Writing the Other into Humanitarianism:
A conversation between 'South-South' and 'faith-based' humanitarianisms

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Introduction

Since the 2000s, numerous academics have examined the evolution and nature of humanitarianism, typically tracing its origins to the Enlightenment period, to the role of Christian actors throughout Europe's imperial projects (Stamatov 2013: 1-2) and more specifically to the activities and goals of Northern religious groups in the early-nineteenth century (Barnett and Weiss 2011; Wilson and Brown 2011; Barnett and Stein 2012). Many such studies note that "Although the idea of saving lives and relieving suffering is hardly a Western or Christian creation, modern humanitarianism's origins are located in Western history and Christian thought" (Barnett and Weiss 2008: 7). While repeatedly asserting modern humanitarianism's Northern and Christian origins, authors such as Barnett have at times admitted that despite entitling his book *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Barnett 2011: 15), the reader should note that "Western bias is ahead. This is not a book on the history of all forms of humanitarianism around the world". Rather than remedying this bias by integrating a nuanced analysis of 'Other' forms of humanitarianism, including a critique of mechanisms through which the history of non-Northern, and indeed non-Christian, humanitarianism(s) has been 'erased' from or 'footnoted' in the hegemonic 'archive of knowledge' (following Derrida and Foucault respectively), the Northern academy as a whole has continued to reproduce this primary focus on Northern-led humanitarianism.

Paradoxically, although faith principles have long inspired individual and communal responses to the needs and rights of members of their own and other communities, since the late nineteenth century the humanitarian regime has increasingly been articulated in secular terms (Ager and Ager 2011). In particular, the birth of the professionalized aid industry in the post-World War Two era witnessed the entrenchment of three key assumptions by Northern social scientists, policy-makers and practitioners alike: first, that societies would become increasingly secular as socio-economic development took place; second, that secular approaches would invariably offer the strongest means to secure peace and stability, democratic political structures, and good governance; and third, that religious identity and structures would continue to be foundational causes for oppression, conflict and persecution (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2014a).

In spite of a widespread discrediting of secularization theories in the 1990s and 2000s and the recognition that we live in a 'post-secular' age in which religious belief and practice are becoming *more,* rather than *less*, important for individuals and communities around the world,

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the privileging of the ostensibly 'secular' principles of Western humanitarianism in both policy and academia has nonetheless prevailed (Ager and Ager 2011). Concurrently, contemporary faith-based humanitarianism has often been constituted as an anomaly and/or potential threat, with the motivations and aims of such actors viewed with suspicion, and their activities often denominated as 'political' and 'ideological' rather than motivated by 'humanitarian' principles (Alterman and Hippel 2007; Howell and Lind 2008; Pantuliano et al 2011). In particular, Islamic faith-based humanitarianism has been subjected to extensive academic, policy and media scrutiny post-9/11, with state and civil society responses inspired by Islam frequently analysed via securitization frameworks (Aziz 2011; Guinane 2006; Charity and Security Network 2011).[i] Such work has often either applied, or critiqued, the securitization of Islam in these contexts, thereby reproducing *securitization* as the primary referent in their analyses.

By exploring faith-based humanitarianism through the lens of emerging debates surrounding South-South humanitarianism (Pacitto and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2013), we purposefully 'footnote' the securitization referent in order to affirm the value of what we refer to as 'writing the "Other" into humanitarian discourse', and to redress the biases inherent to much Humanitarian Studies theory. Although Southern-led development initiatives have enjoyed increasing attention by academics in recent years (e.g. Bobiash 1992; Woods 2008; Six 2009; Mawdsley 2012), and most now recognize the existence of a multitude of humanitarianisms, including "humanitarianisms of Europe, of Africa, of the global, and of the local" (Kennedy 2004: xv), humanitarian action not borne of the Northern-dominated and highly institutionalized international humanitarian regime has remained largely neglected in academia.

Drawing on examples of Southern[ii] faith-based actors' responses to recent and ongoing processes of displacement, including case-studies of Myanmar and Syria, we address these gaps in knowledge and re-engage with popular debates around religion/secularism, politics and humanitarianism. We argue in line with constructivist theory that ideology and politics pervade not just humanitarian practice, but the 'humanitarian' epithet itself, and it is this politics that has for so long footnoted the Other in the study of humanitarianism. Through the case-studies, we demonstrate the significance of current faith-based responses to complex emergencies, arguing that ignoring or a priori demonizing these as a result of the abovementioned bias undermines the ability for policy makers or academics to develop rigorous understandings of, and appropriate responses to, displacement.

Further, we engage with the notions of solidarity that resonate throughout the case studies presented, including those expressed between co-religionists and members of different faiths (or none), to argue to incorporate these multiple and overlapping solidarities in Humanitarian Studies. This incorporation does not reject the existence or legitimacy of notions of global citizenship that inform some humanitarian action. However, by considering how global society is only one of a myriad of potential spheres of solidarity held by individuals and communities, it rejects the contention that this is the *only* legitimate form of humanitarianism, advocating for more academic inquiry into the humanitarianisms of the global South, including South-South faith-based humanitarianisms.

