

Thesis MA Literature in Society. Europe and Beyond.
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These are the modes

On the inhuman representation of refugees in European literature

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Introduction

De geschiedenis van de mens is een verhaal van migratie. Zodra wij op twee benen konden staan, zijn wij gaan lopen. (Pfeijffer 13)

Ilya Leonard Pfeijffer addresses his *Brief aan Europa* to Europe as a continent and accuses her (he personifies Europe as an old woman) of maintaining an unjust refugee policy. This opinion is based on the fact that migration has always been there, from prehistoric times onwards. Closer to the present, Europe has known multiple occasions in which its own inhabitants migrated or had to flee themselves. Think only of the number of people migrating to Australia, New Zealand and America, the Second World War, refugees fleeing Yugoslavia: “U kent het verhaal van de vlucht ook van de andere kant en u weet dat wanhoop altijd sterker is dan een hek” (13). Politicians often object to the intake of refugees by using the liberal argument that refugees are an economic burden to the country, yet as the text points out, liberalism thrives on open borders and globalization: “U weet beter dan wie dan ook hoe belangrijk verplaatsen is, Europa, juist u. U hebt het vrije verkeer van mensen en goederen tot uw grootste project gemaakt, omdat u ziet hoeveel voordeel dat oplevert. U hebt begrepen hoe profijtelijk het is om grenzen af te schaffen, zelfs als we uitsluitend in economische termen willen denken. Maar kennelijk geldt het recht op vrij verkeer niet voor hulpbehoevenden die van buiten komen” (Pfeijffer 14). Pfeijffer accuses Europe of acting solely out of self-interest and thereby forgetting the human aspect. Europe should empathize more as she has been through the same. We will see that such empathy is lacking, partly due to generalizing representations of the media.

This accusation towards the refugee policy of Europe forms the start of this thesis. The question that this thesis will aim to answer is two-folded: what forms/modes of inhuman representation can be distinguished in refugee representations and how are these modes reflected on in *Dit zijn de namen*? In trying to answer these questions, I will pay attention to general representations of refugees in literature and media, and I will investigate the connection between the lack of human rights and those representations. As literature can be used as a means to represent and as an instrument which can lay bare the struggles a society is coping with, I believe it is necessary to look at exactly how literature depicts the refugee crisis. I will do so by discussing the relation between human rights,

refugees and literature, and secondly by a close-reading of *Dit zijn de namen*. On the basis of the novel I do not presume to make allegations that entail the whole of Europe, but I hope it will form a solid base from which research on inhuman representation of refugees in literature can be extended.

Before beginning, I believe I must explain my choice of the use of the term “refugee”. I have chosen this term for the sole reason that it is the dominant term in the majority of the articles that I will discuss in this thesis. I also need to make sure that it is clear from where I am writing: as a white woman currently enrolled in a Dutch university. As a literary scholar with limited knowledge of the law, I refrain from discussing human rights in depth, but will rather focus on the consequences of statelessness for refugees as represented in literature. Moreover, I also try to refrain from using an “us vs. them-narrative”. I will sometimes use “they” when I am speaking of refugees. When I use “we”, I do so to refer to people who belong to the Western culture, which includes myself. As for my method of working, I would like to refer to Edward Said, who in his major work *Orientalism* laid bare how he handled writing about Orientalism and how he believes anyone should:

My principal methodological devices for studying authority here are what can be called strategic location, which is a way of describing the author’s position in a text with regard to the Oriental material he writes about, and strategic formation, which is a way of analyzing the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large. (28)

Whilst *Orientalism* isn’t the subject I am working on, Said’s work is of great importance to my work because it also deals with the delicate matter of representing Others. Like Said, I believe it necessary to not only confine to matters inherent to the text, but also to pay attention to the context.

Human rights, refugees and literature

1.1 General representation of refugees in Europe

In order to give context to my argument of inhuman representation of refugees, I will pay attention to the ways in which the refugee crisis is spoken about in both media and literary studies. This starts with an examination of the used term:

The so-called “refugee crisis” in Europe then appears as a term coined by politicians and the media with little or no connection to the reality of the migrants who are confronted with the violence of war, the inhuman conditions of their journeys towards “Fortress Europe”, governments’ unwillingness to provide for an effective new start, and the xenophobic or Islamophobic attitudes and discourses. Their journeys recall the Odyssey, but without the promise of a return, and the Mediterranean Sea, as used to be the case with the Black Atlantic, has become a cemetery. (Gallien 736)

In her article, Gallien describes how the “refugee crisis” is used as an empty term which hides the horrible events that take place. Instead of focusing on the implications that the “crisis” has on Europe, she insists that the attention should be on the crisis that takes place in the country of origin and the inhuman circumstances the refugees find themselves in during the flight and even after arriving in the “promised land”. As we are talking about forced migration, I believe that the attention should indeed rest on the conditions in the country where they came from. For the majority of the refugees it was not a choice but a necessity to flee. Instead of focusing on the effects on Europe, the problem that should be dealt with is the one that forces these people to flee in the first place.

A great deal of how Europeans shape an image of refugees is through newspaper articles. The Council of Europe wrote a report on this representation and concluded that: “Refugees were given limited opportunities to speak of their experiences and suffering. Most often they were spoken about and represented in images as silent actors and victims.” (Georgiou Zaborowski 26). The report also shows that little information is given that individualizes refugees. According to Georgiou and Zaborowski, this has led to the following:

Refugees thus emerge from these narratives as an anonymous, unskilled group. They are 'the other' to the presumed reader of the press and this limited characterization shapes the discourse surrounding the refugee crisis for both European audiences and stakeholders. (10)

This relates to the notion of Othering as articulated by Edward Said and underpins the idea that refugees are framed as the Other in regard to the European. I will discuss Othering in relation to literature in more depth later on. Georgiou and Zabarowski add that without these individual characteristics, refugees are implied to be of little use for Europe, as they seem to have no profession. They raise suspicion because the media has created a narrative of all refugees being young men in search of "luck" (10). Most importantly, without these individual characteristics, refugees gain little empathy from the Europeans as they are dehumanized and de-individualised (Georgiou Zabarowski 10). Another report, that was published by the World Association for Christian Communication in cooperation with the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe, rightfully adds:

The low representation of refugees and migrants in the news articles, however, means that the debate on those topics occurs mainly outside the realm of the people directly affected by it. This makes it easier for the public to distance themselves from the issue, and not think about the human beings who are affected by the policies and laws under consideration. (19)

These two reports thus underline the importance of a more nuanced representation of refugees in newspaper articles and admit that refugees are being de-individualized in them, which leads to dehumanization as it facilitates the reader to distance him- or herself from the figure of the refugee, even to consider the refugee as the Other with whom he or she has nothing in common. However, not only newspaper articles decide the image of the refugee.

Gallien also speaks of the way in which literature can function in a unitary way for refugees. She believes that literature has the ability to create a common ground for the

refugees, comparable to the imagined communities that Anderson proposed in his article (49):

[Furthermore,] it is only by preserving an inclusive definition of the genre that we enhance literature's capacity to create places of refuge, of common ground, and resistance against the exclusionary logic of the state which differentiates between citizens and non-citizens (Bosnar 2006; Dauvergne 2009) and between wanted and unwanted migrants (Gallien 745).

The importance of literature for refugees is highlighted here, yet we must beware of the fact that this statement of Gallien speaks of literature written by refugees and not literature written about refugees (by non-refugees). In the case where non-refugees write about refugees there are other questions involved that entail matters of representation and cultural appropriation. As the case study for this thesis is written by a white, European male, I find it necessary to pay some attention to these matters.

The *Encyclopedia of Human Services and Diversity* defines cultural appropriation as follows: "Cultural appropriation is the taking of one culture's artifacts, artistic subject matter, traditional knowledge, rituals, symbols, or technologies by members of another, often dominant, culture" (Cousins 298). In literature, this would entail writers writing about a culture other than one's own or creating a main character from a completely different ethnic background. Cousins states that it are the dominant cultures who lend themselves the right to this appropriation. I believe that this can be supported by the thought that in having to stand up against the dominant culture, subcultures have lesser freedom to represent anyone other than themselves. The minority culture would be in danger of being defined by the dominant when they do not represent themselves. Marx, however, believes that a group of people cannot represent themselves if they do not form a community. He claims that as long as the "identity of their interests forms no community, no national bond, and no political organization among them [...] They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented". Although Marx was talking about peasants in his text and not about refugees, it can be applied to refugees as they also do not have a community or nation to which they can turn. However, this argument also works the other way around. As refugees form no coherent group and have no nation or community to turn to, their representation in media

and literature becomes more important than ever. I believe that self-representation might become more difficult when one does not belong to a community, but it does not make it impossible.

What is more, a community does not always confine itself to borders, nationalities or religion. This means that refugees gain an opportunity to create a community of people who have been through the same horrors, with whom they can relate. I believe that an imagined community, as proposed by Anderson, can help refugees in their self-representation as they can present themselves as a group. Such an imagined community, Anderson argues, can be established through literature:

In an anthropological spirit, then, I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign... It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (49)

In my opinion, such an imagined community would benefit the refugees as it would help them represent themselves. In this way, they circumvent the danger of being framed by the dominant culture. This does not mean that European writers should not write about refugees. According to me, European authors should be granted the right to write about refugees as well as it helps to create awareness. Moreover, the artistic freedom of writers should not be detained, especially when it comes to fiction.

