429). "In a very concrete way," she concludes, "they are policing their own national boundaries by regulating access to residency and citizenship. In a more abstract sense, they are policing the notion of the nation. Acknowledging the indeterminate relationships among language, nation, territory '*elsewhere*' subtly undermines those connections '*here*'" (Blommaert, 2009, p. 430, emphasis in original).

Overall, the intense scrutiny of the cultural and linguistic knowledge of the refugees in the asylum interview only perpetuates the culture of mistrust and misinformation that surrounds them. As Smith-Khan (2017) proves, the state agencies' positioning of the refugees as the sole authors of the narratives places a disproportionate responsibility for communication outcomes on the refugees in subsequent asylum proceedings. This, which the institution incites despite the prominent roles of other actors in the co-construction of the narratives, critically undermines the credibility of the refugees and also contributes to perceptions of their disingenuousness (Smith-Khan, 2017). On this foundation, the state thus not only seeks to control the relationship of language, nation, and territory, but to align the refugees' inherently transnationalized experiences along institutional standards and nationalist ideals.

In the case of the RCOA narratives, a similar process of entextualization has occurred. No evidence of the origin of these narratives, whether oral or written in their first telling, exists on the RCOA's website. Yet, they are published as authentic records of the refugees' experiences. Through their presentation as such and manipulated structure, the RCOA has clearly exhibited a dominant role in the telling of these narratives. Regardless of the alternating first- and third-person narrative structure between the refugees and the organization and the other textual features that they use to indicate the refugees' voices, including direct quotations, the narratives are ultimately products of the organization used to advance the organization's goals. Moreover, as I will later discuss, although the RCOA seeks to change the same negative public perceptions of refugees that also dominate the asylum interview and tribunal processes, the RCOA ultimately serves the nationalist ideals of the current Australian political climate in the production of the former refugee narratives.

Furthermore, just as refugees in asylum proceedings face accusations of dishonesty if they deviate from their "original" narratives entextualized as "truth" (Blommaert, 2001, p. 436-438), the distance between the entextualized former refugee narratives examined in this study and other refugee narratives in general proves significant. Discussing the linkages between a text and its generic model, Briggs and Bauman (1992) describe an *intertextual gap* that unavoidably emerges. They state:

> On the one hand, texts framed in some genres attempt to achieve generic transparency by *minimizing* the distance between texts and genres, thus rendering the discourse maximally interpretable through the use of generic precedents… On the other hand, *maximizing* and highlighting these intertextual gaps underlies strategies for building authority through claims of individual creativity and innovation…, resistance to the hegemonic structures associated with established genres, and other motives for distancing oneself from textual precedents. (Briggs & Bauman, 1992, p. 149, emphasis in original)

Furthermore, Bruner (1991) and Hodges (2011) develop a definition of *genre* as a category of narrative characterized by similarities in form, style, and/or subject matter that "pattern discourse into culturally recognized types" which serves to "provide conventionalized expectations that guide the interpretation of particular narratives" (Hodges, 2011, p. 19). As I will prove throughout the study, several intertextual gaps emerge in the data that illustrate both the minimal and maximum distance between texts and genre that Briggs and Bauman (1992) discuss. First, the RCOA minimizes the intertextual gap between the former refugee narratives and "successful" refugee narratives as per asylum proceedings. Second, the RCOA maximizes the

intertextual gap between the former refugee narratives and the dominant discourses that negatively essentialize the refugee experience. Both of these strategies serve the organization's goals to prevent the formation of negative opinions of refugees, and as I will support throughout the study, I argue that the RCOA exploits both maximal and minimal intertextual gaps in order to create a distinct genre of former refugee narratives in line with the current political climate and discourses of Australian nationalism.

Hermeneutic Composability and Narrative Structure

In Bruner's (1991) formative essay "The Narrative Construction of Reality," he discusses the relationship between, and interdependence of, a text and its constituent parts. Describing the "hermeneutic circle" that materializes, he cites Taylor (1979): "In order to read a text we appeal to the reading of its individual parts; yet, we cannot only read individual parts of the text to determine meaning, as they only make sense in relation to others and thus the text as a whole" (p. 7-8). Bruner (1991) emphasizes this awareness when interpreting narrative:

> This is probably nowhere better illustrated than in narrative. The accounts of protagonists and events that constitute a narrative are selected and shaped in terms of a putative story or plot that then "contains" them. At the same time, the "whole" (the mentally represented putative story) is dependent for its formation on a supply of possible constituent parts. In this sense, as we have already noted, parts and wholes in a narrative rely on each other for their viability… The act of constructing a narrative, moreover, is

considerably more than "selecting" events either from real life, from memory, or from

fantasy and then placing them in an appropriate order. The events themselves need to be

constituted in the light of the overall narrative. (p. 8)

In Hodges' (2011) in-depth analysis of the "War on Terror" Narrative he synthesizes Bruner's

(1991) argument, concluding that "a narrative's constituent elements depend on an overarching

plot to organize them. The organization of a narrative around a central plot, therefore, works to

bring in diverse elements so that these elements, no matter how diverse, form a coherent whole"

(p. 42). Overall, Bruner (1991) and Hodges (2011) define *hermeneutic composability* as the

human capacity to comprehend a narrative as a story and process it as both individual parts and a

whole in order to find meaning.