Humanitarianism defined

For many, the International Committee of the Red Cross's (ICRC) definition of humanitarianism is *the* definitive standard (Barnett and Weiss 2011: 9). Ferris, for example, argues that the seven organizing principles established by the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement have become fundamental to the humanitarian movement. She asserts that four of these principles have become hallmarks of humanitarian action "throughout the international community": humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence (Ferris 2011: 11).

The perspective of humanitarianism borne out of these principles is "that politics is a moral pollutant" (Barnett and Weiss 2008: 4). The strict dichotomy between morality and politics is robustly posited by the ICRC and other international organizations, and is considered to be central to these organizations' credibility, and thus to their ability to function on the ground in often highly politicized conflict environments. Many observers, however, critique the assertion that humanitarian agencies can be apolitical (Barnett and Weiss 2008: 4), and suggest that the idea of being able to situate oneself outside of politics is an exercise in self-deception (Rieff 2002: 75).

Egeland describes humanitarianism as "a universal imperative and shared intercultural system of principles" before conceding that the regime has become so deeply influenced by the North in terms of funding, staffing, structure, and political profile that it is under threat of enduring opposition in many Southern contexts (Egeland 2011: xviii). Humanitarian agencies, in these settings, are often viewed as agents of Northern domination, or as proponents of Christian evangelicalism or post-Christian godlessness (Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan 2003: 4; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager 2013; Stamatov 2013). "The Red Cross's principle of 'universality' is sometimes impugned as a veil for neo-colonial power and a prolongation of religious missionary activity in a new form" (Bitter 1994: 100-1, in Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan 2003: 58). Indeed the idea of Northern-dominated humanitarianism as a contemporary manifestation of colonial (including missionary-cum-colonial) imperatives is one of the main critiques put to the international humanitarian regime (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2014a). As noted by Chimni (2000: 3): "'humanitarianism' is *the* ideology of hegemonic states in the era of globalisation."

Despite widely differing in their positions, both a strict adherence to the Northern institutional model and the countervailing post-colonial critique of the Northern system ultimately have the same effect of obscuring other emerging forms of humanitarianism. Only recently, academics and policy makers in the humanitarian field have paid attention to the rise of 'new' or 'non-traditional' humanitarian actors with roots in the global South (Davey 2012a: 1).[iii] As a whole, this attention has primarily focused on the financial contributions of *high*-GDP Southern donor *states* which are not members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), while major lacunae remain regarding the plurality of humanitarian responses developed by low- and medium-GDP states, including but not restricted to financial transfers and material donations. Furthermore, although commentators have recognised the increasing contribution of NGOs and civil society movements from the global South (Egeland 2011: xxi), humanitarian responses initiated by these civil society networks and displaced populations themselves have largely remained unexplored (Horst and Lubkemann, this volume), including those responses inspired by principles of faith. South-South responses to forced displacement in studies of humanitarian action therefore provide an excellent opportunity to engage with and effectively substantiate

Barnett's contention that: "We live in a world of humanitarianisms, not humanitarianism" (2011: 10).

Humanitarianism deconstructed: a critical approach to the 'humanitarian' label

Although acknowledgement of the significant role of 'new' donors and NGOs in the humanitarian enterprise is widespread, the fear endures that "'non-Western' groups may not subscribe to the principles underpinning the formal system, and may have a misguided understanding of what it is to be 'humanitarian'" (Davey 2012a: 2; Ferris 2011; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2015). Within this view, there is no attempt to consider the historical basis upon which the humanitarian label is founded or the extent to which formalized understandings of what constitutes 'humanitarian' responses are embedded within Northern practices and systems of knowledge. Slim's analysis of the oligopoly held by NGO humanitarians on the concept of humanitarian action as "something they want everyone to value and enjoy but which only they are allowed to do" (Slim 2003, in Barnett and Weiss 2011: 14), and Haysom's critique of the predominance of what she refers to as the Northern "relief elite" (cited in Pacitto 2012), are pertinent in this regard.

A prime opportunity thus emerges to problematize Northern appropriations of the humanitarian label, and to enrich and expand popular understandings of the concept. As Rieff argues, "…every concept of humanitarianism, like every concept of what it means to be fully human, has a history and, more important, a historical context that we ignore at our peril" (2002: 67). In overlooking the values and experiences of actors and communities whose conception of 'humanitarian' action falls outside of the dominant Western framework (Davey 2012a: 4), we inevitably fail to grasp the complexity and contested nature of the term, and how it is evolving over time and space. This argument does not presuppose that all Southern humanitarianisms exist in conflict with the principles and rhetoric of the Northern institutional system. It does, however, posit that the reality, or in some instances the perception, that the motivations underpinning Southern initiatives may not necessarily adhere to the Northern model, is part of what has historically obscured them from view in Humanitarian Studies.