Zadie Smith believes the problem is not writing about other cultures, but the negative connotation that cultural appropriation has required:

What would our debates about fiction look like, I sometimes wonder, if our preferred verbal container for the phenomenon of writing about others was not “cultural appropriation” but rather “interpersonal voyeurism” or “profound-other-fascination” or even “cross-epidermal reanimation”? (Smith)

Indeed, the term “profound-other-fascination” has a much more positive connotation as it suggests an honest interest, whereas cultural appropriation sounds as though something is

stolen. Therefore, I believe that a change of the term would surely aid the way that cultural appropriation is seen. Assuming that most writers are genuinely interested in other cultures, the term should indeed change. However, I think that we must not forget the danger of stereotyping. Some cautiousness in this regard is not out of place, especially when it considers people belonging to a dominant culture making claims about a minority culture.

Celik explains this danger of a one-dimensional representation of minorities.

According to her,

The integration of minorities seems to never be complete, as they can prove to be potential security menaces at all times, while illegal migrants who appear as victims of various forms of bodily exploitation can easily turn into threats as hyperreproductive bodies. These examples are indicative of the limited yet recurrent frames of representation through which refugees, migrants, and minorities of migrant background become publicly visible in Europe: in relation to violent events that hide social crises lurking in the background. They appear either as threats that call for security measures or as victims that call for aid, frequently shifting back and forth between the affective registers of fear and pity. (Celik 128)

Celik here argues that migrants are framed as either victims or threats in the dominant discourses surrounding refugees. Although I have found more evidence of inhuman representation in the literature that I have read than of this division she is talking about, I do agree with what she believes to be the reason for this representation. In her view, this opposition functions to position the refugee as the significant Other for the inhabitants of liberal Europe, an Other that we can either pity or fear, as long as we don't identify with them. It can be used as a reason for inhuman representation as well, as a European would not recognize himself in someone who is considered as less than human. Celik articulates it in the following way:

Refugees, migrants, and minorities become the necessary Others for the liberal Europe state that distances them from the realm of politics and contains them in the realm of legality (with a right to control and punish) or compassion (with a vague ethical but no political obligation to act upon). Both the politics of fear that dictates

security measures to protect the liberal subject and state, and the universal rights of humanitarianism, strip these populations of their status as social beings with political rights to “bare life” who need to be contained or aided. (Celik 129)

The degradation of refugees to “bare life” is one form of inhuman representation which will be discussed in length in the next chapter. What is important here in relation to representation, is that the minority is viewed as the “necessary” Other. It seems that a culture or person needs an Other to define himself.

Edward Said explains this necessity of an Other: “Men have always divided the world up into regions having either real or imagined distinction from each other” (47). This distinction is needed, not only in order to define one’s own culture, but also in order to be able to feel superior to that other culture. “The Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, “different”; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, “normal.”” (Said 48). Europe in this case is the grown-up, the rational adult who knows better. I believe that the Orient is now replaced by the refugees. A credible reason for this would be the proximity of these refugees. As there are many of them and they come into the immediate living environment, people claim to be afraid of the disappearance of their culture. The underlying fear, however, might as well be the discovery that the Western culture isn’t that superior, that there are in fact few differences between cultures and that the differences that do exist are not strange or scary, but in fact worthy of admiration. The reason that this is scary is because it shakes up the thought of what we believe ourselves to be. We would have to redefine not only the other culture, but also that of ourselves as they can only exist in relation to each other. Othering especially becomes problematic when it leads to inhuman representation.

1.2 Human rights and bare life

The previous chapter has hopefully laid bare the discussions on refugee representation in media and literature. I have discussed Othering in length because I believe that the presumption of superiority leads to an inhuman representation of Others. However, there seems to be a second cause of this inhuman representation.

In *Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt speaks of human rights. She explains that they were initially meant to protect individuals against the new sovereignty of the state. Human rights were considered inalienable. No special law was deemed necessary to protect them, as all laws were supposed to rest on them (Arendt 380). The intention was that it would safeguard the right of the people to sovereign self-government. Arendt believes that a person has to be completely isolated in order to be able to self-govern. The paradox in human rights, she argues, thus derives from the fact that it describes an abstract human being who exists nowhere, as even savages live in a certain social order (381). She proceeds to explain what the effect is of the human rights describing an abstract human being:

The whole question of human rights, therefore, was quickly and inextricably blended with the question of national emancipation; only the emancipated sovereignty of the people, of one's own people, seemed to be able to insure them. As a family of nations, it gradually became self-evident that the people, and not the individual, was the image of man. (Arendt 381)

In other words, instead of protecting the people against new sovereignties, human rights became dependent on states, as a result of an inadequate description of the people it is supposed to protect. Arendt states that the loss of national right inevitably leads to the loss of human rights (382). I think it is safe to say that human rights fail to safeguard individuals and can only be deployed to protect own citizens. In my view, this dependency of human rights on national rights is another cause of the inhuman representation of refugees in literature. They cannot access the rights of man (human rights), which are supposed to be inalienable and accessible to everyone. The fact that they are deprived of both national and human rights suggests that in the face of law, stateless people can hardly be recognized as people. I believe that inhuman representation is a result of the failing

human rights. Part of this thought is connected to the distinction between political life and bare life.

Aristotle, in *Politics*, states that human beings are no more than political animals. The sole difference between man and animal, according to him, lies in politics, and politics only exist because human beings have learned how to speak:

Now, that man is more of a political animal than bees or any other gregarious animals is evident. Nature, as we often say, makes nothing in vain, and man is the only animal whom she has endowed with the gift of speech. And whereas mere voice is but an indication of pleasure or pain and is therefore found in other animals (for their nature attains to the perception of pleasure and pain and the intimation of them to one another, and no further), the power of speech is intended to set forth the expedient and inexpedient, and therefore likewise the just and the unjust. (Aristotle 5)

He calls human beings “other animals”, which suggests that the difference between human beings and animals lies solely in the ability of human beings to speak. This, he argues, makes them political. Aristotle also remarks that the power of speech is intended to make moral judgements and separate the just from the unjust. I agree with this moral function of language, but given the failure of language in the declaration of human rights, I must also admit its shortcomings. Refugees fall outside of both national and human rights, which means that they are stripped of their political bodies. When following Aristotle’s reasoning, this would mean that the refugees, without rights and thus political voice, are degraded to animals as they only have access to mere voice. In reality, I believe that the refugees remain human. In literature, however, I think that they are represented as inhuman to refer to the loss of their political body.

Agamben in his book *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* makes a similar distinction between two forms of life. He distinguishes between the two meanings the Greek had for the word “life”: “*zoē*, which expressed the simple fact of living common to all living beings (animals, men, or gods), and *bios*, which indicated the form or way of living proper to an individual or a group” (9). In politics, the issue is that there is no difference made between what Aristotle calls “life”, as mere living, and “good life”, which is a politically

qualified life (Agamben 9). Agamben explains that in politics, the humanity of people is decided:

In the “politicization” of bare life – the metaphysical task par excellence – the humanity of living man is decided. In assuming this task, modernity does nothing other than declare its own faithfulness to the essential structure of the metaphysical tradition. The fundamental categorial pair of Western politics is not that of friend/enemy but that of bare life/political existence, *zoē/bios*, exclusion/inclusion. There is politics because man is the living being who, in language, separates and opposes himself to his own bare life and, at the same time, maintains himself in relation to that bare life in an inclusive exclusion (12).

According to Agamben, Western politics opposes bare life and political existence, exclusion and inclusion. He states that politics exists because man opposes his own bare life by mastering language. I consider this fragment important for the research on inhuman representation because it argues that Western politics rest on the categorial pair of *zoē/bios*. What I believe Agamben is trying to show, is that Western politics is founded upon what it tries to exclude: bare life. For him, it is namely clear that Western democracy uses *zoē* as a guidance:

It is just as certain, however, that nascent European democracy thereby placed at the center of its battle against absolutism not *bios*, the qualified life of the citizen, but *zoē* – the bare, anonymous life that is as such taken into the sovereign ban.

(Agamben 124)

Hence, European politics places *zoē*, or bare life, at its center whilst bare life is the binary opposite of political existence. This suggests that not only refugees, but also European citizens are the victims of a politics that prioritizes the protection of bare life over protection of the good life. However, I believe it is important to distinguish between human rights and civil rights before any claims can be made on bare life of citizens and refugees. Agamben does not make this distinction in this part, but does so in another section of his book.

Like Arendt, Agamben judges the way in which human rights cannot be maintained if humans do not have civil rights at their disposal: "In the system of the nation-state, the so-called sacred and inalienable rights of man show themselves to lack every protection and reality at the moment in which they can no longer take the form of rights belonging to citizens of a state" (75). He goes on to explain that refugees bring the "originary fiction of modern sovereignty in crisis" by disrupting the continuity between man and citizen and by bringing to light the difference between birth and nation (Agamben 77). In Roman law, rights had always belonged to members of a polis, either by birth in a certain territory or by birth from citizen parents. Later, after the French Revolution, citizenship is defined the members of the sovereign (Agamben 76). Refugees shake up these two fictions of what citizenship should be because they appear within the domain of citizens as bearers of bare life (Agamben 77).

