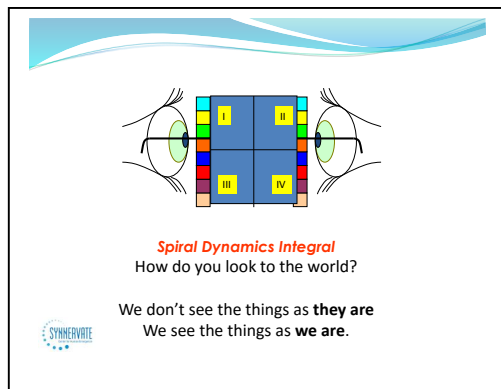# Refugees in The Netherlands
as seen from Spiral Dynamics integral

no one leaves home unless
home is the mouth of a shark [1]

1.   Introduction

For over 20 years I have been involved in supporting refugees in The Netherlands to find their place in society. In 2006, together with my Somalian friend Naima I started the *Quality Centre for Refugee Women* with the aim to organise coaches and network meetings for the women. During the three years that the project was funded, our great intercultural team reached about 80 refugee women. Our approach was for a refugee woman to form a dyad with a woman who was deeply familiar with the ins and outs of Dutch society, culture and its written and unwritten rules and regulations. The dyads were meant to turn into something much like a friendship in which you learn from one another. Many of these (intercultural) contacts are still alive. To give a recent example: when an Iranian poet gave a performance during a cultural day, her former dyad-partner who is also a writer, supported her with the translation into Dutch language.

Spiral Dynamics Integral
How do you look to the world?

We don't see the things as **they are**
We see the things as **we are**.

I have faithfully been using Spiral Dynamics integral (SDi)[2] since 2005, as this theory has given me a wealth of insights and perspectives to act upon in fields such as community empowerment or working with refugees. Setting up the Quality Centre, I began by analysing the situation of refugee women in the four quadrants. On this basis we developed strategies and policies. We designed 'developmental cards' to be able to check the progress of the women and coaches, and developed a model for integration. This model is explained in section 5 of this paper.

These days, as we all know, the refugee issue has become even more pressing, so the main topic of this paper is: which (new) insights for policy making emerge when we apply SDi to the refugee issue. After having painted you a picture of how things are in The Netherlands, where I live (in section 2), I will discuss three major themes that are related with the refugee issue in my country. The first theme (in section 3) is the perceived cultural difference and the use of the concept of 'culture' in the public discourse. Politicians and people often speak about 'our' culture and 'their' culture, creating a gap that in fact doesn't exist. This causes distance between people and increases more resistance, fear and anger. The second theme (in section 4) is how to deal with the anger and hate that is emerging and the third one (section 5) is the integration of refugees in our society.

Using the Spiral Dynamics lens to inquire what new light this sheds on the three themes, I presume that the reader is familiar with the basic theory.

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[1] From a poem written by the Somalian-British poet Warsan Shire
[2] See Don Beck and Chris Cowan: *Spiral Dynamics, Mastering Values, Leadership and Change*, 1996 and the new Spiraldynamicsintegral website that will be launched during the IEC 2016

2.   The situation in The Netherlands

In the past The Netherlands has been a country that welcomed people from other countries, mainly because of economic reasons. From the end of the 16th century, protestant people from all over Europe fled to The Netherlands out of fear of persecution by the Catholic Church. Many of them were craftsmen, artisans, artists, scientists and they contributed a lot to the wealth of a period of thriving in the 17th century that we call our Golden Age. However, the situation of most immigrants was quite poorly, they lived mostly at the outskirts of the city doing jobs that weren't paid very well. Between 1500 - 1800 more than 1,5 million immigrants came to live here. There were no big conflicts between the different groups of the population in this time when borders were not clearly defined yet. There were no restrictions to where one could live so people moved around to find a good place to live. Live and let live was the rule.

Around the year 1800, there was an increase in constitutional structures which was combined with clarifying boarders between the different states. Around 1850, the Netherlands counted 3 million inhabitants and the economic situation had deteriorated. In bad times generally nationalistic attitudes emerge and in 1849 the Dutch government adopted a Law for Strangers: from now on refugees needed to have papers and financial means in order to get a foot in the door. In the period 1850 – 2000 the growth of the population was caused mainly by the natural increase. There was little immigration with even more people emigrating than coming in. During World War I nearly 1 million Belgians lived temporarily in our country but they went back when the war was over. And after World War II some 300,000 people immigrated from Indonesia, that we had occupied as a colony for over 400 years.