On the one hand, the analytical integrity of an expanded use of the 'humanitarian' label may itself be critiqued; the term was birthed in the European Enlightenment period and is deeply embedded within the philosophical developments of this period, namely with the cosmopolitan principle of a shared 'humanity' irrespective of social, religious and cultural characteristics. As such, trying to incorporate pluralist expressions of compassion into this term may remain open to contention. Indeed, humanitarian action is "quintessentially cosmopolitan" as it represents an effort to relieve the suffering of strangers (Calhoun 2008: 73). However, multi-lingual analyses tracing the origins and evolving usages of equivalent constructs used in languages such as Arabic and Chinese demonstrate the heterogeneous historical and etymological roots of the term 'humanitarianism' around the world, thereby critiquing the assumption that 'the term' humanitarian originates from the Enlightenment period (e.g., Davies 2012a and 2012b). A multi-lingual, cross-cultural approach therefore highlights that although 'the term' may have become part of the 'archive of knowledge' produced and reproduced in a particular hegemonic region and an interconnected set of European languages, alternative labels and concepts have existed

and evolved across time and space. Rather than reproducing the assumption that 'humanitarianism' as a term originated in the Enlightenment, it becomes necessary to trace how and why this Northern appropriation of the term 'humanitarianism' has come to be taken for granted and institutionalised in contemporary systems of knowledge and practice.[iv]

In addition, the dominant theory on the concept of cosmopolitanism itself, most commonly associated with the Stoics, Pauline Christianity and Enlightenment thinkers like Immanuel Kant (Vaughan-Williams 2007: 107), remains embedded within an explicitly Northern religious and philosophical lineage. In an earlier publication, Calhoun (2002: 871) offers a critique of the way in which the political theory of cosmopolitanism is "left lacking a strong account of solidarity" which he attributes to the liberal opposition to communitarianism. He concedes that this conception of cosmopolitanism is deeply embedded within a Northern view of the world (ibid: 873) and advocates rather a cosmopolitan conception of citizenship as multiple and layered, encompassing an array of complex connections. Whilst this argument in no way requires an acceptance of illiberal nationalisms or religious 'fundamentalisms', it finds merit in the idea that both of these forms of community, and indeed many others, are not just foundations upon which xenophobia and persecution are bred, but can also be sources of solidarity and care for strangers (Calhoun 2002: 893). This idea is significant when considering responses to displacement emanating from sources that do not necessarily share the Northern liberal tradition, and thus may not conform to the 'humanitarian' principles based upon this tradition. We will return to this point, with reference to faith-based humanitarianism, below.

Critical scholarship from the global South around liberalism and human rights also aids us in advocating for an alternative reading of cosmopolitanism that is sensitive to the different levels at which people experience community. Parekh offers an important critique of Northern assumptions of the universality of liberal individualism, asserting that liberalism "abstracts the person from all his or her 'contingent' and 'external' relations" (1992: 162), whilst simultaneously accepting that certain human rights enjoy a broad cross-cultural consensus. In turn, Oman asserts that "it is…evidence of an ideological predisposition that inclines those influenced by this tradition to 'negatively hallucinate' the omnipresent role of human community in our lives", a predisposition that remains at odds with the self-understandings of many prevailing traditions of cultures across the global South (1996: 527), and, indeed, non-Christian religions. Post-development theorists Esteva and Prakash (1997) engage with Rene Dubos' famous slogan, "think globally, act locally" to argue that the slogan rejects the illusion of partaking in global action and emphasizes the importance of local action. They simultaneously advocate for a transformation of Dubos' slogan, and the substitution of 'global thinking' with 'local thinking'. In challenging the notion of the universality of human rights, a genre closely interlinked with humanitarianism, they highlight that many ordinary people and radical thinkers reject this global vision of rights as an imposition of the specific interests and vision of the West (ibid: 285). This imposition of an individualistic system of rights, according to Esteva and Prakash, echoing Parekh's argument, threatens to "dissolv[e] the very foundations of cultures which are organized around the notions of communal obligations, commitment and service" (ibid: 282).

Writing the 'Other' into humanitarian discourse

Recognizing the insights emerging from diverse systems of knowledge across both the global North and global South, therefore prompts us to engage with the multiple and overlapping ways in which individuals experience community and communal obligation. We argue that to engage with South-South humanitarian responses in all their diversity is to attempt to write the 'Other' into the history of humanitarianism, to critique the processes through which Other actors and Other modes of action have been footnoted, and to move beyond the assumption (reproduced, for instance, by Agier, 2010: 29) that the only conceivable form of humanitarian action is that which serves the neo-imperial politics of the ""empire"" as part of a global network of control and domination of the South. This has the result of recognizing Southern actors' agency and capacity for agency and thus has the potential to challenge and enrich critical interpretations of humanitarian action, which, despite their critical nature, remain focused on the Northern system. This is not to ignore the importance of global processes in shaping the local, but to assert that a more comprehensive engagement with the 'local', including local faith communities, is essential in order to begin to address the Northern biases inherent to academic theorizations of humanitarianism.