Agamben explains that the position of refugees is so hard to define because it breaks with these two traditional notions of citizenship and it challenges the imaginary dividing line between man and citizen (77). He adds an observation regarding the representation of refugees as a mass phenomenon:

What is essential is that, every time refugees represent not individual cases but – as happens more and more often today – a mass phenomenon, both these organizations and individual states prove themselves, despite their solemn invocations of the "sacred and inalienable" rights of man, absolutely incapable of resolving the problem and even of confronting it adequately. (Agamben 78)

Agamben states that this is the result of the separation of the rights of man and rights of the citizen, as it forces refugees to find solace in these rights of man. According to Agamben, those are not equipped to secure refugees with rights that ensure that their good life, or their political rights, are looked after. This is the case because the rights of man only consider rights of bare life, whereas rights of the citizen safeguard rights of the good life, political life, or *bios*:

The separation between humanitarianism and politics that we are experiencing today is the extreme phase of the separation of the rights of man from the rights of the

citizen, in the final analysis, however, humanitarian organizations – which today are more and more supported by international commissions – can only grasp human life in the figure of bare or sacred life, and therefore, despite themselves, maintain a secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight. (Agamben 78)

This means that one who enjoys civil rights has more chance of a guaranteed qualified life than one without. I agree with the thought that (the lack of) human rights and bare life are connected, yet believe that the problem is not so much the separation of the rights of man and citizen, but the way in which human rights are inextricably linked to civil rights, which means that refugees lose the first as a result of losing the latter.

Agamben offers a solution that entails that the concept of the refugee ought to be separated from the concept of the rights of man (78). According to Agamben, the concept of the refugee questions the fundamental categories of the nation-state, meaning both the link between birth and nation and citizen and man. By doing so, it creates a possibility of rethinking these ancient categories. These renewed categories should work “in the service of a politics in which bare life is no longer separated and excepted, either in the state order or in the figure of human rights” (78). In my opinion, both bare life and qualified life should matter in the human rights. In order to achieve this, however, the declaration should specify the abstract figure of man.

Refugees thus experience a loss of both their civil and human rights. This leads to an even smaller chance of receiving protection for *bios*, or qualified life. I believe that inhuman representation is a result of the failure of human rights. I also believe that literature can play a role in addressing this failure. According to Joseph Slaughter, literature and law are alike. In his book *Human rights, Inc.*, he argues that the law is an interventionist, positive force that calls into being, and enables particular forms and expressions of personhood (8). In this way, literature seems to be a good medium to deal with legal issues, as it is able to establish particular forms and expressions of personhood itself as well. As Slaughter states: “human rights discourse and narrative theory draw upon much of the same conceptual vocabulary of plot, character, and setting in their respective analyses of the sociology of human development” (91). I can see the similarity in establishing stories in literature and, for

instance, courtrooms. In there, the faith of the refugee depends completely on his or her story. This makes narration as important in the courtroom as it is in literature.

Agnes Woolley writes about the importance of narration in her article “Narrating the “Asylum Story”: Between Literary and Legal Storytelling”. She states that: “More than any other aspect of human rights legislation, the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees depends almost entirely on the story of the claimant” (Woolley 378). Woolley points out that whether a refugee is granted the “right” to stay in the country of arrival therefore almost completely depends on their self-presentation, on their ability to persuade a judge or immigration officer of the truthfulness of his or her story (380). Refugees thus narrate their stories and present themselves as a character in the story that narrates their lives. Judges or immigration officers hereby function as the audience, the receivers. They will analyse the story and determine its credibility. The refugees have to narrate themselves into a position of legitimacy, which can only be accomplished by persuading the “readers” of the authenticity of their story (Woolley 380).

In narrating their stories, I believe that the refugees are going through the same process that writers go through in the formation of a character. As the refugees are the main characters in their own story, they have to rethink their being and identity. I believe that this can help the refugee to redefine him- or herself in relation to the new culture. In other words, the refugees have the difficult duty to (re)define themselves and narrate their history in order to “win back” their personhood and safety, and all this depends on the words that they choose and the credibility of the impression that they make.

Furthermore, Slaughter believes that “the novel can be described as a technology for making the institutional abstractions of both the human person and the nation-state formation (individually and collectively) sensible” (92). In this view, literature, and specifically the novel, can be of great importance in not only the representation of refugees, but also in their struggle for gaining rights that protect their “good life” as well as their bare life. Towards the end of his book, Slaughter adds that if the way of reading is changed, this can also have positive consequences for how refugees, or Others in general, are viewed. The biggest problem with reading is, according to him, that people are bound by their nations:

I am suggesting that the effective limitations of human rights are related not merely to the institutional frailty of the international legal regime but to the historically nationalist limitations of our literary imaginations. (Slaughter 324)

I believe that a more universal way of reading would indeed aid the broad-mindedness. It would also reduce at least one of the two reasons for inhuman representation: Othering. When a reader relates to someone very different than him, his tendencies to oppose himself to that Other vanishes.

When considering refugees, this would entail a positive development. When people read stories of or about refugees, they would no longer be seen as a mass phenomenon, but rather as individuals. Especially when the reader relates to the refugee, this would not only reduce Othering, but also their inhuman representation. When one relates to the Other, he would never accept the Other to be described as less than human. In order to reduce the Othering, Slaughter proposes a sentimental way of reading. This, he argues, would teach readers to sense the dignity of the human personality in “people very unlike us” (Slaughter 326). Although I understand the perks of sentimental reading, I find the danger of victimizing the refugees once again too big. Additionally, I do not believe that it fixes Othering or inhuman representation. For example, in feeling sorry for another, there often is a relation of power at work, as the one that feels sorry often finds him- or herself in a better place. This means that, although one might recognize something of himself in the Other, he still feels superior.

Instead, I would like to suggest a way of reading that makes the reader recognize modes of inhuman representation. I believe that recognition is the first step towards fixing a problem. Inhuman representation, I claim, is a result of Othering and the failure of human rights. I am aware that recognizing the inhuman modes in literature will not fix these issues. However, it is important to be aware of this type of representation in order to prevent it from becoming the dominant conception of refugees. Hopefully this chapter has shown how human rights, literature, refugees and Othering are related. If one changes, perhaps the others will too.

1.3 Infrahumanity in the representation of refugees

In his article “Illegible Humanity: The Refugee, Human Rights, and the Question of Representation”, Limbu states that:

[...] it is necessary to find alternative narratives that provide different perspectives on the refugee experience. This process involves interrogating the very notion of the human and of humanity in the most powerful discourse currently available to make claims on behalf of the refugee: that of human rights and humanitarianism. To be a refugee is to lose certain rights, and in the absence of these rights a person is not recognizable as such and thus becomes socially irrelevant, devoid of significance, and meaningless to the prevailing schemes of representation. (257)

The rightlessness of the refugees has consequences for their representation. As I have already discussed, the Othering of refugees leads to representing them as infrahuman. Combined with their rightlessness, which strips them of their political body, their agency is even more endangered. Limbu argues that this is very visible in how they are being represented:

In the abstract nakedness of their humanity, they no longer made sense in the existing representational categories and thus were confronted with the question of existence itself. (272)

Limbu insists that the representational scheme of refugees is in crisis as a result of the lacking access to human rights. As they aren't recognized as human, they fall outside of the representational categories that normally belong to human beings. This, I believe, leads to a representation of refugees as less than human. In my research, I have been able to distinguish four modes of this infrahuman representation of refugees. I do not argue that these modes are present in every work on or of refugees or even that every work contains infrahuman representation. I argue that in the representation of refugees, refugees are often (but not always) portrayed as infrahuman, and that in this infrahuman representation, there are four modes, or categories, that can be distinguished.

1. *Animalistic/naturalistic mode*. This mode can be related to the earlier discussed theories on bare life by Agamben and Aristotle. Wolfe explains how falling outside the human frame leads to this kind of representation:

Framing decides what we recognize and what we don't, what counts and what doesn't; and it also determines the consequences of falling outside the frame (in the case at hand, outside the frame as "animal," as "zoe," as "bare life"). (Wolfe 6)

The danger of falling outside of this human frame, as Wolfe states, is that the person in question is consequently framed as an animal. This is very evident in many articles about refugees. Think alone of the "Jungle of Calais" (Allen) or the many hydrophobic metaphors that are used. Especially in newspaper articles, it is not uncommon to stumble upon words as stream, gulf or flows when referencing to refugees. For example, in Dutch newspapers headlines such as the following are frequently visible: "Nieuwe golf van duizenden bootvluchtelingen van zee gered" (Algemeen Dagblad). These references to animals and nature once again establish a difference between the "real" human beings and the refugees, who become the Others, the ones that have more in common with nature than with people.

2. *Political irrelevance*. This mode is closely related to the animalistic mode as this political irrelevance actually leads to this animalistic, or naturalistic, representation. Both Aristotle and Agamben acknowledge that without political voice, one is degraded to mere voice, or bare life. This political voicelessness, or irrelevance, can be explained by referring to Limbu's argument that a rightless person is not recognized in the face of law. Without rights, a person cannot be recognized as such, which hardens his representation as well. Moreover, the lack of a political community amongst refugees and the fact that human rights only protect bare life can also be viewed as reasons for political irrelevance in their representation. I believe that this political irrelevance often reveals itself in the portrayal of the refugees as voiceless.