At the time I extracted the corpus of narratives (April 2016), the "Refugee stories" page

of the RCOA's website listed the name of each refugee (each name serving as a hyperlink to

their respective story), followed by "former refugee from…" and their country of origin. As I

will detail later, the designation of each individual as a "former" refugee proves foundational in

the constitution of these narratives as a specific genre. In three instances, the profession of the

refugee is listed as well: "former editor of *The Age* and former refugee from Poland," "actor,

writer, director and former refugee from Vietnam," and "actor and former refugee from Poland"

(RCOA, 2014a). Overall, the refugees come from a variety of countries spanning four continents,

including Sudan (four), Poland (two), Iran (one), Vietnam (one), Burundi (one), Iraq (one), and

Zimbabwe (one), each having "found a new life in Australia" (RCOA, 2014a). The variety of

countries of origin also contributes to the establishment of a salient genre in the Australian

context.

Beyond the immediately evident first- and third-person interchange, other structural patterns surface. In this alternating sequence of paragraphs, the RCOA initiates the narrative in nine of the 11 narratives, while the refugees close all 11, a significant detail to which I will return. In the data set of 7365 words, the RCOA paragraphs average 41.42 words/paragraph, 57.71% of the total words in the data, while the refugee paragraphs average 38.59 words/paragraph, 42.29% of the total words. The fairly even distribution of words per paragraph and overall distribution in the narrative portray a rather evenly divided co-narration. The distribution of content, as I illustrate throughout the study, proves otherwise. Overall, this division between perspectives and intensions proves ripe for narrative analysis and the deconstruction of hermeneutic composability and intertextual gaps. Based on this unique aspect of the RCOA former refugee narratives, I will continue to draw conclusions about claims and contestation of many factors between both entities within the narratives and the constitution of genre overall.

One distinct aspect of the co-narrative structure of each narrative is temporality. Largely told in the past tense, each narrative arrives at the present and hypothesizes the future at certain points, as I discuss later. Although a complete analysis of tense and time deixis remains beyond the scope of this paper, significant disparities arise between the RCOA and the refugees in the use of what I call *quantified temporal phrases*. I include under this term all phrases that use a numeral to describe a temporal reference, such as "at the age of two," "in 2005," "of forty years," "first attempt," etc., as opposed to non-quantified temporal phrases such as "eventually," "when you are young," "much of his time," etc. In total, 101 quantified temporal phrases occur in the data set, with the refugees using 16 and the RCOA using 85. This includes 17 references to specific ages and 35 references to specific dates and years. Of these subcategories, the refugees

reference only three specific ages, compared to the RCOA's 14 references, and two specific dates and years compared to the RCOA's 33 references. In a 2013 study, Anthea Vogl breaks down one refugee narrative in an Australian asylum tribunal according to Ewick and Sibley's (1995) core elements of "successful" narratives which, reductively, consist of a selection of events and characters, temporal ordering, and the relation of these elements to an overarching structure or plot. She notes that a recurrent issue in determining the credibility of refugee narratives in asylum claims regards the specific points in time at which the refugee left her or his country of origin, arrived in the host country, and claimed asylum (Vogl, 2013, p. 76). She concludes that "any sense of a haphazardness or disorder to the sequence of events is often cited as evidence of the implausibility of the story" (Vogl, 2013, p. 76). Moreover, as many other scholars have indicated of "successful" refugee narratives, she states that these events must be precise "from the very beginning" and consistently referred to in retellings (Vogl, 2013). So, the evident division in the RCOA corpus indicates that the RCOA not only heavily dictates the chronological progression of events in each narrative from the start, but also suggests that they do so in order to situate the narratives in line with pre-established standards of credible, "authentic" refugee narratives – of those who have successfully emerged from asylum proceedings.

Published online as text without any accompanying evidence of interaction or elicitation, I can only assume that the RCOA edited the narratives heavily and that perhaps the RCOA contrived them similarly to the narratives elicited in traditional Labovian (1972) sociolinguistic interviews. Regardless of their origin, certain thematic structures emerge within the chronology. The narratives follow a linear pattern of events that always begins by invoking the *country of origin* of the refugee and the *precipitating event* of their migration, often introduced through

foreshadowing. After, an *escape* occurs and is followed by a *journey* and *struggle* that act as complicating actions in the narrative, always ending with the refugee's *arrival in Australia*. A *process of overcoming difference* ensues, the narrative arrives in the *present*, and the refugee looks toward the *future*.