In line with the Constructivist approach in this volume, as well as advocating for increased focus on local efforts, we must seek to understand the diverse relationships which exist between Southern actors and the broader organizational environment in which they are situated. Indeed, South-South humanitarian initiatives are often situated within a highly complex web of humanitarian action, and many humanitarian actors originating from the global South have strong links with the formalized institutional regime (Davey 2012a: 1). Reports identify some 2,800 national NGOs working in collaboration with one or more of the institutions that make up the formal international humanitarian system through partnership agreements (ALNAP 2012, in Davey 2012a: 1). This arguably poses methodological and analytical challenges when examining local initiatives without an understanding of how global processes affect local responses. The interconnection of such organizations further problematizes the idea of 'South-South' assistance and highlights the often blurred lines between what constitutes 'Southern' and 'Northern' assistance. One such example of this relates to networks of faith-based organizations (FBOs), which as Ferris asserts, "are unique players in the international humanitarian community in that they are rooted in their local communities and yet have global reach" (Ferris 2005: 325). These interconnections must be considered when assessing the extent to which South-South humanitarian initiatives challenge, or complement, Northern-led humanitarianism. In response to the theoretical arguments outlined above, the remainder of the chapter explores specific faith-based initiatives as modes of South-South humanitarian responses to forced displacement.

Defining Southern (and/or 'local') faith-based humanitarian actors
Southern NGO and civil society efforts have been prominent in the promotion of humanitarian protection for displaced populations, and have included both secular and faith-based initiatives (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager 2013). The emphasis that such institutions and networks place on providing material assistance *and* spiritual support as part of a holistic service to refugee communities gives pertinence to arguments that local faith communities (LFCs) and faith-based organizations can play an important role as sources of social and spiritual capital for displaced groups (ibid). Although many actors remain unwilling to use the 'humanitarian' label to describe

faith-based initiatives, it is increasingly recognized that LFCs and FBOs are important in this respect (Stawski 2012). Further, faith communities are a significant presence at the front line of many humanitarian situations, and faith-based institutions and organizations, because of their rootedness within local landscapes, often have privileged access to even the most marginalized communities. Unlike more temporary and transient non-local assistance, LFCs and FBOs are also often fixed presences that have intimate connections with the communities they serve, and thus hold the capacity to develop medium- and long-term programmes useful for the development and implementation of durable solutions (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager 2013; Pacitto 2012). Indeed, the potential for communities of faith and FBOs to support displaced persons is increasingly being recognized; for instance, the 2012 United Nations High Commissioner's Dialogue examined the role of faith in protecting forced migrants, and in 2013 UNHCR launched a "Welcoming the Stranger" initiative (UNHCR 2014).[v]

Stawski (2012) concedes that there are contexts in which the 'truth claims' of religions are presented in a discriminatory manner towards vulnerable groups and 'other' faith communities, and the potential negative impact of this should not be taken lightly. The fear of proselytization and the possible relationship between religion and faith on the one hand, and power and control on the other, remain significant issues that must be addressed in engaging with faith-based and faith-inspired organizations, be they (as in the case-studies explored below) regional and international organizations such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, local community groups like those found in Amman, or evangelical humanitarian relief providers like Karen refugees on the Thai-Myanmar border.[vi] It is for this reason that 'alternative' humanitarian perspectives should not be unequivocally idealized. Rather, they must themselves be critically assessed and the power dynamics inherent within them must be examined.

Faith-Based Humanitarianisms: Regional and international mechanisms
The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), an inter-governmental organization with 57 member states across four continents, has a specialized institution, the Islamic Committee for the International Crescent, which was established in 1977 and is mandated to "[help] alleviate the sufferings causes by natural disaster and war" in particular through the provision of medical assistance. Since 2008, the OIC has had its own humanitarian affairs department, which both implements humanitarian aid on behalf of the OIC in different countries and engages in policy making and dialogue facilitation, for instance among humanitarian NGOs in OIC member states (Binder et al. 2010).

At the end of 2011, the OIC contributed to the humanitarian efforts following Storm Washi in the Philippines (OIC 2011), a disaster that resulted in the displacement of 285,000 people (UNHCR 2011). The OIC has also been approved access by the government of Myanmar to provide "necessary assistance" to the displaced and persecuted Rohingya Muslim minority (OIC 2012), in a country where Northern NGOs and UN agencies have often been denied access to populations affected by humanitarian crises, largely as a result of the tense relationship between Myanmar and many Northern states for almost 20 years (Pacitto and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2013). In the aftermath of cyclone Nargis in 2008, international humanitarian actors were prevented from accessing Myanmar, while local faith communities, monasteries and churches delivered emergency supplies, and aid organizations and NGOs already operating in the affected regions collected information on the damage and the needs of those affected. The task fell to the regional

organization, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), to convince Myanmar, one of its member states, to provide access for humanitarian relief efforts. Despite initial resistance to foreign involvement, Myanmar agreed on an ASEAN-led mechanism upon assurances that assistance provided through ASEAN would not be 'politicized' (Marr 2010; Cook 2010; Fan, this volume).

These events are a clear example of an instance in which Northern humanitarian organizations, despite their purportedly 'apolitical' and 'neutral' character, are not perceived as such by other actors. The OIC's and the ASEAN's success in negotiating and reaching an agreement with the government of Myanmar demonstrates the privileged position that Southern actors may hold in certain geopolitical contexts. These examples resonate with Six's research (2009) on Southern development actors and their capacity to hold a distinct place in the global landscape. In an era where rhetoric around 'shrinking humanitarian space' is ever-present, the 'privileged access' afforded to certain Southern organizations demands further inquiry by academics and practitioners alike.