3. *Invisibility*. I believe that this type of representation is connected to both political irrelevance and the way mass media represent refugees as a mass phenomenon. According to a report by the earlier mentioned CCME and WACC Europe, in only 21% of news items on asylum and migration there is an individual refugee mentioned. They claim that "it points to a pattern of invisibility that creates a clear divide between the policies being discussed at the

political level and the effects of those policies on people” (CCME and WACC 5). The refugees remain invisible for the Europeans because the policies are more frequently discussed than the refugees. As long as the Europeans remain unaware of the individual stories, they will fail to understand that the policies have an effect on real human beings. In other words, they will fall short in sympathizing with the refugees. This invisibility is not only “visible” in articles, but can also be related to the voicelessness in politics. As they have no power over political speech, they cannot be perceived in the realm of politics. It is comparable to the way in which, as Agamben argues, refugees are politically hard to define as they break with the traditional notions of citizenship. Within the law of a state, which is grounded on rights of citizens, one could argue that stateless people are invisible because they do not fit into the established norms.

4. *Death/nonbeing*. The fourth and final mode has to do with death, or a state of non-being. This is intertwined with invisibility because invisibility can also be viewed as a state of non-being. However, invisibility and non-being are not the same, as invisibility implies that what is not seen is nonetheless there. What is invisible can be made visible more easily than what is non-existing. This state of nonbeing, or death, can also be connected to the mode of nature references; as refugees are referred to as animals or natural phenomena, this also implies a human nonbeing. The mode of death or nonbeing can be recognized in literature by ghostlike descriptions of refugees or simply by references to the “living dead”.

Hannah Arendt discusses the way in which the Jews were seen as “living dead” and how historically, even before the second world war, people who fell outside of the legal framework were already forced to live in camps:

The extermination camps appear within the framework of terror as the most extreme form of concentration camps. Extermination happens to human beings who for all practical purposes are already "dead." Concentration camps existed long before totalitarianism made them the central institution of government, and it has always been characteristic of them that they were no penal institutions and that their inmates were accused of no crime, but that by and large they were destined to take care of "undesirable elements," that is, of people who for one reason or another were deprived of their judicial person and their rightful place within the legal

framework of the country in which they happened to live (“Social science techniques and the study of concentration camps” 369)

Although the refugee camps thankfully are no extermination camps, the fact that the refugees are in a camp which in some cases they may not leave, does trigger a parallel between the two kinds of camps. The comparison is strengthened by the realization that the number of refugees in the current crisis is as high as it was during the Second World War. Arendt points out that during the Second World War, people were also deprived of their juridical rights and viewed as less than human. The prisoners ended up in concentration camps, the same way in which the refugees are nowadays forced to live in refugee camps. This emphasizes the problematic nature of inhuman representation of refugees, especially when they are referred to as ghost-like figures.

The four discussed modes each overlap, but still are distinguishable from one another. However, they all have one thing in common. They make sure that the distance between the Europeans and the refugees remains big enough. In this way, the Europeans aren't able to identify with the refugees. The report by the CCME and WACC Europe remarks that articles often discuss politics, and that when refugees are represented, they are represented as inhuman. The report states that, as a result, the public does not view the refugees as human beings that are all too similar to themselves (18). This of course is worsened by the lack of individual stories. This leads me to the discussion of *Dit zijn de namen*, in which the previously discussed modes of inhuman representation will be encountered and discussed. This, I hope, will concretize the theory.

Representation of refugees in Dit zijn de namen

2.1 Dit zijn de namen

Dit zijn de namen is a novel by the Dutch writer Tommy Wieringa. The story revolves around a group of refugees who flee from different parts of the world. The story presumably takes place near China, deduced from references to Confucius and the country he imagined. What is certain is that it takes place in a savannah. The refugees are transported in a truck by a human trafficker. They are left in the middle of the desert, allegedly on the other side of the border. They walk for months until they find the cabin of an old lady, whose entire food supply they consume. Finally, they reach Michailopol and realize that they have never crossed a border. They end up where they began. Parallel to this story, the life of Pontus Beg is described. He is a commissioner of the police in Michailopol who just discovered that his mother might have been Jewish.

The two stories resemble each other as both struggle with history and identity. I have dedicated two chapters on an analysis of the analogy between the refugees and the Jews, which includes a comparison between Beg and the refugees as well. The reason for this is that, although the focus lies on the four modes of inhuman representation, an analysis of a novel is incomplete without discussing major themes and analogies. Moreover, these analogies can also be linked to the modes of inhuman representation and to theories on refugee representation. Following these two chapters, I will discuss the four distinguished modes of inhuman representation separately. I aim to differentiate between the journey itself and after. I will also try to connect each to the already existing theory on refugee representation. The final chapter will deal with the implications that the book makes. The fact that the novel contains these four modes of inhuman representation is what motivated my choice of this novel as a case study. In this way, I can show how these modes operate in a literary work.

2.2 Jewish analogies

The title of the novel contains the first reference to the Jewish religion. *Dit zijn de namen* refers to the second book of the Thora, that mentions the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt. The significance of this title will appear from multiple references to the Exodus from Egypt and resemblance with the flight of the refugees.

The desert plays a significant role in the comparison between the refugees and the Jews. In the Jewish religion, the desert poses as a place of symbolic value. Although Omer-Sherman argues that there has been too little attention for the desert as a trope in the mythic and symbolic construction of the Jewish space, he states that there seems to be a general agreement on the importance of the desert in Israeli literature (7). He claims that “[...] in Jewish narratives, the desert becomes a metaphysical idea that is both a process and a place that raises compelling questions about justice and national identity” (Omer-Sherman ix-x). In *Dit zijn de namen*, the desert is used as a place to describe the process that the refugees are going through, which includes their struggles with their history and their identity as well. This is shown by their reluctance to know each other names and by the references to animals, which illustrates their degradation to bare life. I believe that the desert, in literature, functions as a perfect place to describe the process that the refugees are going through, as it is a place without distractions.

Furthermore, Omer-Sherman discusses the place that the desert takes in the collective fantasy of place and belonging (xv). Throughout their history, the Jewish people have struggled with finding their own land, a place where they belonged. The desert has been of great importance in their collective, cultural memory, not only because of the Exodus from Egypt, but also because they accepted the Torah at the base of a desert mountain (Omer-Sherman xv). The place of the desert can therefore, in literature, function as their common ground.

The refugees in *Dit zijn de namen* also lack common ground as they all come from different parts of the world. Also, akin the Jews, refugees have no nation to turn to. Refugees are not united by a country, only by their statelessness. This is not to say that the Jews are stateless people, just that they have lacked a common state until the erection of the state of Israel. The non-place of the desert can be seen as the common ground of the refugees, the place that unites them. The desert can also be related to what Agamben calls

bare life: “The desert humbles one in numerous ways, reducing the intellectual to unprecedented awareness of bodily identity (through thirst, heatstroke, and hallucinations)” (Omer-Sherman xiii-xiv). The bodily becomes much more important than the intellectual in the struggle for survival. This means that one’s political identity does not matter in this case. According to both Aristotle and Agamben, without political identity, man is reduced to a way of life that has more in common with animals than with human life.

The juxtaposition thus mostly revolves around the similarity of the passage through the desert by the refugees, in which the desert itself is of great symbolic importance. There is one more argument which supports this analogy. The refugees namely carry the head of the Ethiopian with them after he died. This resembles the passage of the Jews, carrying the bones of Joseph. Beg realizes this analogy between the two journeys: “Als de Joden hadden ze door de woestijn gereisd, en als de Joden hadden ook zij het gebeente van een van hen meegedragen op hun reis” (Wieringa 248). The comparison cannot only be drawn between the two journeys, but also appears in resemblances in the way the refugees look after their flight and how the Jews from the concentration camps looked. This comparison is more concrete than the one drawn between the two journeys. When a police officer explains to Beg how the refugees looked, he says: “Als de Joden van het kamp, meneer de commissaris. Zo zagen ze eruit. Ik kan niet anders zeggen.” (Wieringa 189). The police officer probably states it in this way because they look just as emaciated as the Jews did in the camps during the Second World War, but it contributes to the general parallel that is drawn.

The novel thus hints to a comparison between the journeys of the Jews and the refugees. This mostly happens inexplicitly. The refugees are, however, explicitly compared to the Jews from the concentration camps. I do have some trouble with the latter comparison, since the refugees are not the target of a mass extermination. The analogy between the two journeys, however, I find very strong. The desert as a place of transformation plays a significant role in the metamorphosis of the refugees to animals. Whereas the desert is an important place for the Jews as their history is grounded there, the desert takes the refugees back to the history that they try to avoid. Also, the refugees share an almost religious belief near the end that started with the death of the Ethiopian as they believe that the head of the Ethiopian has showed them the way to Michailopol. This, I believe, justifies the comparison between the two journey’s even more.

Apart from the comparison between the refugees and the Jews, and the importance that the desert plays in that comparison, there are also similarities between the stories of Beg and the refugees. First of all, Beg has just discovered that he might be Jewish, which makes him research the history of the Jews. He therefore immediately draws a parallel between the Jews and the refugees when they arrive in his city. As Beg views himself more and more as a Jew, he inevitably identifies himself with the refugees as well. Also, there are many similarities in the way Beg and the refugees deal with their problematic relationship with the past.