Many themes also remain structurally important to the narrative. *Work, employment, and careers* play a prominent role in the data, both before and after migration, as well as the pursuit of *goals* in general. Getting an education and *attending the university* often prove one of these goals. Moreover, the data shows the refugee as a source of *unrealized potential* and *success*, depending on the chronological enactment of this theme. Finally, *giving back* remains an important theme, with familial sacrifice, community engagement, and helping current refugees appearing prominently in the data. In Table 1, I include one narrative diluted to these core chronological events and thematic elements to illustrate a prototype of the data set:

Table 1

Par. #	Narrative	Event
1	From her first day of school in Iran, Anisa Memari felt like an outsider. As members of the Baha'i faith, Anisa and her family faced daily discrimination.	country of origin, foreshadowing, struggle
6	Anisa was awarded fourth place in a state poetry competition, but was prevented from competing in the national competition due to her faith.	unrealized potential

9	In 2000, her family's situation took another tragic turn when her father was involved in a near-fatal accident that left him a paraplegic.	precipitating event
11	With their situation becoming unbearable, Anisa's family decided to flee Iran. Her mother and sisters escaped to Turkey by car, with Anisa and her father travelling by plane.	escape
13	For three more years, Anisa was forced to put her education on hold as her family underwent the lengthy process of applying for refugee status and seeking resettlement. At the end of 2002, after countless interviews and meetings with lawyers, Anisa's family arrived in Sydney...	journey, arrival in Australia
14	While her family was now safe from persecution, Anisa still had many challenges ahead of her. The task of learning a new language was particularly difficult for Anisa.	process of overcoming difference
16	Making up for lost time, Anisa undertook a combined degree in Advanced Science and Law at the University of Sydney…	attending the university
17	*Ultimately I would love to work for the UN.*	goal, work

20   She cherishes her new-found freedom in Australia and is looking   present,

forward to pursuing her goals in a country where her faith will   future

present no barrier to her success.

As this excerpt illustrates, the refugee in this narrative follows a chronological trajectory from

struggle in her home country to a successful present and hopeful future in Australia, an outcome

well earned through a process of hard work and overcoming adversity. However, when looking

more closely at the narrator of these core events, it becomes apparent that the refugee only

initiated one, the goal of working for the UN in Paragraph 17. That the refugee initiates only one

core narrative element in this excerpt is not an anomaly; throughout the data, the refugees

initiate, on average, only 1.4 core elements in their narratives as compared to the RCOA's

average initiation of seven per narrative. This rigid structuring aligns the narratives with another

of Ewick and Sibley's (1995) vital components of "successful" narratives described by Vogl

(2013): the relation of past events and characters with temporal ordering to construct an

overarching structure or plot. That the RCOA dominantly introduces key plot elements in each

narrative shows how much control the RCOA exhibits over not only the progression of the

narratives but also their thematic content, and evidences the alignment of these narratives with

"culturally specific stock stories" that have "particular 'moral meanings'" (Vogl, 2013, p. 78).

However, similar to how Vogl (2013) describes rejected asylum claims in the Australian

tribunals, this process can be, at best, dismissive of the refugee's own sense of what is important

in the narrative and, at worst, contradictory to it. The overarching chronological and thematic

structure exhibited in these narratives, both strictly controlled by the RCOA in this corpus, show

the minimization of intertextual gaps between the former refugee narratives of this study and prevailing discourses of refugees as evidenced by "successful" asylum interviews. The significance of this conclusion, however, emerges only in relation to the maximization of another intertextual gap, and as such I must first dissect each core element and the discursive features that contribute to the RCOA's control of the narratives.

Chronological Events

The connection between the refugee and territory, their country of origin, occurs in the first paragraph of eight of the 11 narratives, in the second paragraph of the remaining three, and is only once introduced by the refugee rather than the RCOA. Although the narrator explicitly names country of origin in each narrative, indicative of the world of nation-states in which the transnationalized refugee resides, the narrator also exemplifies the refugee's connection to territory in more subtle ways. In this world of nations rendered as the discrete spatial partitioning of territory, both Malkki (1992) and White (2004) note that terms such as "the country," "the land," and "the soil" are synonymous with "the nation" to the extent that "demonstrations of emotional ties to the soil act as evidence of loyalty to the nation" (Malkki, 1992, p. 27). The normalization of these links between people, territory, and state, is routinely exemplified via botanical and arboreal metaphors of "roots" and "rootedness" (Malkki, 1992). These metaphors prove so pervasive that, as a result, "rootedness" has become not only normalized, but conceived as a moral and spiritual need (Malkki, 1992, p. 30). This appeal to "roots" appears in one narrative, stated by the refugee:

(1)   *[My parents had] given up their roots and home and come to this strange place where*

        they were determined to make a life for their children.

In this example, the refugee's parents' act of leaving their native territory, to give up their roots, constitutes a sacrifice of spiritual need for the good of the children.

    More frequently in the RCOA narratives, however, is the slightly more abstract connection to territory described through "settling" and "resettlement," which occurs at least once in 10 of the 11 narratives for a total of 19 times, only one of those stated by the refugee. For example:

(2)   His unsettled childhood and lack of a permanent home had made Henri anxious to belong

        and achieve the acceptance of his peers.

(3)   Finally, after years of living in limbo, Santino's family was resettled in Australia.

(4)   After living in the camp for a decade, Yuol was ecstatic to learn that his family would be

        resettled in Australia.