Our present multicultural society started mainly in the seventies. Because of the booming economy, businesses needed labour. Men were recruited from Southern Europe and later on from Morocco and Turkey. They stayed and later brought their families over. Around 1975, many people from Surinam domiciliated in The Netherlands when this colony got its independence. As to refugees we had some from Chili and Eastern Europe (3,300 Hungarian refugees in 1956). The arrival of refugees from former Yugoslavia, the Middle-East and Africa started in the nineties.

Looking through the SDi lens, one can see that The Netherlands was a quite peaceful country that has real difficulties to deal with Red. After World War II, all efforts were oriented on creating a new wealthy society and sustainable peace. Orange was booming. From the sixties onwards, the Green [v]Meme emerged strongly: people did all kinds of personal emotional work and communication courses, organisations devoted themselves to changing and improving the world. Optimism ruled. Then, in the nineties, partly because of economic reasons, the ground shifted. A more right-wing, and even neo-liberal, politics came along. One of the effects of this shift is a growing societal gap between people living from the traditional value systems (Purple, Red and Blue) and the Orange/Green. This is reflected in the refugee issue.

We are generally known as a tolerant country. From a historic perspective this seems to be true, but in the nineties and especially after 9/11, part of the population became fearful and turned against 'foreigners'. A few political parties took the issue of foreigners up as their main topic and according to

recent polls the party of the populistic politician Wilders would become the biggest if national elections were held. Can we do anything to influence the course of things….?

3.   'Our' culture?

The first theme I want to look into deeper is the use of the concept of culture. By default, many people react to incoming refugees and other migrants or any conflicts that arise from this complex issue, with the judgment: "*'They' have to adjust to 'our' values, norms and way of life"*. The terms 'our' culture and 'their' culture are used time and time again in politics, in institutions, on the street and in the (social) media and deployed at all levels. It seems that everything is said and made clear with this differentiation. In fact, it is very misleading.

Part of the Dutch population thinks that "all refugees are Muslim; their relationship between men and women is unequal by definition; they don't support freedom of expression, democracy and a free way of life; they are criminals, they might rape our wives and daughters, or be terrorists, in brief: they are very dangerous and not like us. If they want to stay here, they have to become like us".

People are afraid that their own way of life would be threatened because of the presumed character of 'their' culture: "I am used to wear miniskirts in summer, but if they are here, I cannot do that anymore". Or: "We cannot let our daughters cycle alone to school because they have to go by the asylum centre". Other people are more concerned about the presumed negative effects of caring for the newcomers on their life: "My daughter and her family are waiting for an own house for more than 5 years, and they just arrived and already got one". "They cancelled the day-care for my father, yet these people get everything they want, for free".

We can observe that in many circumstances true or balanced information is missing and that fear is driving the way of thinking and acting of many people. Prejudices abound and are freely expressed. People don't see the difference between refugees and economic migrants. Often they are struggling with their own life issues and feel they are not seen by politics. Obstacles to creating more awareness and nuanced thinking are that different groups of the population use different sources of information and that opinion making mainly happens in homogeneous social groups and networks, where the same (old) messages are repeated.

Many facilities for the newcomers are organized on the basis of this paradigm that *'they' have to adjust to 'us'.* For instance, the education for the incoming refugee children has the Green character that is usual in The Netherlands. Whereas these children are used to strict Blue school structure, missed several years of their school attendance because of war and being on the run and have had intense and horrific experiences. Instead of working on their own in mixed groups such as the Dutch children have been used to from an early age, these children need a safe environment and classical instruction. They also need space to share their stories and feelings of fear, sadness, bereavement and shock. The good intentions of the more complex Green value system are out of sync with the life circumstances of the refugee children.