When Beg visits the last rabbi in his city Michailopol, this rabbi asks him: "Hoe kunt u zo leven? Zo zonder geschiedenis? Wij Joden... we hebben lange tenen en een geheugen dat tot vierduizend jaar teruggaat!" (Wieringa 126). This already implies that it is impossible to deny your history. Just as in the case of the refugees, the past is often described with comparisons to ghosts and shadows. For instance, Beg describes the synagogue as: "Een schimmenrijk waar je steeds minder lichaam werd en steeds meer schaduw, een uitgeveegde potloodstreep" (Wieringa 128). The synagogue as a place of ghosts insinuates that it is a place of history. As the rabbi is also the last Jew in Michailopol, this all the more suggests that the Jewish religion is something that belongs to the past. Paradoxically, although the Jewish religion seems to be something that belongs to the past, it is also revived by Beg's discovery of his Jewish roots. Instead of the rabbi being the last Jew of Michailopol, Beg now becomes the last Jew and even passes his Jewishness on to the boy, Saïd. Beg tells him that he can get an Israeli passport if he becomes his son. Although Saïd's purpose of becoming Jewish is to be able to move to Israel, Beg makes him promise to become a good Jew. Therefore, Beg makes sure that the Jewish religion survives. From their conversation it appears that Beg is convinced that Saïd could be a good Jew, because he has completed a similar journey as the Jews: "Je zou een goede Jood zijn, Saïd Mirza. Je hebt de tocht door de woestijn gemaakt, je hebt recht van spreken" (Wieringa 301).

Furthermore, the statement that the body becomes a shadow in the synagogue also hints to a spiritual experience. To say that it is a place where you become a faded-out pencil mark, also suggests that individuals are nothing in regard to the thousand years of history. Beg realizes that he knows nothing of this mysterious world: "Niets wist hij van wat hier gezegd en gedaan werd, in deze geheimzinnige wereld waar de herinnering aan een tocht van duizenden jaren geleden levend werd gehouden" (Wieringa 128). Beg admits that he is

open to the idea of starting over, of leaving his old life behind and to devote himself to the Jewish life: “Zijn oude ziel afleggen, dat rafelige, versleten ding, er een nieuwe voor in de plaats krijgen. Wie wilde dat niet? Wie zou zo iets afwijzen?” (Wieringa 130). Similar to the refugees, who try to leave their old life behind, Beg wants to dive into a new life, one of more meaning than his previous. The differences between Beg and the anonymous dead people that he sometimes encounters while doing his job becomes smaller and smaller: “Steeds minder verschil was er tussen hem en de naamlozen die soms gevonden werden” (Wieringa 141). I interpret this as Beg leading a life that is insignificant. He needs to find something that gives his life meaning again. I believe that Judaism and the connection that he feels with the refugees give Beg’s life renewed purpose.

What becomes clear throughout the story is that Beg tries to redefine himself in regard to the newly acquired information on his origin, but also in regard to the refugees he is confronted with in his job. He reads *Kuzari*, a book by Halevi, in which a Jewish wiseman explains that someone who converts to Judaism never becomes the equal of the Jew by birth. He then realizes: “Beg las die redenering nog eens over en concludeerde dat het het oude liedje was: wie zichzelf probeerde te definiëren, deed dat principieel ten koste van de ander” (Wieringa 170). Beg’s own redefinition, however, is done in a way in which he pays more attention to the sameness of the refugees and himself, rather than to the otherness. This acknowledgement is aided by the similarities he sees in the refugees and the history of the Jews. He is the one who recognizes the similarities between the two passages through the desert and in drawing this parallel, he admits his own connection to the refugees. In my opinion, the parallel between Beg and the refugees functions to show that the refugees and Beg need each other to define themselves. This is backed up by the fact that the novel switches between chapters about Beg and chapters about the refugees.

2.3 History and eternal recurrence

One major aspect that the novel revolves around is yet left undiscussed. It concerns eternal recurrence. Throughout the novel, there are clues that seem to suggest that one's history cannot be denied. History seems to repeat itself as the journey that the refugees make is similar to the one the Jews made earlier. This repetition of history reminds us of a concept that was introduced by Nietzsche: the idea of eternal recurrence. Nietzsche, in his *Ecce Homo*, explains that eternal recurrence must be seen as an "unconditional and infinitely repeated circulation of all things" (48). This idea of eternal recurrence needs to be discussed because I believe that it is connected to inhuman representation. Also, history is a great theme in the novel because it opposes Beg, who increasingly values history, and the refugees, who want to forget their history.

In *Dit zijn de namen*, this idea of eternal recurrence first emerges when all the days in the desert are alike and cannot be separated from each other: "De jongen keek in de richting die ze uit zouden gaan, de vlakke streep aarde, het monotone uitzicht, alsof ze dezelfde reis elke dag opnieuw begonnen, de eeuwige wederkeer van hetzelfde" (Wieringa 146). The most substantial argument for the thought of eternal recurrence however, is the arrival in Michailopol, when the refugees discover that they have never even crossed the border. They have left everything behind, their belongings as well as their memory, only to return to the point of departure. "Alles was voor niets geweest. Alles. Ze waren de woestenij overgestoken naar een nieuw land, om daar te ontdekken dat er geen nieuw land was, alleen de nachtmerrie van een eeuwige wederkeer" (Wieringa 236). Eternal recurrence becomes a nightmare when you return to where you wanted to flee from. They have never crossed the border they presumed to have crossed. Beg speaks to the rabbi about this: "De grens?! Er was helemaal nooit een grens! Er was alleen maar het product van een boosaardige verbeelding: een kopie van een grens, een nagebootste grens" (Wieringa 231). The border being imaginary of course reflects on how the human traffickers framed them, but it might also be read in a more philosophical way, meaning that there never is an actual border, as any border between countries is imaginary because they are man-made. This would mean that one is not ever able to leave everything behind, that one's history cannot be denied by being in another country.

The idea of eternal recurrence is further explored in several other fragments. During their time in the desert, the refugees recognize the inevitable circle of life: “Zijn dood was onafwendbaar, zoals het zaad op de aarde moest vallen en sterven om in het voorjaar weer vrucht te dragen. De stroper, de vrouw en de jongen komen uit boerenfamilies, zij weten hoe zulke dingen gaan. Zij kennen de eeuwige kringloop. Hoe uit de dood nieuw leven kiemt” (Wieringa 262). The death couldn’t be prevented because it is part of this cycle, which means that the cycle is seen as something inevitable that needs to be undergone.

Eternal recurrence, I argue, is used as a tool to show that history cannot be denied and always comes back. Eternal recurrence in that reasoning is comparable to the circle of life: inevitable and necessary. I believe that this opposition is purposely made in the novel in order to illustrate that. In the novel, eternal recurrence has a different connotation for the Jews and the refugees. The Jews value repetition. This appears from their prayers and from the way that they carry their four thousand years of history with them. The refugees, on the other hand, prefer a linear way of history as they try to overcome their history. In my opinion, the purpose of the references to eternal recurrence is to show how a linear way of life is impossible because everything has happened before. The refugees fail in their attempt to linear history, not only because they end where they began but also because their journey was a repetition of many earlier expeditions through the desert.

In eternal recurrence, as in the circle of life, repetition is of utmost importance. Beg points to this importance of repetition in the Jewish religion: “Hij leerde bidden in het Hebreeuws en ging het ge-exalteerde universum van de herhaling binnen. Hij wist dat herhaling vervoering kon oproepen en dat vervoering het mysterie dichterbij bracht. [...] Hij was moe, het juk van herhaling was van zijn schouders gevallen, hij wachtte alleen nog op de dood” (Wieringa 272). If repetition can bring the mystery closer, eternal recurrence does so as well, as it depends on repetition. The fact that Beg is tired of this repetition, inevitably means that he is tired of life, and death, in his case, is viewed as the only escape from this eternal recurrence. The similarities between the passages through the desert of the Jews and the refugees supports this idea of eternal recurrence. History repeats itself, albeit in different circumstances and although the desert now was travelled by a group of different people. The promised conversion of the boy reinforces the idea of eternal recurrence that the novel is suggesting, as the boy accepts the same religion as his predecessors.

Finally, the importance of acknowledging the past is stressed when the boy is in the hospital, as he is described looking as if he is going to die of a disease of the past: “Het lijkt of de jongen zal gaan sterven aan een ziekte van vroeger, zo mager is hij. Doorschijnend haast” (Wieringa 222). This can be interpreted in different ways. First, it can simply refer to an actual disease of the past which caused extreme thinness, but it can also be read more symbolically. One of these symbolic ways is that the disease of the past functions to show the reader that one cannot deny his past, because it finds its way back to you and consumes you if you haven’t processed it. Another way to interpret it is that as the boy returned to his point of departure, he in a way returned to his past. This has everything to do with eternal recurrence, as it seems impossible to exit the circle of repetition. The boy then looks as if he is going to die of a disease of the past because he finds himself in the same past that he was fleeing, a past that he needed to get away from to survive.

This analysis shows the importance of history and repetition. I believe that the comparison between the Jews and the refugees is established to show how history repeats itself. This is backed up by the desert as their mutual place of significance. The Jewish were stateless people for a long time and found a common ground in the desert, where their religion started, the same way in which the stateless refugees connect with each other through this desert. The repetition of history is an important aspect of the story as it strengthens the comparison between the Jews and the refugees and because it shows us that the world did not learn from the events that have taken place with the Jews, especially during the Second World War. The reference to the Jews in the Second World War is not strange as that time period knew as many refugees as there are now.

I am convinced that the parallel between the Jews and the refugees is used in order to show that refugees are mistreated. The comparison with Jews from the camps makes the reader uncomfortable, as everyone knows the horrible history of the Jews. I believe that the comparison thus, together with the four modes of inhuman representation, functions to make the reader aware of the inhuman treatment that refugees receive in real life. The refugees are compared to figures of the past, either to Moses and his people during the Exodus from Egypt or to the Jews from the Second World War. I believe that the comparison to figures of the past leads to their ghost-like representation, which is categorized under the modes of invisibility and nonbeing. This brings me to the discussion of the four modes of inhuman representation present in the novel.