(5)   *I think if we said that we had no problem settling into Australia it would be a lie. But I*

        think that in all refugees and migrants, the strength and determination to move on and

        restart their lives is stronger than the pain and hardships that they have been through.

In Examples 2-4, the RCOA describes an "unsettled" childhood as a cause of anxiety and "resettlement" as a necessary solution for the uncertainty of "living in limbo" and a source of ecstasy when finally achieved. However, the one instance of "settling" used by a refugee portrays it as a difficult process requiring "strength" and "determination" to overcome. That the RCOA incites this metaphorical human connection to territory in nearly every narrative, and 18

of the 19 total times in the data, shows how much import the resettlement process has for the organization.

The moral and spiritual implications attached to territory as Malkki (1992) describes have specific repercussions for refugees who have left their territory and "native" land. Bruner (1991) for instance describes the concept of *canonicity and breach*, which suggests that for a narrative to warrant telling, it "must be about how an implicit canonical script has been breached, violated, or deviated from" (p. 11). As the previous data shows, living a "settled" life with "roots" constitutes a shared cultural script and canonical life situation. The displacement inherent in the refugee experience, however, exhibits a breach of this canonicity, a conclusion both supported and perpetuated by entrenched metaphors of 'rootedness' in the narratives, that makes these narratives worth telling. Furthermore, this breach serves as the precipitating event in the narratives and is often foreshadowed or backshadowed. For example:

(6)   From her first day of school in Iran, Anisa Memari felt like an outsider.

(7)   *If I could wish for one thing in the world, I would wish that there had never been a war in Sudan.*

(8)   The civil war in Sudan compelled Aduc Barec to flee…

(9)   Santino was arrested twice by Sudanese authorities. Fearing for his life, he made the decision to flee Sudan.

(10)   *There's a civil war between the north and the south. We were part of the south and we became a target…*

(11)   When Germany invaded Poland in 1939, his parents, who were both Jewish, were forced to flee…

(12)   When the war ended with the victory of North Vietnam in 1975, his father was arrested

and imprisoned in a "re-education" camp for two years.

In Example 6, to immediately describe the refugee as an outsider forebodes difficult

circumstances in the future and foreshadows the future displacement. In the quote in Example 7

the refugee heartbreakingly asks for an unachievable reality to begin the narrative and thus

backshadows the precipitating event of becoming a refugee, subsequently described. In

Examples 8-12, each following event occurs because of, and flows from, this precipitating event,

including displacement, ensuing struggles and the physical journey, and eventual resettlement in

Australia. In nine narratives, the RCOA first introduces the precipitating event, while the refugee

only introduces it in two, arguably a method of controlling the initiation and direction of the

narratives. Interestingly, the examples above indicate a lack of agency on the part of the refugee.

In Examples 8, 9, and 11, the RCOA uses the verb "to flee," a verb that inherently deprives the

refugee of agency. In fact, the verb "to flee" is used nine times in the data set, each of these by

the RCOA and not once by the refugee.

The use of voice in the precipitating event also plays a role in the distribution of agency.

In five precipitating events, the passive voice is used while in the remaining six the active voice

is used. However, in the two instances in which the refugees introduce the precipitating event,

they use the active voice while the RCOA uses the passive voice five of the nine times they

introduce the event. I argue that dominance of RCOA-introduced precipitating events, their

preference for the verb "to flee" when describing the escape, and use of the passive voice as

compared to the active voice used by the refugees in these instances contributes to the overall

portrayal of the refugees as lacking in agency, victims of the tragic circumstances that lead to

displacement. This matches other large-scale critical discourse analyses of refugees in the press. As Baker and McEnery (2005) observed in their corpus-based analysis of tokens of "refugee(s)" and "asylum seeker(s)" in both British newspapers and texts from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) website, both corpora described the asylum process with language that obscured agency. The news corpus in particular portrayed refugees as massive, moving groups experiencing "tragic" suffering and "flooding" into other territories with no sense of their own agency (Baker & McEnery, 2005). Thus, I believe that the RCOA does this in order to elicit a sympathetic response from the reader and humanize the refugee in alignment with popular discourses. This argument is also supported by KhosraviNik (2009) who, in his own critical discourse analysis of the representation of refugees in the British press, identified that "sympathetic" and "positive" portrayals of refugees often relied heavily on topoi of victimization and humanization.

Moreover, most of these precipitating events draw upon previously established "big D" Discourses of war (Gee, 2005). In the data, the RCOA invokes "war" 11 times in comparison to the refugees' three. Simply citing a civil war, especially *the* civil war in Sudan (Examples 7, 8, and 10), the German invasion of Poland beginning WWII (Example 11), or the Vietnam War (Example 12), invokes entire Narratives and well-known Discourses of war whose tragedies bring both gravity and credibility to these precipitating events. Overall, the breach of the canonical living of a "settled" life, introduced by precipitating events invoking well-known Discourses of war, makes these narratives tellable: "settled" life is disrupted by war or undue incrimination, and the narrative is now significant enough to warrant the listener's attention. The RCOA's control over this process of narrative initiation, exhibited by dominating the introduction of precipitating events and persistent use of "(re)settlement" and "war," in contrast

to the refugees' lack of usage, shows the complete control that the RCOA intends to exert over the narrative; they confirm the tellability of the narratives, and structure their development from the start.

