



SHAMEFUL AND SENSELESS: EUROPE STRUGGLES WITH A REFUGEE CRISIS

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"We have learned that history is something that takes no notice whatever of our expectations."¹

-- Oswald Spengler

Much has been written about the human exodus streaming into the European Union's southeastern flank through a two-pronged corridor — an eastern land bridge at Istanbul, and a western sea route across the Aegean from western Turkey to Greece. According to Frontex,² the European Union's border management agency, "more than 500,000 migrants were detected trying to cross the external borders of the member states of the European Union illegally between January and August 2015, half of them using the Eastern Mediterranean route."³ This surge has overwhelmed local authorities in Greece and the western Balkan states, as asylum-seekers trek north toward Austria and Hungary. Amidst polemics and finger pointing among the EU-28 member-states, much of the response from Brussels has been more theatric than substantive.

Hungary is a particular target of opprobrium. Prime Minister Viktor Orbán is accused of shirking a moral duty amidst postwar Europe's largest refugee crisis as his government declares, "the boat is full,"⁴ and seals Hungary's 175km southern border with

The title phrase "shameful and senseless" is from an essay written by the Hungarian philosopher and political scientist János Kis published online by the Hungarian language news portal *HVG.hu*. See: http://hvg.hu/velemeney/20151008_Kis_Janos_Gyalazatos_es_esztelen.

The translation of all source material is by the author unless noted otherwise.

¹ Oswald Spengler (1932). "Technics as the Tactics of Living." In Spengler, *Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life*, Charles Francis Atkinson, transl. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf), 6. The original German text was published in 1931 as *Der Mensch Und Die Technik*. (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung).

² Frontex's formal name is the "European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union." The agency was established in October 2004.

³ Council of the European Union (2015). "Justice and Home Affairs Council Agenda for Thursday 8 October and Friday 9 October in Luxembourg." 3. <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2015/oct/eu-jha-council-8-9-oct-back-paper.pdf>. Last accessed 8 October 2015.

⁴ So said Hungarian government spokesman Zoltán Kovács in a 23 June 2015 interview with the Austrian newspaper *Die Presse*. See: "Boot ist voll: Ungarn nimmt keine Flüchtlinge zurück." *Die Presse.com* [published online in German 23 June 2015].

http://diepresse.com/home/politik/aussenpolitik/4761198/Boot-ist-voll_Ungarn-nimmt-keine-Fluechtlinge-zurueck. Last accessed 23 September 2015.

Serbia.^{5,6} Orbán's critics (which are legion) remind him that some 200,000 Hungarians fled west in 1956 after the Soviet invasion. And how Hungary opened its western border action 26 years ago to thousands of fleeing East Germans, starting a dynamic that ended in the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Mr. Orbán responds that a 2014 influx of asylum seekers, mostly from Kosovo, meant Hungary — which last year registered 42,000 refugees — is already reeling under the EU's second highest per capita number of asylum claims, even before it recorded some 80,000 new claims through mid-2015. This, Mr. Orbán points out, is in a country in which per capita GDP is only two-thirds (68%) the EU-28 average, and where the domestic economy accounts for a minuscule 0.7 percent of the EU-28's combined GDP.⁷ He argues moreover that refugees who attempt to enter Hungary via Greece, Macedonia, and Serbia do so from so-called “safe” countries and therefore are ineligible for refugee protection (Slovenia and Croatia make similar arguments).

The European Union's asylum policy is defined by its so-called "Dublin-III" rules. They are based on the principle stating that the member-state through which an asylum seeker first enters the European Union is responsible for processing that person's asylum claim. If the asylum seeker leaves and goes to a so-called "destination" member-state, Dublin-III allows for that member-state to transfer the asylum seeker back to where they first entered the EU. Some 827 persons were returned to Hungary under this rule in 2014.