Modes of infrahuman representation

3.1 Animalistic/naturalistic mode

The characters in the novel are referred to as Vitaly, the woman, the boy, the tall man, the man from Asjchabad, the poacher and the Ethiopian. They do not learn each other's names because there was no reason for names: "Er was geen reden voor namen" (Wieringa 236). This, I believe, signifies the unimportance of identity in times of survival. When the only goal is survival, or naked self-preservation, identity becomes an unnecessary by-product, a luxury. I will elaborate on this later on.

The Ethiopian is the only one ethnically defined, which I believe highlights his importance for the story. They regard him as a being that is closer to animals than to humans. When they see the Ethiopian kiss a cross, they realize that he is a religious man. This interferes with the view they had of him: "Nu moest hij de man uit Ethiopië als *mens* beschouwen, terwijl hij hem eerder had gezien als een onschadelijk dier in de staart van de karavaan, dat tussen hun benen schuimde en de hazenbotten nog verder afkloof dan zij al hadden gedaan" (Wieringa 41). This specific sentence reflects how the man from Asjchabad views the Ethiopian. However, when the Ethiopian saves the tall man by sharing his food and water, the tall man also acknowledges his humanity: "De zwarte was een mens zoals hij, het leek er alleen op dat het mens-zijn bij hem op een andere manier tot uiting was gekomen, zoals bij de ezel en het paard" (Wieringa 71-72). The tall man now accepts the Ethiopian for the human being that he is, but he also draws a parallel between them and different kinds of animals.

When the Ethiopian is killed by a perpetrator unknown, the man from Asjchabad finalizes the equalization: "Eens had hij hem een kruis zien kussen. Hij had een godsdienstige aap gezien. Hij was erdoor beledigd. God was er niet voor ezels en honden en apen. [...] Nu de waanvoorstellingen waren opgetrokken, zag hij alleen nog maar hoe gelijk ze waren geweest in hun lijden en hun wanhoop" (Wieringa 179). This can either mean that he has elevated the Ethiopian in his mind from animal to a human being as himself, or it can mean that he degraded himself from human being to animal. Either way, he does not differentiate anymore between someone he previously perceived as animal and himself. I believe that

this shows that he has thrown his ideas overboard that categorize men and animals as different species.

A similar process takes place in the representation of the other refugees. It starts with small, subtle references made by the narrator to elements of nature, such as the poacher who is compared to a mountain: "Hij rust als een berg" (Wieringa 32). The changes soon appear. When the tall man collapses, he is immediately referred to as an animal: "Hij keek als een stervend dier naar hen op" (Wieringa 56). By collapsing, the tall man, now a prey, causes the others to profile as predators: "Zo keken ze nu ook naar hem. Prooi" (Wieringa 57). These references to nature and animals are directly related to the concept of bare life that we previously discussed. As the humans are stripped of their political body, they are reduced to bare life, life without speech, which is characteristic for animals.

The reason for the references to nature or animals can be connected to the concept of bare life. In times of starvation, dehydration and physical exhaustion, in a struggle for survival in short, one has no time or need to think about anything else than this survival. In this matter, the human in survival-mode resembles an animal more than a human being. The good life is no longer taken into consideration. Life is thus degraded to mere living. This connects to political irrelevance in the following way: animals only have access to mere voice, which they can use to express pain or pleasure, whereas men generally have access to language. This, according to Aristotle, makes them political (5). When a human being is reduced to mere living, this does not mean that he is demeaned to mere voice, but it does mean that his secondary life circumstances are of no importance. In mere living, only the life itself is preserved, whether that life is worth living is insignificant.

In the novel, this bare life is referred to in the following sentence: "Er waren soms kleine daden van barmhartigheid, vlug, clandestien bijna; uitzonderingen. Irrationeel. Onverstandig. De groep keurde deze inbreuken op het naakte zelfbehoud af" (Wieringa 57). During their flight, naked self-preservation was all that mattered. What follows is a description of the journey that they all undertook in the truck before being dropped in the middle of the desert:

Een golf van mensen spoelde tegen die muren aan, het was onmogelijk om ze allemaal tegen te houden. Ze kwamen met ontelbaren en ieder van hen leefde in de hoop en verwachting dat hij bij de gelukkigen hoorde die de overkant zouden

bereiken. Het was het gedrag van het dier dat in zwermen reist, dat met het verlies van individuele leden rekening houdt maar als soort zal overleven. (Wieringa 104)

The first sentence is an example of a hydrophobic metaphor, where the group of refugees flushes against the walls of a border. As they are with so many, they are compared to the behavior of an animal that travels in swarms. This creates an image of people thoughtlessly following each other, which is backed up by other fragments: “De reis liet geen ruimte voor andere gedachten. Ze waren mensen zonder geschiedenis geworden, ze leefden nog slechts in een acuut heden” (Wieringa 74). To live without history and only care about urging basic needs is very typical for animals. Indeed, when one has constant concerns about water, food and sleep, there is no room for other thoughts and no point to them as well. The loss of their history is also referred to when the truck drops them in the desert: “Onwennig als vee dat in het voorjaar de stal verlaat stonden ze onder de schoongewassen sterrenhemel, en voelden zich alsof ze opnieuw geboren waren” (Wieringa 106). The reference to the refugees as cattle backs up the idea of the refugees as animals without thought. This dismisses their history and thus their identity. The fact that the comparison with cattle that leaves the barn is made, suggests that the refugees have been locked up for a long time and are finally set to freedom. The reference that is made to rebirth suggests a willingness to start over.

The animalistic representation continues when the refugees reach Michailopol. When the police try to restrain the boy, the narrator portrays the boy as a wolf cub: “Een wolvenjong was het, hij spartelde en ze kregen hem nauwelijks in bedwang” (Wieringa 194). The result of such a representation is that the reader creates an image of the boy as a wild animal rather than of a human being. The purpose of this representation, I believe, is to reflect on the general image that people have of refugees, which is partly formed by inhuman representations in mass media. On the level of the plot, I think that it functions to show how the refugees have lost their humanity in the desert, lacking the time to reflect on their identity, history or moral standards in their struggle for survival. Pontus Beg reflects on the refugees and thinks: “Altijd weer kwam er een moment dat iemand niet meer nadacht over de consequenties van zijn daden, de straf die hem wachtte, maar nog slechts zijn natuur volgde” (Wieringa 209). This he believes not only to be true for the refugees, but for human kind in general. Applied to the refugees, however, the fact that they neglect to think about deeds and consequences is justified by their struggle for survival. Just as there

was no time to think about history, the desert was no place to reflect on ethics as well. The refugees followed their nature, which in the desert, in a struggle for survival, is a nature that is more characteristic for animals than for human beings.

The animalistic or naturalistic mode is thus used to show that in a state of survival, the nature of the refugees turns into one that is closer to the nature of animals. In *Dit zijn de namen*, the loss of history and ethics is an irreversible result of this. According to Wolfe, this animalistic portrayal is a result of the lack of human rights. During their flight, however, I believe that there are multiple reasons for this mode of representation. As the refugees get ready to leave, the women are more hesitant to leave their memories behind, whereas the men want to leave everything, including their identity, behind. During the journey on the truck both men and women wish to be invisible, even to stop existing. The self-awareness starts here and perseveres in the desert, where the bodily trumps the intellectual. I believe this leads to two modes of inhuman representation: the naturalistic mode and the mode of political irrelevance, or voicelessness.

3.2 Mode of political irrelevance/voicelessness

The mode of political irrelevance is closely related to the portrayal of refugees as animals. Firstly, because politics is no priority when the bodily becomes more important than the intellect. Secondly, because both modes relate to the lack of human rights. In the novel, there are some statements made about jurisprudence. Pontus Beg, for example, thinks that language is of the utmost importance in lawsuits: “Gedijen deze niet, dan is er geen juiste rechtspraak. Als er geen juiste rechtspraak is, dan weet de natie niet wat te doen. Daarom moet men geen willekeur dulden in het woordgebruik. Dat is waarop alles aankomt” (Wieringa 35). If words are all that matter in justice, it is all the more important for the refugees to be in charge of their words and to be able to represent themselves.

The refugees themselves, however, believe that it is better to arrive nameless and without identity: “Het was beter om zonder identiteit te arriveren in het land van aankomst. Een mens zonder naam en afkomst verwacht het protocol” (Wieringa 103). This, once again, supports the earlier hypothesis that the refugees are without names and identity during their flight, but adds another reason; when the state in which they arrive does not know who they are and where they are from, it is difficult to send them back.

The lack of trust that the refugees have in the law appears near the end of the novel. When the poacher is questioned by Pontus Beg, the poacher says: “U weet wat ze zeggen. Dat de wet een slang is die alleen mensen zonder schoenen bijt” (Wieringa 250). By saying this, the poacher seems to suggest that the law only works for people with shoes and thus money. The law does not only not work for the disadvantaged, it also bites them in the exposed skin, the soft spot, hence it worsens matters for those who are already vulnerable.