The RCOA exhibits their control, and the institutional control over refugees in general, in other ways throughout the narratives especially regarding the refugees' arrivals in Australia. For example, the UNHCR is mentioned seven times in the data, only once by the refugee. For example:

(13)   *It took a while for UNHCR to find us.*

(14)   They were eventually found by UNHCR and moved to a refugee camp in Kenya.

(15)   For three years, Matur worked as a doctor in a refugee clinic before UNHCR secured resettlement for his family…

These examples, in which the UNHCR "found" and "secured resettlement for" the refugees, match the findings of Baker and McEnery's (2005) corpus-based analysis of UNHCR website texts that characterize the refugees as vulnerable and in need of institutional intervention. In addition, though not every narrative in the RCOA corpus includes a mention of the UNHCR, the RCOA obfuscates any other methods of resettlement by using passive constructions or simply the verb "arrived," indicating a preference for institutional intervention in general and UNHCR intervention in particular. Relatedly, the issue of "security" occurs prominently throughout the narratives. Various forms of "security" occur nine times in the data, nearly evenly split between the refugees (four) and the RCOA (five). However, the refugees use nominal (three) and adjectival (one) forms while the RCOA exclusively uses the verb "to secure." For example:

(16)   *You don't know what's going to happen to your future and [my] kids' future… There*
         were a lot of insecurities.

(17)   It would be another five years before UNHCR secured resettlement for Aduc and her
         family.

(18)   *You worry that security will arrest you for no reason and when you ask why, they don't*
         know either. I was arrested because of a security problem.

(19)   After studying for two and a half years, Matur secured a position as a medical registrar in
         Western Sydney.

As Examples 16 and 18 illustrate, the lack of security plays a prominent and troublesome role in

the refugee experience, with the unknown futures described as "insecurities" and the "security"

service incriminating individuals without reason. In response to this, the RCOA verbalizes the

term in their responses, as shown in Examples 17 and 19. In Example 17, the UNHCR "secured

resettlement" for the refugee; in Example 19, which directly follows Example 15 in the narrative,

the securement of resettlement by the UNHCR directly parallels the refugee securing a job,

implying causality in this series of events.

        This portrayal of the UNHCR and its invocation of "security" and "securing" also stems

from the entrenched metaphors of "rootedness" and "settlement." Malkki (1992) describes that

rather than a sociopolitical issue, "rootedness" as a moral and spiritual need leads to

displacement emerging as a pathological condition and the refugee as requiring "specialized

correctives and therapeutic interventions" (p. 33). Citing the pathologization of refugees during

World War II, Malkki (1992) continues, concluding, "refugees' loss of bodily connection to their

national homelands came to be treated as a *loss of moral bearings*. Rootless, they were no longer

trustworthy as 'honest citizens'" (p. 32, emphasis in original). Due to their loss of both physical and moral bearings, the RCOA and the UNHCR recognize their obligation to intervene. When the refugees describe their lack of security, the RCOA wastes no time in verbalizing these forms and, in many instances, acting as the agent of the verb and thus exemplifying their role as provider of the security and moral bearings that the refugees so lack. Moreover, the rectification of the loss of bearings comes through the re-connection of the refugee with territory, a tenet of the nation-state ideal.

Finally, with settlement established the refugees in the narratives still must overcome difference in Australia, recognize their present, and look to the future. In addition, many of the narratives cite language learning as the challenging difference to overcome. For example:

(20)   The process of building a new life in Australia was both exciting and challenging for Matur. In particular, he faced significant difficulties in pursuing his career as a doctor.

(21)   The process of settling in was not, however, an entirely smooth one. While Henri was by now something of a professional at adaptation, the process of integrating into an entirely new culture and learning yet another language remained a significant challenge.

These examples, which illustrate the process of overcoming difference as "foreigners" in Australia, often lead up to the use of the present tense for the first time in the narrative as well as illustrate the refugees' reflections on their past and outlook for the future. For example:

(22)   Matur remains concerned about the members of his family left behind in Sudan. Since arriving in Australia, he has returned to Sudan twice to visit his family, and hopes that they will soon be able to join him in his new country.

(23)   He is currently working on a memoir which will focus on Australia in the 1950s and
       1960s. While best known for his achievements as a journalist, it has been the events in his
       personal life – his journey to Australia, his marriage and the birth of his two children –
       which Michael considers to be the most important in his life.

(24)   Yuol plans to continue his studies at Charles Sturt University and hopes to have the
       opportunity to study in Sudan so that he can visit his family. He is extremely grateful to
       the youth worker who helped him to build the confidence he needed to realise his dreams.