The OIC also coordinates with, rather than explicitly competes against, the UN. However, the OIC has simultaneously presented itself in a way that rejects principles that have been enshrined within the Northern regime. One example is the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights - originally drafted in 1990 – which attempted to establish a set of human rights compatible with the teachings of Islam, and specifically with Shari'ah Law (Kayaoğlu, 2012). Although references to the Cairo Declaration have now been removed from the 2008 revised Charter of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, elements within the Charter continue to demonstrate the distinct character and values of the community that it purports to represent. For example, the Charter calls for member states to reaffirm support for the rights of *peoples,* as stipulated in the UN Charter, thereby clearly placing an emphasis on communal, rather than individual rights. This resonates with some of the critical academic literature on development. The idea that human rights represent a specific, Northern vision of the world that does not necessarily reflect the prevailing values of Southern cultural communities, as noted by Esteva and Prakash (1997: 278, op cit), gains pertinence when we see it manifest itself in the principles that underpin Southern institutions such as the OIC.

Another stipulation of the Charter is "to enhance and strengthen the bond of unity and solidarity among the Muslim peoples and Member States." As Davey argues, "for some Islamic organizations, humanitarian action is an expression of solidarity with other Muslims and is part of a broader effort to defend the Islamic community (*ummah*) from outside threats" (2012a: 4). Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan (2003) discuss the Islamic charitable tradition of *zakat*, stating that it is often understood that the recipients of *zakat* must be Muslims. Although this proposition is frequently rebutted and other interpretations extend the concept to encompass non-Muslim poor, the stated foundations for partialist assistance in the Islamic tradition exposes the non-universal nature of what is seen to be one of the core principles of humanitarianism. Here, notions of 'solidarity' and 'community' correspond with a particular religious identity (in this case, Islam), although these concepts can be manifested in different forms and on a variety of scales across different faiths.

Southern State and Civil Society Responses to Syrian Refugees' Displacement

The popular uprisings that swept across North Africa and the Middle East from the end of 2010 were characterized by significant upheavals, including major episodes of displacement. In particular, the ongoing conflict in Syria has been described by the High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, as 'the most dramatic humanitarian crisis that we have ever faced' (Chulov 2013), with over 2.9 million refugees having fled Syria to neighbouring countries and North Africa by August 2014.[vii] The significant role played by Southern actors at a multitude of levels has been one of the key features of the response to these processes of forced migration. Some of these initiatives have adopted the 'apolitical' and secular identity of formal international humanitarian organizations, while others, including groups affiliated with the opposition Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, retain a highly politicized character, and/or identify themselves as being motivated by faith. Indeed, notions of solidarity and brotherhood have been a distinctive feature to some aspects of the relief efforts in the region.

In 2012 alone, the Arab League pledged $100m in aid to Syrian refugees (Gulf Times 2012), and Arab states' responses have ranged from reports of the Moroccan government sending aid convoys comprising the resources for a field hospital in Jordan (Aujourd'hui Le Maroc 2012) to the Qatar Charity providing food and non-food aid and medical assistance both in Lebanese border areas and in Jordan, as well as assisting with rent and health services in Jordan (Gulf Times 2012). On a national level, the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO) has been charged by the Jordanian government to coordinate the aid response to the influx of Syrian refugees (IRIN 2012); the JHCO established Za'atari refugee camp, delivering aid and overseeing partnerships with major UN agencies including UNICEF, OCHA, UNHCR and WFP, and with a range of Islamic and Christian FBOs including Islamic Relief, Latter Day Saints, and the Lutheran World Federation.[viii]

Importantly, although the English version[ix] of the JHCO's website makes no reference to Islam, the Arabic version[x] notes that the organization was established in "The Arab and *Islamic* world" in 1990 and that the JHCO supports projects which "deepen the concepts of justice and equality at the national, Arab, *Islamic* and international levels" (our translation, emphasis added). The erasure of the Islamic referent in the English language version of the official JHCO website[xi] is particularly relevant in light of the above-mentioned securitization frameworks which have typically been applied in analyses of Islamic faith-based humanitarianism. Publically distancing itself from the Islamic referent, in addition to stressing its roles in providing assistance and establishing partnerships "regardless of their religion, origin or creed"[xii] are all means of asserting the JHCO's official commitment to internationally recognized humanitarian principles, and can be seen as supporting the organisation's broader declarations that it is "making great strides to becoming an *international* humanitarian organization" (emphasis added).[xiii]

In spite of the central role officially played by JHCO, the Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) have reported that it is arguably civil society groups that have played the largest role in responding to the Syrian refugee influx. In addition to the preexisting Syrian community in Jordan providing significant support, some Jordanian landlords have also allowed Syrian refugees to stay free of charge (IRIN 2012). Furthermore, faith-based Muslim organizations are playing a key role in Jordan; these include the Syria Women's Organization – established in 2006 by the children of Syrians who had fled the repression of the Muslim