Overall, the law is not spoken very highly of. It depends on language and protocol and it favors the rich. The text does not make any other claims about the law or the voicelessness of the refugees, at least not explicitly. This might have to do with the fact that they do not arrive in a new country as they have not crossed the border. Although the novel does not make any specific claims regarding voicelessness, it does oppose voicelessness simply by allowing the refugees in the story to speak. On the other hand, apart from the few comments on the flaws of the law, the refugees refrain from making political statements. I believe that this is how their voicelessness is actually portrayed. Knowing it is useless, they do not bother. This is supported by the fact that the refugees do not speak often. It is mostly

the narrator that makes claims about them. When the refugees do speak, they do not talk of their past or of who they are. They are defined by the narrator and in that way, they remain voiceless. The only real accusation is the one just mentioned. It was made after their flight, when they found themselves in a civilized world, and it articulates the belief that the law only functions rightly for the privileged and disadvantages the already vulnerable. This supports that the idea that they view themselves as insignificant in front of the law. I think that the novel uses this strategy of representing, in which the narrator defines the refugees, in order to show how refugees are defined by the media.

The many references to natural elements and animals that are used in the text to refer to the refugees suggest that they are degraded to the bare life Agamben was talking about in his *Homo Sacer* (9). In a state of survival, there is no time to think about politics, ethics or whatsoever. Also, in the desert there is no access to human rights or politics. The political relevance of a human being thus depends on how well their life is. Think of the statement by the poacher, who says that the law is a snake who only bites the ones without shoes. Only when one leads a good life, he or she can afford the luxury to mingle in politics.

The struggle for survival thus leads to the political irrelevance of the refugees. They are voiceless because they are defined by the narrator and because they do not utter political beliefs. The refugees are portrayed as animals to show that they have been stripped of their political body. When they arrive in Michailopol, they are rather viewed as the living dead, as people that are so thin that they have become unsubstantial. The process of their disappearing physique has set in earlier though and can be recognized by references to invisibility.

3.3 Mode of invisibility

The mode of invisibility manifests itself in two ways. In one way, as the refugees are referred to as animals, they are considered to be politically irrelevant. This reveals itself through voicelessness, but also through invisibility. As they belong to no state, they cannot be recognized as citizens and as laws are often based on citizenship, the refugees are invisible in the face of law. Secondly, the refugees are described as sight-through, ghosts, or shadows. In terms of invisibility, this is the more evident manifestation of the mode. As the refugees are so thin, they almost become transparent. They are thus politically invisible in an abstract way but almost literally invisible as a result from their hunger.

In *Dit zijn de namen*, this invisibility has a lot to do with shadows, ghost, and the slow disappearance of their humanity. This process starts early in the novel: “Achter hen werden hun voetstappen vlug uitgewist. Ze waren voorbijgangers, ze lieten geen sporen en geen herinneringen na” (Wieringa 17). The lack of traces and memories suggests that they are less than real. This idea is strengthened by how the refugees become more and more transparent. This can be caused by the lack of food but might also hint towards a disappearing of their selves. “De jongen kijkt naar zijn reisgenoten, vuile, uitgehongerde verschijningen; het is of hij ze voor het eerst ziet” (Wieringa 29). As the boy feels as though he sees them for the first time, this suggests that they have changed so much he almost doesn't recognize them.

The Ethiopian seems to be in even worse shape: “Hij was gaandeweg doorschijnend geworden. Wanneer hij aan het einde van de dag opdook bij het vuur en de resten van het schamele voedsel verzamelde, realiseerden de anderen zich dat ze hem al bijna vergeten waren” (Wieringa 40). His transparent appearance can be caused by the lack of food, but the fact that they have almost already forgotten him adds to the portrayal of him as a ghost-like figure, as someone who is less than human, who is closer to death than to living beings. It doesn't take long before the other refugees find themselves in a similar state: “Als schaduwen dwalen ze over de steppe, iedereen zo mager als een riem. Nog even en ze zullen doorschijnend geworden zijn en verdwijnen” (Wieringa 87). Instead of simply stating that they might die soon, another ghostly reference is used. The refugees will cease to exist, which might have more to do with their loss of identity and history than with starvation. I believe that, in representing the refugees as invisible, the novel suggests that a person

without history or identity is no longer a person. The thought that the novel judges the attempt to deny history can be supported by the many references to eternal recurrence.

The will of the refugees to be invisible derives from the dangerous journey that they undertook with the help of a smuggler. In the back of a truck, they needed to stop existing in order to cross the border without being noticed. “Ze wilden het liefst onzichtbaar zijn, zelfs hun schaduwen waren hun tot last” (Wieringa 99). The remark that even their shadows are a burden has to do with the fact that they cannot be seen while crossing the border, but might also be interpreted as a metaphor for their past. Before and during their journey by truck, everyone struggles with memories and which ones to bring and which ones to leave behind. They are not allowed to take luggage with them because this will be a burden on the road. This means that the physical objects of their past are a burden. It has already become clear that during their journey through the desert, their mental recollections of the past are also viewed as a burden and left behind, hence the thought that the burden of their shadows is also a metaphor for the burden of their past is no strange one.

The impossibility of their invisibility is acknowledged when they are at what they believe to be the border: “Hoe hadden ze kunnen denken onzichtbaar te zijn?” (Wieringa 104). The realization of their visibility also implies that they could not get rid of their shadows, which, when following the metaphor, means that they could not deny their past. When the refugees finally arrive in Michailopol, those who see them describe them as: “Schaduwen, van hun lichamen gescheiden” (Wieringa 183). The refugees are referred to as shadows, either to show that they are more dead than living, or to show that they have become their past. This last thought is backed up by how the boy is described when he is in the hospital: “Het lijkt of de jongen zal gaan sterven aan een ziekte van vroeger, zo mager is hij. Doorschijnend haast” (Wieringa 222). A sickness of the past can be read very literal, yet could also mean that he is consumed by the past, by what he has been through. Following the metaphor or not, it is clear that after their journey through the desert, they have become the ghost-like figures that they feared soon to become during their passage through the desert. For instance, when the woman dies after giving childbirth, Beg tells the rabbi: “De vrouw is vannacht gestorven. Ik heb haar gelukkig nog kunnen spreken – een schim van een mens” (Wieringa 275). She was no longer human, but simply a ghost of who she once was.

The transformation of Vitaly has set in even earlier, when they stayed at the house of the old lady with the chickens: “Alleen Vitaly deed niet mee, die kwam nog maar zelden uit de mist van het schimmenrijk tevoorschijn” (Wieringa 280). The reasoning functions both ways; either they have become ghosts of who they once were, or they have become their past. The idea that their past cannot be denied has already been discussed in a separate chapter, but it is important to note that this transparent representation, or the references to invisibility, are not only caused by the hunger the refugees had to endure. They are also used to show how the refugees, roaming the desert without identity, are lacking humanity. This invisibility reveals itself through ghost-like descriptions and therefore, the modes of invisibility and nonbeing are closely linked. When the refugees reach Michailopol, their transformation from humans to nonbeings seems to be complete.

3.4 Mode of death/nonbeing

One way in which the mode of nonbeing appears is through the naturalistic mode. When one is considered to be more of an animal than a human, this implies a human non-being. Another way in which nonbeing manifests itself is through the representation of the refugees as invisible. *Dit zijn de namen* contains many references to invisibility and ghosts. This creates a sense of nonbeing, especially since ghosts are irreversibly linked to death. For instance, at one point during the passage through the desert, the boy perceives the other refugees as a hallucination: “Voor hem uit gaat een hallucinatie; een bonte stoet zonderlingen, met buitenissige voorwerpen behangen, buitgemaakt op hun veroveringstochten” (Wieringa 30). More than ghosts, who are remains of people who have at least existed, a hallucination is non-existing. To be referred to as a hallucination then, is to be denied of existence. The references to nonbeing aren’t restricted to their journey through the desert, but also appear when they are in the truck: “Langzaam verdwenen ze in de schemer. Ze zouden niet alleen maar zwijgen, ze zouden hun adem inhouden en niet meer bestaan tot ze de grens over waren” (Wieringa 100). They thus didn’t only want to be invisible, they wanted to stop existing.

The moment before they depart, in which everyone had to leave their belongings behind, it is stated that they now are nobody: “Nu zijn ze niemand meer” (Wieringa 103). This suggests that by leaving, the refugees leave their past and thus their identity behind. It also suggests that without one’s history and identity, one ceases to exist. I believe that the novel uses this mode of nonbeing to illustrate that one’s history cannot be avoided, that you cannot deny where you come from because it will always stay inside of you. Although I do not think that leaving inevitable leads to a loss of history and identity, I do believe that history and identity are troubled by it. However, they can never be denied or deliberately forgotten. As I argued earlier, the novel hints towards this idea of eternal recurrence, which entails that history cannot be denied because it always comes back. In that way, I think that the declaring of the refugees as nobodies when they leave is just an ironic notion. Their identity or being is not confined to their belongings. It therefore functions as a warning; their humanity is grounded upon their history and identity. Without them, they are nobody.

Throughout their flight, there is only one more reference made to death, which is the following: “Tegen de andere mannen was hij weerloos, al had hij van de stroper niet zoveel

te vrezen, die was neutraal als een dode” (Wieringa 151). The boy realizes that he cannot compete with the men, but adds that the poacher is as neutral as a dead man. To say this of the poacher might mean that he is the one who resembles a dead man the most, as his neutrality reflects his lack of identity. I think that this way of representing shows that the novel critiques neutrality, because neutrality is equated with death. Indirectly, it once again states that without opinion or identity, one might as well be dead.