There is no doubt the number of asylum seekers is swelling: Eurostat reports the EU-28 accepted 817,935 asylum applications from persons hailing from non-EU countries in the twelve months ended 30 June 2015. In the second calendar quarter of 2015, nearly all (93%) were first-time applications, the number of which (228,640) increased 15% quarter-on-quarter and 85% year-on-year.⁸ August 2015 was the fourth consecutive month in which the EU recorded a record number of asylum applications, a rising share (7%) of which were by persons claiming to be an unaccompanied minor.⁹

Syrians today account for the largest number of asylum applications — more than one-fifth of all applications during both the second calendar quarter of 2015 (22.9%) and the twelve months ended 30 June 2015 (20.6%) — followed by citizens of Afghanistan, Albania (mostly ethnic Albanians from Kosovo), and Iraq. Together these four countries account for about half (48.1%) of asylum applications during the second calendar quarter of 2015. Syrians made 43,995 asylum applications in that quarter and 154,210 in the twelve months ended 30 June 2015, representing increases, respectively, of 50% quarter-on-quarter and 104% year-on-year. Similar increases were seen in applications made by Iraqis, Afghans and Albanians.¹⁰

The European Union's dilemma with rising numbers of Syrians, Iraqis and others who arrive claiming refugee status is exacerbated by the length of time required to process first-time asylum applications (and subsequent appeals). This is evident in the swelling number pending applications — up from 434,000 in September 2014 to 568,000 in June 2015. Another factor is the large percentage of applications rejected on first consideration by the largest EU member-states. In second calendar quarter of 2015, for example, refugee status was denied in over half of first-time decisions made by Germany (57%), France

⁵ Once the 175km border fence was erected, Orbán deployed some 4000 Hungarian Ground Force troops (a commitment of nearly 40% of its active duty component) to reinforce Border Guards there, and later deployed another 2000 HGF reservists. The result is that refugees are attempting to circumvent the Hungarian-Serbian border and enter Hungary from Croatia. There is a southern route that crosses into Hungary near Magyarbóly and a western one that crosses near Nagykanizsa. Hungary's relationship with Croatia has become increasingly frosty, with Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó recently calling Prime Minister Zoran Milanović “a pathological liar.” See: "Szijjártó nem bír leállni, most épp szánalmasozza a horvát miniszterelnököt." *444.hu* [published online in Hungarian 18 September 2015. <http://444.hu/2015/09/18/szijasrtó-nem-bír-leállni-most-épp-szánalmasozza-a-horvát-miniszterelnököt/>. Last accessed 23 September 2015.

⁶ A majority of Hungarians believe Orbán's fence will be ineffective in stopping the refugee flow according to a September 2015 opinion poll by Publicus Intézet. Nearly four in five Hungarians (78%) said the border fence will not be effective versus only 17 percent who said it will. A majority (58%) of persons who support Orbán's own Fidesz political party said the same. Nearly two-thirds of Hungarians (64%) said the country has a duty to help refugees. See: "Menekültügy: megosztott ország" ("Asylum: a divided country"). *Publicus Intézet* [published online in Hungarian 19 September 2015]. http://www.publicus.hu/blog/menekultugy_-_megosztott_oroszag/. Last accessed 23 September 2015.

⁷ A standard metric used to define the size of an economy, gross domestic product or "GDP" is defined as the total value of all goods and services produced over a specific time period.

⁸ Eurostat is the Luxembourg-based statistical office of the European Union. Its most recent report on asylum applications was published on 18 September 2015 and covers the period ending 30 June 2015. See: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Asylum_applicants_\(including_first_time_asylum_applicants\)_Q2_2014_-_Q2_2015.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Asylum_applicants_(including_first_time_asylum_applicants)_Q2_2014_-_Q2_2015.png). Last accessed 22 September 2015.

⁹ European Asylum Office (2015). "Latest asylum trends." <https://easo.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/Latest-Asylum-Trends-Snapshot-September2015.pdf>. Last accessed 22 September 2015.

¹⁰ The respective increase in the number of asylum applications quarter-on-quarter and year-on-year are as follows: Afghanistan (109% QoQ & 323% YoY); Albania (117% QoQ & 354% YoY); and Iraq (91% QoQ & 470% YoY). See: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:First_time_asylum_applicants_in_the_EU-28_by_citizenship_Q2_2014_-_Q2_2015.png. Last accessed 22 September 2015.