So, what is OUR culture and what is THEIR culture? Often it appears that the speaker by WE refers to the white indigenous Dutch and by THEY means people from another ethnic background even if they have the Dutch nationality. However, at least more than 20% of the current Dutch are not originally rooted here and this number is probably higher. These people are certainly part of the Dutch WE. In my opinion these dualistic terms cause confusion and a wrong image of all involved actors. Our queen Maxima once publicly said: "There is not one 'Dutch culture'" and she is right. The Dutch population is very diverse as it consists of many different groups with their own cultures and ways of life. So what we are talking about?

What is meant by culture?
So let us see if we can create more clarity to this matter. What is meant by the concept of 'culture'? You can look at human beings and the similarities and differences between them in various ways.

Every man is in certain aspects:
- like all other men,
- like some other men
- like no other man

- Universal (like all other men): In some aspects all people are the same with a comparable physical, mental and spiritual appearance. All people share the same basic needs of food and shelter and experience the same basic emotions like anger, love, sadness, sexuality and fear. General differences are gender, age or physical abilities.
- Cultural (like some other men): People live in various social systems, e.g.: family, school, friends, work, religious institutions, a neighbourhood. Each social system has a specific way of living and working together, called its culture. Culture is the "common world of experiences, values and knowledge that is characteristic for that social system". It is a shared world of meaning: anyone knows what is meant by certain words, gestures, habits, clothing. Every child is raised in a specific (sub)culture and during their life they will meet and include many other cultures. A cultural lens is not static but changeable. Each day we shape and form our cultures in public and private dialogues. Cultural lenses are a resource when acting in the outside world: you know what is expected from you and how you can realise your goals. If you are a stranger like new refugees in The Netherlands are, you have to come to understand all these new (sub)cultures and find your way.
- Individual (like no other man): Any human being has their own capacities and talents, a specific personality and a unique way of structuring information in the brain. We are able to reflect on our own behaviour and can develop and change. The way each person relates to their own existence is unique.

These three approaches are complementary. They each explain a part of the human condition. But, under this differentiation in universal, cultural and individual aspects a deeper layer is visible. These are the Universal Codes of the vMemes. Spiral Dynamics gives us another lens to look at similarities and differences between people. Human beings develop during their life through the Spiral: the different vMemes/value systems/perspectives that have emerged up till now. People who share a specific value system have a lot in common, although it might look if they are quite different. My book about Roma in Eastern-Europe appeared to be well applicable to the rural population of Malawi. The specific cultural manifestation of value systems might differ but the fundamental source is the same.

Spiral Dynamics
Generally, Western people think that their way of living - or the so-called Western culture - is very special. "We are wealthy, we earn a lot of money, we live in decent houses, we have beautiful clothes

fitting in the hype of that moment, we can buy anything, we are smart, we have the freedom to do what we want, no restrictions, we are successful in all we do like in technical or health innovations; we have a democratic state and all institutions that are needed in society, we have our free time to spend on hobbies and holidays. And we deserve that all. Here we accept gay people, here is freedom of expression, we are tolerant towards other people, we can discuss our tensions instead of using weapons, we treat all people as equals, we help the rest of the world to become democratic and rich, too. These are 'our' values and norms."

Seen from the Spiral, however, these values and norms belong to the Orange and Green value systems. Because of a firm Blue foundation, it became possible for many western countries to bloom in the Orange realm and for part of the population to develop the Green perspective. But in fact, any person, any organisation and any country on earth has the potential to develop along the Spiral if the life conditions are favourable. It is not a 'Western' privilege.

Even in my country that nowadays functions in dominant Orange/Green based on strong Blue, around half of the population is still living from the traditional perspectives (Purple, Red and Blue). My colleagues Wilbert van Leijden and Paul Zuiker wrote a book about the Dutch history in spiral terms[3]. It is highly interesting to read about Beige, Purple and Red life conditions and perspectives in my country in history that are easily comparable with the present life conditions in the Middle-East or Africa. And it is good to realise ourselves that regression never is far away.