Brotherhood's revolt in 1982 – which has registered and provided essential supplies to new arrivals in Amman, and the Islamic Charity Centre Society – also reported to be linked with the Muslim Brotherhood - which has registered refugees and distributed aid in the border regions (IRIN 2012). According to RFI, reporting from the Jordanian town of Mafraq, aid has been coordinated via the JHCO civil society umbrella group, and distributed to refugees in Mafraq via three organisations; Latine, Al Kitab wal Sunnah and Merkez Islami, the latter of which is connected to the opposition Muslim Brotherhood (RFI 2012).[xiv]

These examples of regional, state, NGO and civil society responses to the mass displacements across the Middle East and North Africa[xv] highlight the need to critically assess the historical and cultural context of humanitarian responses by state and non-state actors alike. This includes recognition of the influence of Islamic traditions of asylum, protection and charity, which are by now well documented by academics and practitioners alike (Turk 2008; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2011a; Guterres 2012). For instance, a number of relevant concepts and mechanisms of protection (including *jiwār* – offering protection - and '*amān* – the provision of safe conduct) are central to Islam and oblige Muslims to offer assistance and safety to Muslim and non-Muslim displaced persons alike. While not part of the international institutionalized humanitarian system, Muslim state and non-state actors have historically responded to forced migration in a multiplicity of ways, highlighting the partiality of the abovementioned classification of 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' humanitarian donors.

Indeed, an extensive body of literature explores faith-based *state* responses to displacement, including in particular a plethora of studies of Gulf state-led Islamic Faith Based Humanitarianism post-9/11 (Barakat and Zyck 2010; Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan 2003), increasingly being complemented by the recognition that "the protection of both migrants and refugees have been universally and unequivocally regarded as moral and legal obligations, *not only by states and governments, but also by individuals and civil society*" (Abd al-Rahim 2008: 15, emphasis added). As reflected in the role played by the Syrian Women's Organisation and as discussed further in the following case-study from the Thai-Myanmar borders, the individuals who are inspired by their faith to provide protection and assistance to displaced populations are often themselves refugees.

Humanitarian Refugees: Views from the Thai-Myanmar border and beyond
In the protracted Myanmar refugee situation, with over 100,000 refugees living in refugee camps and settlements along the Thai-Myanmar border since the 1980s, an extensive range of services, welfare and relief is provided by Karen Christian refugees on both sides of the border. In addition to providing assistance to refugees in the camps, Karen refugees frequently re-enter Myanmar's border zone as 'soldiers-medics-missionaries' (Horstmann 2011), accessing an area known to be largely inaccessible to international humanitarian NGOs. This multifaceted project of evangelization, assistance and reconstruction is "fuelled by global alliances with American Christian churches (Wuthnow 2009), South Korean Pentecostals, and international advocacy networks" (Horstmann 2011: 515). Many Christian Karen refugees use their institutional resources in Thailand to actively support IDPs in Myanmar's Karen state. Examples include the Karen Baptist Convention, which assists both refugees at the border and IDPs in Myanmar, and

the Karenni Social and Welfare Centre which works in coordination with the Thailand Burma Border Consortium and the Burma Relief Centre to provide emergency relief and training and to document human rights abuses. Since its inception in 1998, the Back Pack Health Worker Team has recruited and trained health workers from displaced communities, working from Mae Sot, a Thai border town that serves as a base for Myanmarese refugee groups. Those recruited are trained by technical experts from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and the American NGO Global Access Health Program, and subsequently travel into Myanmar by foot to provide medical assistance to displaced communities (BBC 2011).

The notion of refugees acting as the providers of humanitarian assistance for members of their own community and other displaced populations in some respects represents the ultimate paradox with regards to Northern assumptions of the roles of different stakeholders in the humanitarian arena. The ascription of 'victimhood' and 'passivity' onto refugees in humanitarian circles has been extensively critiqued in the refugee studies literature, with Harrell-Bond arguing that refugees are rendered docile and dependent *because of* the practices of the humanitarian system, whose main agenda is one of control (1986), and Hyndman analyzing the ways in which refugees are represented in the humanitarian arena as vulnerable and in need of care from outsiders (2000: 121). The example of Karen refugees coordinating and implementing humanitarian action for their own community and other displaced persons, thus directly challenges these presumptions, situating refugees as the providers and coordinators of aid and protection services, whilst simultaneously raising concerns regarding the power imbalances which may characterize the work of those we may refer to as 'refugee-evangelists' in contexts of displacement, and the extent to which Karen refugees implement a faith-centred—or ethnic— rather than a universalist approach to humanitarian action (Ferris 2011).