The most explicit references to death, however, appear when the refugees have arrived in Michailopol. Someone who has called the police to report this group of people exclaims: “‘Het zijn de doden,’ zei ze” (Wieringa 183). Considering the comparison with the Jews and the thought of eternal recurrence, I believe that they are viewed as dead because they embody an age-old story that repeats itself time and again. When Beg speaks about the refugees to the rabbi, he says: “[...] En toch waren ze nergens. Al die tijd hebben ze door een niemandsland gezworven, onder omstandigheden die voor ons niet voor te stellen zijn.” (Wieringa 231). The modes of invisibility and nonbeing are very much connected with the setting of the story, the desert. Wandering the deserts for months, the refugees remain invisible for anyone outside of their group. The desert itself is of significance as well. As a place of infinite sameness and without any reference points can be viewed as a strictly anonymous place, or rather as a non-place. Cleary calls the desert an anti-place: “[...] the anti-place of the desert, the ‘no-place’ between two borders” (qtd. in Limbu 276).

In Jewish culture, the desert is also seen as a spiritual place. This could explain the ghostly references. Omer-Sherman, in his book on Jewish writing and the desert, quotes the Israeli anthropologist Zali Gurevitch, who states that “Between the place and the world lies the non-place, the desert, wherefrom the voice comes and where the book is given” (qtd. in Omer-Sherman 3). The desert as a non-place supports the thought that the existence of the refugees during their flight is troubled. It is like the philosophical question: if a tree falls down in the forest, but no one is there to hear or see it, did the tree fall? In this case however, it concerns a group of people. What makes it uncomfortable, according to me, is that they might as well not exist because they are not perceived by anyone. This would mean that one has to be acknowledged in order to exist. In my opinion, the novel does suggest that this is the case, because of the switching off of the chapters on Beg and the refugees.

Finally, the poacher appropriates the metaphor of nonbeing by saying: “‘Hoe vaak zijn wij niet ingeslapen in de overtuiging dat er geen morgen zou zijn? Wij zijn doden. U kunt ons niet raken.’” (Wieringa 251). The refugees have become the dead because they have lived in a state of survival for so long. I believe that the poacher takes back his representative power by appropriating the mode of nonbeing. He also speaks for the other refugees, which implies that they have formed a community. On the basis of this statement by the poacher, I believe that the novel suggests that the formation of a community is what is necessary for the refugees to reclaim their representation. This is backed up by his proclamation that they cannot be harmed by Beg or the police. According to me, this sentence displays a positive notion because it shifts the refugees from passive objects who are defined by a dominant narrator to resilient people who have self-agency at their disposal.

3.5 Results

The questions I posed in the beginning were: what forms/modes of inhuman representation can be distinguished in refugee representations and how are these modes reflected on in *Dit zijn de namen*? I argue that in the representation of refugees, refugees are often (but not always) portrayed as inhuman, and that in this inhuman representation, there are four modes, or categories, that can be distinguished. The four modes that I have been able to distinguish are the animalistic/naturalistic mode, the mode of political irrelevance/voicelessness, the mode of invisibility and the mode of death/nonbeing. I believe that Othering and the lack of human rights are two causes for inhuman representation.

In *Dit zijn de namen*, these four modes are present. They all connect to each other and to the concept of bare life. What is innovative about the novel is that it uses these modes to critique the way in which refugees are treated. I believe that the references to the Jews and the idea of eternal recurrence criticize the way in which nothing has changed when it comes to the taking in of refugees. The inhuman representation is mostly established through the dominant narrator. The narrator makes claims about the refugees and the refugees themselves speak little. I believe that the dominance of the narrator is meant to show the reader how the subculture is defined by the dominant culture. The inhuman way of representing the refugees would then become a tool in the attempt to show how subcultures are defined by the dominant culture, or voice. In this case, it is the all-knowing narrator who decides who the refugees are and who, in turn, decides that they are less than human.

The danger of such a politics of representation is that the reader might not pick up the subtle clues that it is in fact a critique against the inhuman treatment or representation of refugees. There are only a few points in the text from which appears that it is in fact a critique on the treatment of refugees and Othering. I have stated earlier that, through Beg, the novel seems to acknowledge that people need an Other to define themselves. In my opinion, the critique is therefore aimed at defining oneself at the expense of another. This, however, does not take away the danger of inhuman representation. The reader might actually form an image of the refugees as beings that are less than human when he or she misses the clues. Although I believe that the novel judges the way that

Western media shape an image of the refugee as inhuman, it cannot be directly subtracted from the text. The novel does not evoke feelings of sentiment or empathy. The language used leans towards apathetic, also since some descriptions of the refugees are quite harsh. If the narrator indeed represents the Western society or media, I find the use of this language justified as it reflects on the way that the refugees are spoken about.

Although there always exists a risk of misinterpretation, I believe that by incorporating the form of representation that is simultaneously criticized, Wieringa has taken a risk. If the reader is unaware of the background of Wieringa and fails to notice the hints, *Dit zijn de namen* could be read as novel that promotes inhuman representation. On the other hand, in my opinion this subtlety is exactly what makes the novel extraordinary. As often is said, changes in discourses have to take place inside of that discourse. I believe that this is what Wieringa accomplished. He has implemented the modes of inhumanity in his work, in order to criticize them from the inside. In my view, Wieringa has done this by establishing the comparison between the Jews and the refugees and by referring to eternal recurrence.

Conclusion

The four modes of inhuman representation which I have distinguished in this thesis are all visible in the novel that has been used as a case study. Especially bare life seems to play a big role in inhuman representation, as it leads to representations which are characteristic to the naturalistic mode and the mode of political irrelevance. Furthermore, the symbolical importance of the desert and the references to eternal recurrence show how the past cannot be denied. The significance of the desert can also be related to bare life. In the novel, the desert functions as a place which aids the dehumanization of refugees, as it reduces the intellectual and lays the attention on the bodily (Omer-Sherman xiii-xiv). This means that the desert as a place, or as a non-place, aids the first mode of inhuman representation, in which the refugees are referred to as naturalistic phenomena or animals.

The analysis of the novel has also revealed the relation between Beg, the Jews and the refugees. The comparison with the Jews appears on many occasions and the idea is supported by the title of the novel, which refers to the second book of the Thora. The entire comparison and the references to eternal recurrence suggest that the story is not only something that has happened before, but that it has always happened and will continue to happen. It is a circle from which cannot be escaped, as the refugees return to the same place from which they departed. The repetition implies that migration is bound to be continued, but also shows that nothing is solved or fixed. It relates to the citation from Pfeijffer that I started with. The history of humanity is a history of migration and *Dit zijn de namen* seems to suggest that this will continue in the future as well.

The parallel that Wieringa draws with the Jews is quite obvious, but he never mentions where the story takes place and by not naming the refugees, they remain somewhat anonymous. This results in a universal story that could have happened anywhere and could have been anyone. The significance of borders and boundaries fade in this story, as the refugees never reach a border, and as the country in which the story takes place is of no importance. The universality of the story takes us back to the accusation that Pfeijffer makes against Europe, since he blames her for having lived through refugee experiences of her own, and of not showing compassion now. He pleads for an acceptance of migration, irrelevant of someone's status:

Ik ben een Nederlander die zich in Italië heeft gevestigd. Hoe noemen jullie mij? Ik ben een dromer en een gelukszoeker, een vluchteling voor de motregen in de lucht en de hoofden. Maar waarom mag ik wat zij niet mogen? (Pfeijffer 118)

The universality of the story is also aided by the comparison with the Jews, as they, similar to the refugees, are scattered around different parts of the world. One advantage of the universality of the story is that it blurs the boundaries and shows the reader that it does not matter where migration takes place. The only thing that matters is *that* it is taking place. What can be learned from this universality, but also from the bond that connects refugees, which almost seems religious, is that there is no Other, at least not in the strict sense. Slaughter expresses this in the following way:

Thus, the suspect humanitarian moral is not that we should regard difference as irrelevant to our treatment of others, but that we should treat others as ourselves—that “[a]ll human beings . . . should act towards one another in a spirit of [half-]brotherhood” (UDHR)—because they may not, in the end, be altogether (ethnically) other (321).

Literature, according to him, has the ability to play a major part in the renewing of this humanitarian model. The eternal recurrence of defining yourself at the expense of another has to be interrupted.

Dit zijn de namen has the ability to function as an example of how the treatment of refugees leads to inhuman representation. In this novel, Wieringa has also shown that what people after the Second World War have promised never to let happen again, is still happening. Wieringa has done this by establishing strong metaphors and referring to eternal recurrence, but also by exhibiting four modes of inhuman representation, which are a result of human rights issues and the bare life as described by Agamben. The solution for dismissing this way of representing would require a drastic overturn. Celik argues for a new way of representing:

[...] a hope for the visibility of ethnic and racial Others as fictional characters with more elusive desires as they enjoy the “luxury of playing with words and images,”

characters who enable their spectators to experience anew, reflect on, and hopefully alter for the better the current limited palette of affects associated with the multicultural landscape of Europe. (Celik 134)

However, the view on refugees or ethnic or racial Others is not changed by changing the representation alone. The inhuman representation did not just take shape, it lays bare the way that refugees are treated and view in real life. The inhuman representation is a result of a lack of human rights, a politics of bare life and rusted ideas on citizenship. Not all can be changed overnight, especially the political issues. The responsibility, however, is not limited to politics. Speaking in terms of moral responsibility: it is high time that we learn that there is much more to gain in interaction with each other than in dismissing each other beforehand. It is as Pfeijffer remarks:

Onze nieuwsgierigheid naar de ander is het geheim van ons succes, zo niet van ons voortbestaan. (Pfeijffer 14)

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