Probably, the countries from which refugees and migrants come to Europa, have life conditions and a current dominant value system – or Centre of Gravity - that is less complex and thus lower on the evolutionary spiral than those of the European countries they flock to. In current Syria the Centre of Gravity is Beige-Red, before the civil war it was Red-Blue. However, the people themselves operate from various value systems. Many Syrian refugees are educated people functioning in Blue and a little Orange. African countries mainly are centred in Purple-Red as are many African refugees and migrants, but there also are countless Africans who function from Blue and more complex perspectives. We can see that refugees differ from each other in their developmental paths. Some are traditional, some are entrepreneurial, others have a broad worldview. Blue, Orange, Green and Yellow are not the property of the Western countries. These systems are accessible for everyone, provided their living conditions are favourable for development.
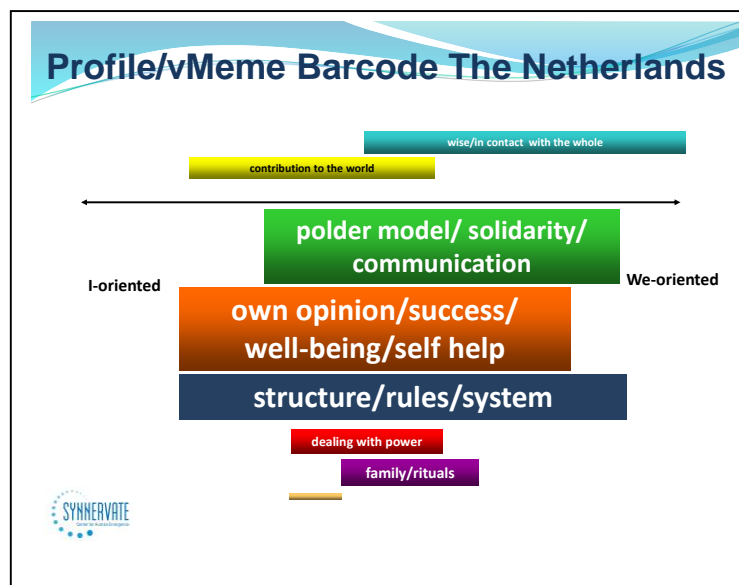
Each country has its own developmental story, just as its inhabitants do. We can see the emergence of the various value systems, the current Centre of Gravity and also the regression that takes place when life conditions exacerbate. The challenge for the receiving countries is to adjust their policies to the various value systems, and to design and implement a differentiated approach to support new comers to find their place in society. As Don Beck says: *"it is not about colour or culture but about codes".*

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[3] Wilbert van Leijden en Paul Zuiker: *Nederland op doorbreken*. Emergent Publishing 2012- www.valuematch.net

4.   How to deal with Red?

The second theme is how to deal with the current anger and hate that is arising in our society. Aggression and violence by words or deeds is a manifestation of an unhealthy Red value system. In this phase of its development, The Netherlands has real difficulties to find effective answers to deal with Red. Of course, we have inhabitants operating from all the different value systems, in healthy or unhealthy ways. We have our unhealthy Red in criminal scenes, gangs or domestic violence and in section 3 I highlighted the Blue characteristic to think in 'Us vs Them' terms. On the other hand, the Blue plight to follow and implement the 1951 Refugee Convention is deeply felt, especially by people working in governmental institutions. We also have strong Orange and Green vMemes and a little Yellow. But somehow the firm attitude that is needed to deal with Red seems to have disappeared through the imperative of Green tolerance. However far The Netherlands might have developed, at this moment it lacks healthy Purple and healthy Red. And even a healthy Blue outside of the bureaucratic structures. Our traditional foundation is wavering.

On the other hand, our next natural step will be the Yellow perspective, so we have to work on that too, to find better ways to deal with rising Red as you can see from the graph depicting the distribution of the value systems in my country, our 'vMEME Barcode'[4].

As to the refugees, the general Orange opinion is "We need to protect freedom of expression, so let's support people who are prosecuted for their opinion" and "We can use smart human capital and we need workers to keep our economy and health care systems going". The Green attitude is worded as: "We welcome all people, all refugees, all migrants, regardless of numbers". The Orange-Green expresses a rational, quite open, tolerant attitude towards immigrants. Government on local, regional and national levels operate mainly from these vantage points. Most policy makers do their best to organise temporary protection and asylum centres. The number of private initiatives to support refugees is enormous: there are much more volunteers than refugees! Also many church members are active in organising activities like sports for children and Dutch lessons.