These examples, which occur in the final few paragraphs of their respective narratives, illustrate
how the refugees in the present still pursue their goals while reflecting on their migration to
Australia and what it has done for their life. As the narratives come to a close after these
chronological milestones, the refugees almost always close the narrative with a broad, emotional
statement about realizing their goals and their deep gratitude for Australia. For example:

(25)   *Australia is a good country – the same as my country before the war. If you want to do
       good things you can. The government can help you, give everything, good education for
       you and your children, but you must listen to the law, tell your children to respect
       everything, to respect people and you won't have any problems.*

(26)   *I am so happy that here in Australia I am able to have a dream and am able to work
       towards it.*

(27)   *In countries like Australia, you can achieve anything. That's why I really wanted to come
       here.*

As concluding statements by the refugees themselves, they act as powerful support for the RCOA's work and goals and generate pride in Australia as a nation, which I will further analyze in the discussion section.

Thematic Elements

One of the most powerful and pervasive thematic elements of the narratives is the importance of work, employment, and careers for the refugees. Forms of the terms "work," "employment," "career," and "position" occur 61 times throughout the data, with 49 of those used by the RCOA and only 12 by the refugees. These references include the occupation of the refugees and their parents, working hard to achieve goals, and having successful careers in Australia. For example:

(28)   Born in southern Sudan in 1965, Matur Gak worked hard from an early age to realise his dream of becoming a doctor.

(29)   *I fell into it only because when you are young and you don't know what you want to do, if there is a job going, you take it.*

(30)   Roderick particularly enjoys working with the fire crew, who have helped to make him feel at home in his new country.

(31)   The internship was the beginning of a successful and fulfilling 37-year career at *The Age*, where Michael worked as a feature writer, news writer and foreign correspondent in London and Washington.

Example 28 illustrates how the refugee understood the value of hard work even before coming to Australia, while Example 29 shows that the refugee will take any available job. On the other hand, Examples 30 and 31 demonstrate the success that refugees can achieve in Australia due to these values of work; Example 30 shows success through public service on the fire crew and subsequent adaptation to Australia, whereas Example 31 shows the extensive, fruitful careers that refugees in Australia have had. In narratives that describe such success as in Example 31, the careers of the refugees were originally listed next to their name on the RCOA's website as I described earlier: "former editor of *The Age* and former refugee from Poland," "actor, writer, director and former refugee from Vietnam," and "actor and former refugee from Poland" (RCOA, 2014a). This displays the success outright, before the reader has even arrived at the narrative. Overall, these examples and the dominant inclusion of values of work, employment, and careers by the RCOA as compared to the refugees show how thoroughly the organization embeds this theme in the narratives in order to align the refugees with the endearing "Aussie battler" image so espoused in contemporary Australian politics (Clyne, 2005).

Expressed at various times throughout the narratives, another important theme is the goal-orientation of the refugee. Related to the emphasis on work, the goals and passions of the refugees are often portrayed as in pursuit of successful careers and getting an education. For example:

(32)   *I wanted to be a doctor since I was a little kid. My mother encouraged me. Even though she was from a rural area, she wanted me to become a doctor.*

(33)   *I was a nurse in Sudan and I kept doing that when I went to the refugee camp at a clinic and I was giving medication away. So I continued here and now have Certificate III and want to do Certificate IV…*

(34)   *I was really, really happy at that time because it was my dream – to start a new life, for*

       my children to get a good education and for me, if I get the time, to get a good education.

 (35)   *We tried to leave Iran three times, but me and my dad kept getting questioned. The fourth*

       time I just told them I wanted to study and 'I can't do that here, so just let us go' and they

       let us leave.

These examples illustrate the refugees' focus on achieving their goals both before and after their

displacement, and this thematic element is the only one dominantly invoked by the refugees as

compared to the RCOA. In addition, not a single narrative lacks a portrayal of the refugee as

wishing to continue her or his studies, and many describe how the refugees eventually attended

Australian universities. KhosraviNik (2009) also found that positive accounts of refugees in the

British press frequently included references to professions, education, and lifestyles while

unsympathetic ones did not. Interestingly, this goal-orientation and its high prevalence of

initiation by the refugees contradicts the lack of agency the RCOA attributes the refugees as

previously described.

      Most prominently, however, the strategic manipulation of agentive portrayals by the

RCOA parallels the approach of gatekeeping institutions in asylum proceedings. Smith-Khan

(2017) notes that although the decision-makers and the institution designate the asylum-seekers

as the sole authors of the narratives and critically question their credibility, the asylum-seekers in

Australian tribunals can appeal the decision they receive. In fact, some asylum-seekers did so by

explicitly asserting the role that interpreters, the structure of the application and appeals process,

and decision-makers play in the development of the narrative, yet to no avail in the appeal

(Smith-Khan, 2017, p. 530). As a result, Smith-Khan (2017) concludes that:

First, that while asylum-seekers may face power asymmetries, they are not completely without agency in terms of challenging institutional processes. Second, however – and very importantly, when these challenges conflict with core institutional ideologies, it is – perhaps unsurprisingly – improbable that the decision-makers will accept their arguments. (p. 530-531)

Again, although the RCOA narratives in this study play no role in asylum proceedings, the RCOA authoritatively positions itself similar to the state agencies that conduct these proceedings: as designators of refugee agency in accordance with institutional ideologies. As such, they allow refugee agency, through the refugees' invocation of goal orientation, when it aligns with institutional ideologies and remove it, through dominant invocation of the verb "to flee," the passive voice, and topoi of victimization in contrast to the refugees, when it does not. Moreover, the chronological significance of this contrast in the designation of agency portrays resettlement in Australia and alignment with Australian values as critical components of the refugees' claims of agency, which I address further in the discussion section.