The high level of interconnectivity between Northern and Southern actors in the Karen case also confirms Ferris' contention that FBOs are "rooted in their local communities and yet have global reach" (Ferris 2005: 325), whilst concurrently raising questions relating to the dynamics of North-South relations in these contexts and the extent to which these initiatives can be conceptualized as 'Southern' in nature. The 'evangelical' and missionary-inspired approach to humanitarian action adopted by these Christian refugee groups and their international networks undoubtedly comes into conflict with the ICRC's stated principles, and yet to take these principles as ahistorical and thus to disregard these forms of humanitarian response is to ignore the contingent nature of the term and the temporal specificity of the ICRC's definition. As Rieff argues with regards to the origins of Northern humanitarianism, "Historically … the treatment of the sick, the insane, and wounded soldiers on the battlefield has largely been the work of religious orders" (2002: 57). The missionaries, who by the middle of the nineteenth century were committed to eradicating slavery, simultaneously promoted the 'civilizing' practices thought to run parallel to conquest and imperial domination (Rieff 2002). The persistence of global evangelical networks working in the humanitarian arena (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2012b) and the historical connections between humanitarianism and missionaries is itself therefore a valuable point of study (Jung and Horstmann forthcoming), especially in order to better understand the roles, continuity, and implications of refugee-evangelical humanitarian providers in the global South.

Karen refugees' explicit engagement with proselytization and the stated aim of bringing the Good News to other displaced (and indeed non-displaced) populations living on the Thai-Myanmar border is different in degree and method from the activities of Syrians who became refugees in Jordan in 1982 and who are active in the Syrian Women's Organisation, and of Jordanian citizens offering assistance via the Islamic Charity Centre Society or the Merkez Islami. Indeed, while these and other faith-based organisations are often intimately related to political struggles - for national as well as religious self-determination in the Karen case, and in support of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Jordanian case – the (official) religious identity of the majority of Syrian refugees *as* Sunni Muslims means that *da'wa* (conversion) activities are largely unnecessary on what we can refer to as the 'external' level (i.e., activities encouraging the conversion of non-Muslim aid recipients to Islam). Nonetheless, further research remains to be conducted into the extent to which these organisations may engage in processes of 'internal' *da'wa,* to encourage Sunni Muslim beneficiaries in Jordan to meet certain religious or political conditionalities, for instance with regards to adhering to a particular interpretation of the Islamic dress code, or attending Friday prayers, in order to secure the continuation of assistance in this protracted displacement situation. An additional major difference is that Karen refugee-evangelists on the Thai-Myanmar border are actively supported by an extensive church and advocacy network which extends across the global North and global South alike, and yet Muslim faith-based organisations responding to displacement from Syria (especially those which are affiliated – or are believed to be affiliated – with the Muslim Brotherhood) have continued to be scrutinized by the media, politicians and policy-makers across the global North, with the 'humanitarian' motivations, nature and implications of these organisations and their many supporters (also across the global North and global South) continually questioned. Given this chapter's aim to footnote rather than centralize the securitization framework, we will leave this dimension aside at this point; nonetheless, it is a poignant reminder that not all religions, and not all transnational networks of support, are equally positioned in the international arena.

Conclusions

This chapter has not aimed to identify or classify the similarities and differences which may exist either between Muslim or Christian modes of humanitarian action, or between Southern and Northern humanitarianisms. Rather, it has aimed to demonstrate the need for an expansion of the field of inquiry in Humanitarian Studies, and to illustrate the ways in which writing the 'Other' into Humanitarian Studies has the potential to both challenge and enrich our understandings of the multiple and overlapping modes through which different actors respond to those affected by contexts of forced displacement. Whilst the enduring influence of the Northern-dominated international regime in the humanitarian arena should not be trivialized, nor should the capacity of Southern stakeholders, including refugees and forcibly displaced persons themselves, to exert agency as actors in the humanitarian sphere. The networks and relationships between Northern and Southern humanitarianisms are deeply rooted and complex. In many instances, exploration into Southern humanitarian initiatives, including those designed and implemented by local faith communities, must be coupled with an investigation into these intricate networks in order for these different North-South dynamics to be better understood.

Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Pacitto, J. (2015) "Writing the Other into Humanitarianism: A conversation between 'South-South' and 'faith-based' humanitarianisms," in Z. Sezgin and D. Dijkzeul (eds) *The New Humanitarianisms in International Practice: Emerging actors and contested principles*, Oxford: Routledge.

If humanitarianism is said to be birthed from cosmopolitanism, and if we can conceive, as Calhoun (2002) does, of a cosmopolitanism which balances a liberal idea of rights with a stronger conception of the realities of solidarity and community, then academic legitimacy demands a reconceptualization of the term. Within the cosmopolitan ideal is respect for cultural diversity and the idea of multiple and overlapping solidarities, including, but by no means restricted to the idea of a global solidarity (Calhoun 2002: 893). The concepts of solidarity and community that resonate throughout the case studies above echo the ideas of critical scholars who seek to reaffirm the importance of local communal obligations in opposition to a Northern-conceived universality. Promoting an understanding of Other forms of humanitarianism, including those which are 'local' and 'faith-based,' is not to reject the existence or legitimacy of humanitarianism based upon the notion of global citizenship. However it is to reject the contention that this is the *only* legitimate form of humanitarianism.

