

# ANOTHER OTHER: THE REFUGEE ON FINDING THE MISSING LINK IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE HUMAN ZOO

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ABSTRACT:

As a consequence of the 'refugee-crisis', right-wing movements all over Europe are the political agenda. A close investigation of how cause and effect are connected is therefore long overdue. By closely analyzing Brett Bailey's controversial artwork *Exhibit B* that features several tableaux vivants depicting colonial subjects and refugees, this paper seeks to accomplish two goals: first, to illustrate that the so-called 'refugee-crisis' is a direct result of past (and ongoing) colonial interventions by the European nations; and second, to address the arduous task of defining the self in times of 'crisis'. As a sort of panoptic 'mirror stage', the human zoo format of the late 19th and early 20th century was a cardinal means to corroborate European economic predominance, cultural superiority, and racial fixity by constantly reproducing the hegemonic binary between 'them' and 'us'. *Exhibit B* uses this intertext to bind together early (colonialist) representations of the Other and the latest 'product' of the global economy by laying bare the space both of these processes of Othering rely on in order to take effect: the 'zone of indistinction', the sovereign-declared threshold between *bios* and *zoē*. This paper hence uses the transformative link of *Exhibit B* to the 'human zoo' in order to argue that 'the refugee' is the biopolitical product of a continuously progressing

process of othering; he is the result of predominant colonial narratives and economic structures: an 'uncivilized' and 'potentially dangerous' (human) being that is incompatible with 'our' norms and values; he is a modern *homo sacer* dwelling in ever-changing zones of indistinction – he is another Other.

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