(75%), Italy (53%), and the United Kingdom (60%).¹¹ As a general rule, however, Syrians and Iraqis fare far better than others. Most Syrians (91.2%) and many Iraqis (74.8%) on first consideration received either refugee or protective status. Among so-called destination countries, Germany was by far the most generous in approving Syrian¹² and Iraqi first-time requests for refugee status.¹³

As divisions harden amongst the EU-28 over resettlement quotas, some commentators persist in characterizing the political dimension of the crisis as a relatively narrow question of state sovereignty.¹⁴ That is perhaps understandable (if nonetheless wrong) given ever-increasing refugee counts and daily images of human misery. The underlying geopolitical question remains important, however, as Rem Korteweg of the Centre for European Reform writes:

"The foreign policy dimension of this crisis has been largely neglected. Europe's leaders are overly focused on dealing with the symptoms — the large groups of migrants and refugees coming to Europe — rather than fighting the causes. A more durable solution surely lies in helping create the conditions that stop people from fleeing to Europe in the first place."¹⁵

This essay considers geopolitical implications of the refugee crisis by assessing two causes of the crisis and one effect:

- Turkey's instrumental use of human refugees to exert political pressure on the European Union.
- Asia Minor's geopolitical reconfiguration within the century-old Sykes-Picot zones of influence.
- The European radical right's coalescence around anti-immigrant, nationalist themes as the refugee crisis redefines European political space.

The convergence of these factors creates something of a perfect storm of geopolitical instability.

It is not possible within the confines of a single essay to examine any single factor in depth let alone do justice to all three, so the treatment here is by necessity cursory. The discussion will focus on select European Union actions in response to the influx of asylum-seekers through the so-called Western Balkan route — the sea passage from Turkey to Greece, then northward by land through the western Balkans to Hungary and Austria — and how the influx of asylum-seekers fleeing the Syrian-Iraqi conflict zone is exploited by far-right political movements in Europe. While these movements have a long-held racial animus, they are opportunistically exploiting the current crisis to shape popular perceptions of immigration through a decidedly racial lens. Thus tough policies to "control borders" are a subterfuge to exclude long-disfavored groups, which these far right political movements see as inimical to their notions of "European culture."

A theme that runs throughout this discussion is bureaucratic inertia and officialism, which the European Union possesses in spades. It is very much in evidence in the inability of EU governing mechanisms to respond effectively to emergent crises,

¹¹ These decisions are called "first instance decisions) See: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:First_instance_decisions_by_outcome_selected_Member_States_2nd_quarter_2015.png. Last accessed 22 September 2015.

¹² Nearly three-quarters (73%) of first instance decisions in 2Q2015 resulted in Syrian applicants being granted refugee status. Almost all (22.3%) the rest were granted protective status. Germany led the EU, granting 12,805 Syrian requests for refugee status or 68.7% of all such decisions by EU member-states in 2Q2015. Bulgaria granted the next highest number (1,555). Sweden made the largest number of first time decisions resulting in protective status (3,725). See: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:First_instance_decisions_by_destination_country_and_outcome_in_the_EU-28_selected_citizenships_of_asylum_applicants_2nd_quarter_2015.png. Last accessed 22 September 2015.

¹³ More than three-quarters (78.4%) of first time decisions in 2Q2015 resulted in Iraqi applicants being granted refugee status, mostly (71.9%) by Germany. Comparatively fewer Iraqis (7.6%) were granted protective status in 2Q2015, however. See: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:First_instance_decisions_by_destination_country_and_outcome_in_the_EU-28_selected_citizenships_of_asylum_applicants_2nd_quarter_2015.png. Last accessed 22 September 2015.

¹⁴ Even this, however, has foreign policy implications. Witness Hungary's rapidly deteriorating relations with southern neighbor (and non-EU member) Serbia, which recently protested Hungary's use of tear gas to disperse persons attempting to cross the border. Objecting to Hungary's plan to extend the border fence to the east, Romanian Prime Minister Victor Ponta wrote that the attitude of Hungarian leaders was unlike "anything seen since the 1920s or 1930s." The Hungarian government responded with a *démarche* or formal diplomatic protest, which the Romanian government refused to receive. Regarding the proposed border fence extension, see: "Orbánék új kerítésterve nem tetszik a románoknak" ("Romanians do not like Orbán's new fence plan"). *Heti Világgazdaság* [published online in Hungarian 15 September 2015].

http://hvg.hu/vilag/20150915_Orbanek_uj_keritesterve_nem_tetszik_a_rom. Last accessed 23 September 2015. Regarding Ponta's reaction, see: "A románok szerint Orbánék Európa szégyene" ("Romanians say Orbán is Europe's disgrace"). *NOL.hu* [published online in Hungarian 15 September 2015]. <http://nol.hu/kulfold/a-romanok-szerint-orbanek-europa-szegyene-1563405>. Last accessed 23 September 2015. Regarding the Hungarian *démarche*, see: "A románoknak is repült a magyar tiltakozó jegyzék, csak nem vették át" ("Romanians transmit but do not accept Hungarian protest"). *Heti Világgazdaság* [published online in Hungarian 16 September 2015]. http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150916_A_romanoknak_is_repult_a_magyar_tiltakozo?s=hk. Last accessed 23 September 2015.