Rather than offering a critique of the Northern humanitarian regime, this chapter has critiqued the assumption that a limited and historically-specific institutional definition of what constitutes humanitarian should be mirrored at the theoretical level. To restrict the area of research in Humanitarian Studies to organizations purporting to be working under the strict principles laid out by the ICRC is not just fraught with Northern bias, but it also fails to recognize that claims of impartial, apolitical universality can equally be interpreted and understood to be partial, politicized neo-imperialism. The example of Myanmar, given above, clearly demonstrates this. Politics pervades humanitarianism, and not just humanitarianism in the sense of the practices carried out by 'humanitarian' organizations; it is interwoven within the fibers of the epithet itself. It is this lexical politics that has for so long footnoted Other actors and Other modes of action in the study of humanitarianism. A holistic understanding of the complex heterogeneity of humanitarianisms, in the plural, as they are conceptualized across the South, as well as the North, may help us to transcend the monopoly held by the Northern institutional regime on the humanitarian label. In keeping with the critical tradition, however, these humanitarianisms must simultaneously themselves be rigorously assessed, and the complex power dynamics intrinsic to them must be exposed. Through expanding the use of the humanitarian label we promote a lexical counter-politics that unravels the very fibers of the epithet and what it represents. Broadening the field in this way opens the possibility for new and exciting research trajectories in Humanitarian Studies, Forced Migration Studies and beyond.[xvi]

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[i] Media reports of the Syrian conflict have also reflected this suspicion of Muslim civil society aid networks providing assistance to refugees from Syria – for instance, Ghader (2013).

[ii] Oppositional categorizations such as North/South, West/East, Developed/Developing, fail to reflect the complexity and diversity of global realities, and yet the terms 'global North' and 'global South' are used here in line with McEwan's (2009: 13) suggestion that "it is most useful to think of North/South as a *metaphorical* rather than a *geographical* distinction". Furthermore, the terms global North/South transcend the connotations of typologies such as 'First' and 'Third World, 'developed' or 'developing' which "suggest both a hierarchy and a value judgment" (ibid: 12), in addition to transcending the inherently *negative* framework implicit in the usage of the term '*non*-West' as the counterpoint to 'West'. Where used, the term 'North' or 'Northern' refers to Europe and North America. Also see Pacitto and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2013).

[iii] These states' denomination as 'new' donors is often historically inaccurate. For instance, Caroline Reeves and Urvashi Aneja have respectively documented the long history of financial, material and social support offered by Chinese and Indian state and non-state actors as a response to conflict and disasters on local, national and international levels (verbatim conference proceedings, *Between the global and the local in humanitarian action,* Save the Children, April 2014).

[iv] Palestinian and Sahrawi refugees' own conceptualisations of 'humanitarianism,' 'politics' and 'ideology', as *participant* observers of South-South assistance programmes, are explored in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2015).

[v] See (http://www.unhcr.org/51b6de419.html) accessed 10 August 2014.

[vi] As noted by Jeff Crisp, this may also be the case for any other advocacy groups that have links to powerful institutions (verbatim workshop proceedings, *South-South Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement*, University of Oxford, October 2012).

[vii] *Inter-Agency Regional Response for Syrian Refugees: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey. 27 July – 2 August 2014.* At (http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/documents.php?page=1&view=grid) accessed 10 August 2014.

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[viii] The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation for Development: Syria Response (http://www.jordankorea.gov.jo/content/jordan-hashemite-charity-organization-relief-development) accessed 1 July 2014. This erasure can be understood as a decoupling strategy consistent with neo-institutional theory.

[ix] English version (http://www.jhco.org.jo/?q=content/about-us) accessed 4 February 2013.

[x] Arabic version (http://www.jhco.org.jo/?q=ar/content/%D8%B9%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%A6%D8%A9) accessed 4 February 2013.

[xi] Equally interestingly, an English language summary of JHCO's aims on the web-based *Comprehensive Guide to Civil Society Organizations in Jordan* reads: "Conveying the message of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Arab communities and showing it, fostering the relations between the people of Jordan and Arab and *Islamic* communities, deepening solidarity and cooperation at Arab and *Islamic* levels, through combating poverty, sickness and ignorance, in addition to contributing to the dissemination of Arab and *Islamic* culture in the international arena" (emphasis added). See (http://www.civilsociety-jo.net/en/index.php/special-commissions/201-jordan-hashemite-charity-organisation-jhco) accessed 4 February 2014.

[xii] The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation for Development: Syria Response (http://www.jordankorea.gov.jo/content/jordan-hashemite-charity-organization-relief-development) accessed 1 July 2014.

[xiii] Such a strategic representation of Self is common in refugee (and indeed non-refugee) situations, in which certain characteristics – such a religious identity – are variously magnified or minimized during interactions with diverse audiences to ensure a continuation of support and assistance. See Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2011b and 2014b).

[xiv] Further research into the motivations and implications of these and other faith-based actors' responses to displacement in Jordan will be completed in 2015 under the auspices of a Henry Luce Foundation funded project led by Columbia University. One of the authors of this chapter (EFQ) is leading a parallel research project, also funded by the Henry Luce Foundation, which examines faith-based actors' responses to Syrian displacement to Lebanon.

[xv] Also see Pacitto and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2013) on responses to displacement from Libya, Egypt and Tunisia.

[xvi] The above-mentioned research projects into the nature and impacts of responses motivated or inspired by political or religious solidarity examine the relationship between the provision of assistance, and exclusionary practices.