Related to the previous thematic elements mentioned, the unrealized potential of the refugees is portrayed along with their career and educational successes. In addition to pursuing their own goals and seeking their own success, however, the refugees give back to the community and other refugees. For example:

(36)   Michael won his first Walkley Award in 1982 for a feature article on public housing. He spent a month living in a commission house to research the story, motivated by the desire to assist refugees living in public flats.

(37)   In 1995, with the support of Footscray Community Arts Centre he founded Australian
       Vietnamese Youth Media (AVYM), a non-profit organisation which aims to provide
       opportunities for young Australians from Vietnamese backgrounds to meet, share ideas
       and express themselves through the performing arts.

(38)   Since his arrival, Jean has spent many hours assisting other members of the Burundian
       community to settle successfully in Australia.

This thematic element, also dominantly introduced by the RCOA, portrays the refugees as anything but selfish: the refugees have assisted other refugees, started organizations, and won awards for doing so. As a whole, the thematic elements incorporated throughout the narratives attest to the value systems of the refugees. According to the narratives, the refugees work hard and wish to have successful careers in Australia just like the "Aussie battler," further their education by attending Australian universities, and give back to the Australian communities in which they have settled.

Discussion and Conclusion

The previously described data lead to some interesting conclusions. I interpret the division of first- and third-person perspectives as the organization's effort to portray each as a co-narration between the organization and the individual. In his study of expressive lying and the tall tale, Bauman (1996) notes the difference between utilizing the first person over the third in narration:

The use of the first person brings the tall tale closer to personal narrative; it allows the story to masquerade for a while as "true" personal narrative… What appears to be going on is an account of actual events; what is really going on is a lie masquerading as such an account – a double lie. The man who tells such a tale in the third person is a liar; the man who tells it in the first person is a tricky liar, a con man. (p. 169)

In the case of asylum proceedings, however, Smith-Khan (2017) argues that the use of third-person narration in tribunal decisions not only backgrounds the decision-maker and other contributors' subjectivities but frames the decisions as impartial, authoritative, and institutionally endorsed (Smith-Khan, 2017, p. 523). Though I do not consider these narratives published by the RCOA as intentionally deceptive like the tall tales Bauman (1996) describes, the distinction between use of the first and third person in the RCOA narratives remains noteworthy. If the RCOA were to narrate in the third person only, from their institutional perspective, they risk two potential interpretations of these narratives by the audience: as impartial, authoritative, and institutionally endorsed depictions of refugee experiences, or alternatively, as less accurate, less authentic, or potentially disingenuous portrayals masquerading as authentic accounts. So, by incorporating the first-person narratives, accentuated by italics and quotation marks from their own text, they bring the stories closer to 'true' personal narratives without relinquishing their control over the overall portrayals.

The use of quantified temporal phrases also serves a specific purpose for the RCOA. By giving specific dates, ages, and lengths of time, and invoking widespread Discourses of war, they connect the temporal context of the narratives with the social contexts of the refugees. The numbers have a conjuring effect; they bring into being the refugee experiences by placing them

at specific moments, and ground the narratives in the world of the reader (Harvey & Knox, 2015). Especially in the invocation of specific dates and years in their quantification of the temporality of the narratives, the RCOA has the end in mind; the reader interprets these dates and years in relation to the present. By leaving the non-quantified temporality, or narrative elements with no temporal grounding, to the refugees, the RCOA achieves two things. First, quantification gives a certain authority and expertise to the user and often separates the objective from the subjective (Harvey & Knox, 2015). When the RCOA dominates the use of quantified temporal phrases, then, they not only claim authority over the narratives and their relation to the life of the reader, but also position the refugees' experiences according to the readers' normative understandings of narrative progression while leaving the subjective and hypothetical elements to the refugees.

As I illustrated, however, exhibiting narrative authority through quantified temporality only partially contributes to the RCOA's objectives in the narratives. By including the first-person, non-quantified temporal elements of the refugee, the RCOA thus captures the necessary subjective and emotional material to achieve the authenticity the narratives need to be both positively received and taken seriously by the public. The fact that goals, hypothetical and subjective, remain the only thematic element that the refugees introduce more often than the RCOA supports this. Even more so, the fact that the most agentive portrayal of the refugees in the narratives occurs via their goal-orientation shows the reader that with their agency they only seek the betterment of themselves and their communities, thanks to their newly acquired connection to Australian territory and adoption of Australian values. Moreover, the distinct order of the paragraphs in each narrative serves a purpose in conjunction with the RCOA's domination of temporality. With the RCOA beginning almost every narrative and the refugee finishing each

narrative, they establish control via quantified temporal phrases and leave the reader with a subjective statement by the refugee. The deeply grateful reflections of Australia that occur prominently in this final paragraph support this conclusion, and thus the RCOA leaves the reader with an appeal to emotional authenticity and Australian pride as one final attempt to gain their approval through a depiction of Australian nationalism.