Although people from all layers of society are involved in the volunteer work, the gap between the two parts of the Dutch society shows. Many (young) people from the traditional value systems feel neglected by the liberal government and seem to be disconnected from the Orange-Green success and progress. They feel fear and anger, and are susceptible to nationalistic talk. The strongest and most violent
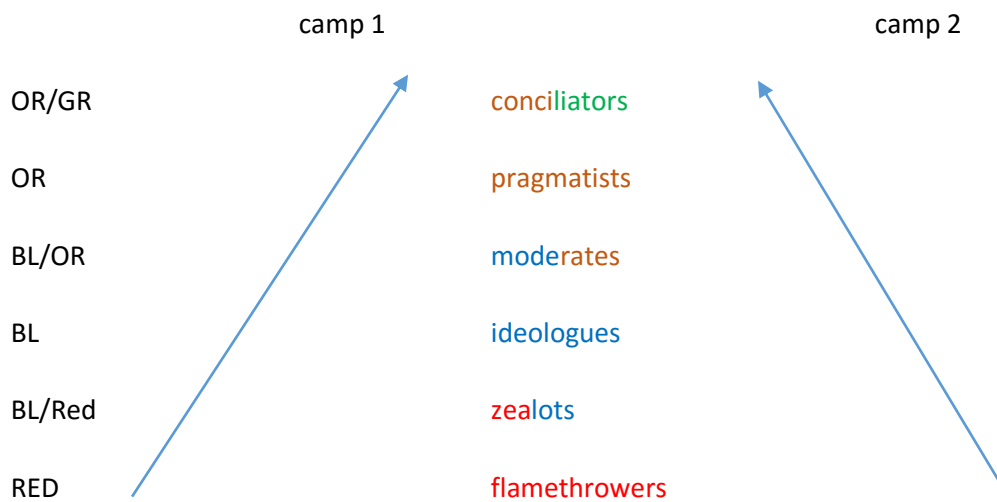
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[4] See Elza Maalouf: *Emerge! The Rise of Functional Democracy and the Future of the Middle East*, p. 188

resistance against 'foreigners' is rooted here in Red/Blue, as is support for IS. Confronted with this phenomenon, the Orange-Green feels powerless, only asks for more protection. The awareness that we have to invest in these citizens has decreased. The current philosophy behind policy making is mainly about self-help and own responsibility.

It is difficult to deal with the anger and hate against migrants that is emerging. In a village where an asylum centre was planned, people hung a dead pig in the trees. Twenty men with balaclava's on assaulted a temporarily asylum centre where 150 refugees lived including 50 children. They threw eggs, and worse, Molotov cocktails. At the same time, we have to deal with IS and the possibility of terrorist attacks. This situation increases the prejudices against the Islam in general, and against Muslim and black people in our country.

The ᵛACE model

I like to introduce Don Beck's and Elza Maalouf's Assimilation-Contrast-Effect or ᵛACE model as a helpful approach to these dilemmas. In Elza's excellent book Emerge![5] she gives a thorough explanation of this model that is based on the Value-systems. In any given conflict there are two camps fighting each other. When you look at these camps through the Spiral lens you can see the same levels and the same roles on both sides:

	camp 1		camp 2
OR/GR		conciliators	
OR		pragmatists	
BL/OR		moderates	
BL		ideologues	
BL/Red		zealots	
RED		flamethrowers	

History and experience teach us that it is useless to try to influence each other from the lowest levels. Flamethrowers, zealots and ideologues from both sides will not listen to each other and just continue their way of thinking and acting. Higher up on the pyramid/in the Spiral there is less distance between the representatives of both camps. They want to meet to find solutions to end their conflict. However, they too cannot influence those troublemakers downstairs. Negotiations with the loudest voices dominating the scene will repeatedly result in failure. The only way out is via the moderates on each side. Moderates are able to influence the ideologues and the zealots. They are acceptable for most of them. They will be listened to and thus can change the dialogue. This is why the role of moderate Muslim thinkers, imams, schools and practitioners is of such importance and why we have to appreciate them instead of accusing them and mixing them up with extremists. This is why the silent part of the Dutch

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[5] Elza Maalouf: *Emerge! The rise of functional democracy and the future of the Middle East*. 2014

population that also consists of moderates, has to express themselves in public and in their social networks. This is why the tendency of the media to look for sensation and the extremes is contra productive.