Returning to the discussion of hermeneutic composability described by Bruner (1991) and Hodges (2011), the narratives published by the Refugee Council of Australia illustrate the complex interrelationship of a narrative and its constituent parts. The deliberate variation of quantified, third-person objectivity of the RCOA and the non-quantified, first-person subjectivity of the refugees exemplify the *tactics of intersubjectivity* described by Bucholtz and Hall (2004). If the audience were to read either the RCOA or refugee narrative portions alone, they would certainly draw different conclusions. The RCOA is an organization dedicated to supporting the successful integration and reception of refugees into Australian society by increasing media sensitivity towards them, and thus I believe they include their third-person perspective in the overall narratives to create both *adequation* and *distinction* between the readers and the refugees (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). As the data has illustrated, the RCOA responded to the refugees' "insecurities" by "securing" them settlement, emphasized hard work, employment, and success more than the refugees themselves, and highlighted the value of refugees to Australian communities. This strategic move manipulates hermeneutic composability to show the readers that the refugees are just like them, even while the refugees say little to that effect themselves, and precisely illustrates *adequation*, defined by Bucholtz and Hall (2004) as a process in which "potentially salient differences are set aside in favor of perceived or asserted similarities that are taken to be more situationally relevant" (p. 383).

Conversely, the RCOA cannot downplay the differences between the readers and the refugees so much that the narratives show no breach of canonicity, that is, the breach (through displacement) of the canonical life situation of a "settled" life with "roots" that makes them tellable in the first place. Thus, via *distinction*, the converse of adequation defined by Bucholtz and Hall (2004) as "the mechanism whereby salient difference is produced," (p. 384) the RCOA and the refugees still emphasize the trauma, tragedy, and emotional subjectivity of the refugees to pique the readers' interest and earn their sympathy. This precise, calculated balance of adequation versus distinction, of the commonalities between the readesr and the refugees versus the tellability of the refugee experiences, allows the RCOA to pursue its goals as an organization. More specifically in the context of these narratives, the RCOA can only achieve this through the manipulation of hermeneutic composability.

Finally, thinking back to genre, each of these narratives certainly exhibited the similarities in form, style, and subject matter that Ewick and Sibley (1995) determine as components of "successful" narratives and that Bruner (1991) and Hodges (2011) attribute to the development of a genre. These characteristics alone do not necessarily create a new genre of "former refugee narratives," however; to achieve this, the RCOA must strategically manipulate several intertextual gaps. First, by exhibiting a linear chronological progression the RCOA aligns the narratives with those from successful asylum claims, effectively minimizing the intertextual gap between the narratives in this study and other refugee narratives deemed "credible" by established discourses of refugees, as evidenced by the many studies of narrative in the asylum process previously described, most notably Vogl (2013), Zagor (2014), and Smith-Khan (2017) in the Australian context. Second, the RCOA also maximizes the intertextual gap between the former refugee narratives and the hegemonic discourses in politics and the press that negatively

essentialize the refugees as "boat people" and "queue jumpers." As such, they portray the former refugees as "Aussie battlers" determined to receive an education and contribute to their communities all thanks to the adoption of Australian values. Thus, by manipulating hermeneutic composability the RCOA evidences objective, authoritative portrayals yet captures subjective experiences worth telling, and by manipulating intertextual gaps they appeal to the Australian nationalism implicit in the contemporary political climate. Both of these strategies serve the organization's goals to respond to myths and misinformation and prevent the formation of negative opinions of refugees. After all, as the RCOA website prominently declares, these stories are *former* refugee narratives.

With only the examination of the specific corpus of narratives in this study, however, it remains difficult to determine if the "former refugee narrative" genre exists beyond this small set of narratives. Interestingly, in their large-scale corpus-based analysis of both British newspapers and texts from the UNHCR website, Baker and McEnery (2005) noted more left-hand collocates of "former" with tokens of "refugee(s)" in the latter corpus than in the former (p. 210). In addition to Baker and McEnery's (2005) general conclusion that the identity of 'refugee' is temporary, this may suggest that "former refugee narrative" is emerging as an institutionally-driven genre as opposed to a popular one. As a result, further studies that examine additional corpora of (former) refugee narratives produced by similar organizations would test these conclusions regarding genre; to my knowledge, no such studies exist. If similar sets of narratives can be identified, larger-scale analyses should be conducted with respect to this genre, similar to the many corpus-based critical discourse analyses of refugees in the British press carried out by Paul Baker and colleagues (Baker & McEnery, 2005; Baker et al., 2008; Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008; KhosraviNik, 2009). In addition, further comparisons of refugee narratives in the asylum

process with other genres of refugee narratives would provide a greater understanding of the overall role that entextualization and strategic manipulation of intertextual gaps and hermeneutic composability play in strengthening nationalism and other hegemonic forces that affect the lives of refugees.

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