Don Beck has designed a four-point strategy on how to drive the hearts and minds of people away from the corrosive effects of the 'Us vs Them' dynamic. In the words of Elza Maalouf[6] these four steps are:
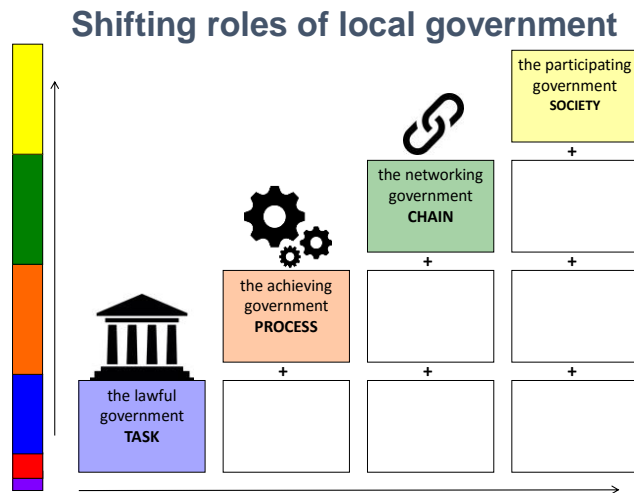1. Create a wedge between the radicals (flamethrowers, zealots and the closed-system ideologues) and the more moderate positions on each side of the value spectrum simultaneously.
2. Enhance the capacities of the pragmatists and the conciliators so they are able to solve the deep conflict and answer to the needs of the people.
3. Anticipate the radical chitchat among the flamethrowers and zealots and depress the polarizing dynamics.
4. Inoculate the masses and the decision makers against the 'Us versus Them' rhetoric.

The most important question then is: how do we bring the moderates and pragmatists on both sides to the table, while empowering them to reject the radical zealots and ideologues on their respective side?

In a few Dutch localities where asylum seekers were housed, a lot of unrest and resistance arose. Some groups said 'no' to any newcomer. Some said: "2000 is too much, but we can deal with 400 in our village and 200 in the neighbouring village". Some said: "All are welcome". We saw demonstrations and violent protests. The authorities reacted in various ways, listening to one of the three voices. I think that the middle voice is the most fruitful, not honouring the closed position of the NO-sayers but listening to their arguments and not uncritically following the Green voice. In fact, this stand requires functioning from a Yellow perspective: understanding the perspectives of all value systems, formulating a transcending purpose and uniting all positive forces. In one neighbourhood people from the three stands started to collaborate spontaneously, looking for new solutions. That is a very hopeful signal!

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[6] Emerge!, p 129-130

The role of government

Shifting roles of local government

the participating government
SOCIETY

the networking government
CHAIN

the achieving government
PROCESS

the lawful government
TASK

What does this mean for the role of (local) government and of institutions/ organizations that are involved in finding solutions for this issue?

Local Dutch municipalities mainly occupy the roles of the lawful (Blue) and achieving (Orange) government. More and more also the Green perspective of the networking government is included. But in order to deal with such complicated problems as the refugee issue or terrorism a Yellow approach is needed. You have to look from a helicopter view, include all perspectives, understand what an effective approach entails and where and when the various roles are appropriate. For policy makers this participating role is completely new and difficult to implement.

An example: The main institution to organise the care for refugees in The Netherlands, called COA, is a very Blue organisation. Partially they have to be because they apply laws, rules and procedures and have to be reliable. They also have result oriented Orange sides helping them in the organisation of refugee centres anywhere in the country. However, they are not able to deal with the many local initiatives that emerge to contribute to new solutions. The mayor of a small town got furious with the COA, because the COA rejected the solution of 40 citizens, the mayor himself included, who provided space for refugees in their own houses. The COA deported all refugees including the children to other asylum centres and so deprived them of a safe start and quick integration in their new country.

It is important to realize that all four roles of local government indicated above remain essential for the functioning of a municipality or other institution. Inhabitants are different and ask for different approaches. From the Yellow perspective one is able to see the needs of the different groups in society and what language and interventions are appropriate for these groups. Like we saw in the example of education for newcomers, it is utterly important to adjust the approach to what is working for them and to let go of one's own ideas. The SDi-lens also shows clearly that more complex roles like Green and Yellow only can be developed if Blue and Orange are transcended ànd included. Looking for chain collaboration without being a reliable partner yourself, is doomed to fail. The facilitating Yellow role to support autonomous civil initiatives also asks for a firm manifestation of the other roles. However, it is not necessary that all people working in these institutions have developed into Yellow. Nevertheless, we need Second Tier/Yellow leaders who are able to design an approach that encompasses each of the levels in their own right.

5.   *A strategy towards integration*

The third theme is integration. Last year Europe was completely taken aback by the numbers of refugees and the (Red) chaos. So was The Netherlands. Now Europe tries to design (Blue) procedures to take more control of the situation. These procedures are mainly oriented towards diminishing and controlling the migration. Few people are thinking about the future: how can we facilitate a good integration of refugees in society?

Steps for integration of the refugees
In the Quality Centre for Refugee Women we learned that the integration of refugees follows certain steps. War refugees are not temporarily guests who will soon set off again. Having nowhere to go, they will stay and thus they need support to build a new existence. They have a strong drive to develop themselves, especially the women and can play a big role in becoming a member of society if they are helped in what they need to do so.

Refugees are functioning from different value systems, but the traditional value systems are most common. For instance, Syrian refugees are most familiar with Purple, Red and Blue and a few have developed into Orange. During the war, the escape, the camps and when they arrive in their new country they are, however, thrown back into Survival (Beige). People are completely disempowered and mainly need good care: shelter, food, clothing, medical and psychological help. A quick asylum procedure also is important so people know what is next. We know that endless waiting and uncertainty might cause new trauma's and put people behind.

From the survival state refugees need to climb the spiral stairs again in their new country, starting with
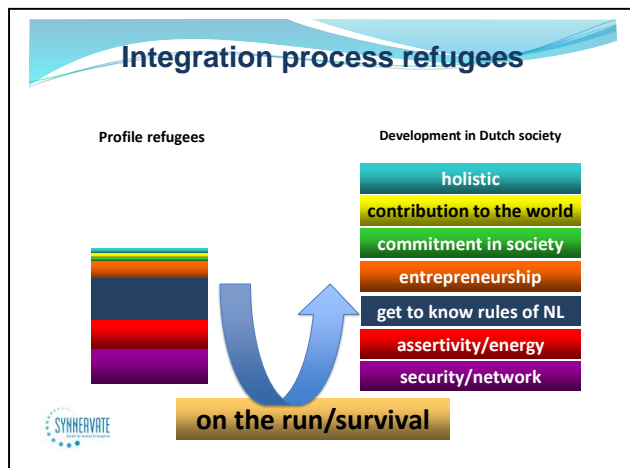
security, connection, a sense of being safe, being part of a (small) community (Purple). The best guarantee for this is when families, friends, people from the same town can live in close proximity of one another. At the same time as a first step towards integration contact and connections can be made with local people in the vicinity. In various towns meetings have been and are being organized where refugees and settled people make food and eat together. Those contacts are vital in the process of integration, especially if the new comers can stay in their first housing place. To have to migrate six times or more is detrimental to developing a feeling of being at home. The best solution is to realize – also temporarily – housing and care for *small groups* of refugees and to involve local citizens in the organisation.

The third step is that people stay active and learn to be assertive in the new circumstances (Red). Refugees have shown much power and resilience in the decision to leave their home land and in their difficult journey. Often they are exhausted when they arrive, but nevertheless full of energy to jump into

their new situation. This can be used in favour of all. Children have to go to school again as soon as possible, youngsters and adults need the opportunity to immediately start with learning Dutch and/or English. Anyone must be allowed to do volunteer work or – even better – to find (temporarily) paid jobs instead of just waiting in the asylum centre for years. Being involved in all kinds of activities and regaining their strengths facilitate a natural beginning of their own new life and is the best remedy against depression and other psychosomatic diseases.

Then, for the people who are granted a licence to stay, the real settling begins: getting to know the Dutch formal and informal rules, the procedures, the many institutions, the forms and finding a balance between their familiar way of life and the norms and values of the new country. Within the Quality Centre each refugee woman was linked up with a coach, a mate, a friend to find her way through this complex societal structure (Blue).

Only after having crawled through the Spiral once more, the possibility to become entrepreneurial and successful opens up for them (Orange). They need to build a new spiral foundation in this new country. Of course, this is easier for people who already could develop higher or more complex value systems than for those who didn't get there in their country of origin. Most Syrian refugees can climb back up to the high levels they achieved earlier, but young refugees from Eritrea often get stuck in their development and stay behind in passive Red/Blue because the gap with their past is so enormous.

Next steps from Yellow
Seen from the Yellow perspective, various next steps to realize integration can be formulated and implemented by policy makers, like:
- Make a clear difference between refugees who try to escape from war, oppression and other reasons described in the Refugee Convention and economic migrants, and develop different strategies and policies for these two groups.
- Think about a new policy: *The Netherlands as an Immigration Country*. Find out how Dutch government can organize controlled immigration for refugees and economic migrants, not as an ad-hoc action but as a permanent activity.
- Integration of refugees means to create the life conditions for them to rebuild their traditional foundation (Purple, Red and Blue) as quickly as possible. On that basis only will they be able to find their place in society and participate in our quite individualistic and self-supporting society.
- Use the positive energy and self-organizing power of established groups in the population who are open to newcomers and facilitate their civil initiatives, like the mayor and his fellow citizens.
- Give extra attention to native and incoming Dutch groups in Purple, Red and Blue who feel threatened in their way of life and need safety and support to develop themselves towards at least a Healthy Blue or even Orange. In Amsterdam a poor functioning secondary school with many black pupils has been transformed into a great institute with clear Blue rules, strong impulses to succeed (Orange) and a lot of (Green) personal attention for the kids.
- Invest in developing countries and create jobs to diminish the need for young men to leave their country to find work.

6.   *European Cooperation*

The Spiral opens up new perspectives and thus new opportunities for action. Nevertheless, the refugee issue is persistent (worldwide 80 million refugees….) and need to be addressed not only in a European but in a global context. The recent Covenant with Turkey to take more control over the immigration route, seems to have effect: a decrease from 70.000 refugees fleeing from Turkey to Greece in January 2016 to a thousand in the first two weeks of April. However, now the number of boat refugees from Libya to Italy is raising again. At this moment it is at least more than two times higher than in 2015. The whole situation is like a 'waterbed': you push on one place and the water will spread to another place.

What is missing, is a more transcending and evolutionary perspective, a historical view, a broad worldwide view. (Blue) agreements and procedures to control immigration are ok. But what to do with refugees sent back to the war zone by Turkey or the refugees who are stuck at the Greek-Macedonian border? What to do with providing the refugee camps outside Europe, in Lebanon, Jordania, Turkey where the majority of the Syrian refugees are located? What to do with economic migrants looking for a better future? What to do with poverty and oppression? All these problems are interconnected and interdependent. That is why we need a Second Tier/Yellow perspective.

In Europe we can see various reactions to the refugee issue. For example, the general attitude of Hungary and The Netherlands is different, becoming apparent in border policy (Hungary closing border with barbed wire fence), the number of policy makers who do their best to organise asylum centres and the emergence of private initiatives to support refugees. The SD-lens shows us a different distribution of the value systems in these two countries, a different 'vMEME Barcode'. This insight elucidates these differences as well as the next evolutionary steps that are needed in the various European countries.

Of course, the European debate also influences The Netherlands. From a pessimistic view you might say that we are regressing to a more isolated country with a quite severe policy towards immigrants. From an optimistic view you might see that a more Yellow thinking and approach is emerging just because the current life conditions of Europe desperately ask for new answers. I would like to connect with my integral colleagues to gather our knowledge and experiences, to reflect upon the whole situation, to be quiet and meditate and see what new prototypes for European solutions emerge from this deep place.

you have to understand,
that no one puts their children in a boat
unless the water is safer than the land [1]

Leida Schuringa
Synnervate/Center for Human Emergence NL   April 2016