¹⁵ "Will the Refugee Crisis Destroy the EU?" *Carnegie Europe: Judy Dempsey's Strategic Europe* [published online 23 September 2015]. <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=61379>. Last accessed 23 September 2015.

those which "fester and grow, arising from more ordinary circumstances that often mask their appearance."¹⁶ It is not the product of some nefarious hidden motive, nor is the EU the first (or last) political body to rate process ahead of action. On that point, consider this bureaucrat's lament c.1939 written by an American diplomat posted to the Berlin embassy:

"We are getting inquiries constantly that come largely from complaints which are made by people in this country and that arise out of immigration cases. In other words, it is this visa work which is causing the offensive on our establishments. It is unavoidable and is part of the picture with which we have to deal. Whenever an alien applying for a visa does not get all that he wants, he, of course, blames it on some clerk or officer. It is impossible for them to understand that we have a law that we must carry through."¹⁷

So, too, today, many asylum-seekers find inconceivable the gauntlet they must run to escape the Syria-Iraq conflict and find sanctuary in the West. The matter of Asia Minor's violent geopolitical reconfiguration driving the current migration crisis is held to the essay's concluding paragraphs, as a paradigm example of the law of unintended consequences in action.

"Splashing the Cash to Keep Refugees Away"¹⁸

"Whenever a man does a thoroughly stupid thing, it is always from the noblest motives."

-- Oscar Wilde

Claims to the contrary notwithstanding, the current refugee crisis was eminently foreseeable, and at least by some, foreseen: one July 2014 commentary asked the (now clearly rhetorical) question, "Schengen's maritime border: Another *annus horribilis* in the Med?"¹⁹ It also is, contrary to some claims, a security issue.²⁰

By at least one estimate, "Turkey's migration identity has shifted from being principally a country of emigration and transit to becoming a destination for immigrants and people fleeing conflict."²¹ Nevertheless a December 2013 readmission agreement with the European Union obliges Turkey to accept the return of anyone who enters a EU member-state from Turkish territory. Several months after this agreement was signed, the Turkish Parliament ratified a new "Law on Foreigners and International Protection" which came into force in April 2014.²² While instituting many long-overdue reforms, it did not alter Turkey's longstanding policy of limiting refugee status to individuals from European countries, and resettling (outside Turkey) or returning non-European asylum seekers, including persons classified as refugees by the United Nations.

When President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan claimed recently that Turkey was bearing the brunt of the refugee crisis, European Union President Donald Tusk responded quickly, "It is indisputable that Europe has to manage its borders better. We expect Turkey to do the same."²³ There are two factors at work here. The first is a significant increase in refugee flows through Turkey into Europe via Greece and other countries, by persons intending to seek of asylum within the European Union. In the first nine months of 2015 alone, the EU estimates more than 350,000 people crossed illegally into Greece from Turkey, only 50,000 of whom were stopped by Turkish authorities.²⁴ The situation is complicated by actions taken under the 2012

¹⁶ Arnold M. Howitt & Herman B. Leonard, eds. (2009). "Prepared for the Worst? The Dilemmas of Crisis Management." In *Managing Crises: Responses to Large-Scale Emergencies*. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press), 6.

¹⁷ Letter from George S. Messersmith addressed to "Raymond H. Geist, Esquire, American Chargé d'Affaires ad interim, Berlin," dated 8 March 1939. George S. Messersmith Papers 1907-1955. http://udspace.udel.edu/bitstream/handle/19716/7144/mss0109_1168-00.pdf. Last accessed 22 September 2015. As Strupp wrote in a 2006 journal article, "The perception and evaluation of German antisemitism [sic] and the danger for Jews—which Messersmith and Geist in Berlin both took seriously—should have had consequences for U.S. visa policies, but this was not the case." Christoph Strupp (2006). "Observing a Dictatorship: American Consular Reporting on Germany, 1933-1941." *GHI Bulletin*. 39 (Fall 2006), 86. <http://www.ghi-dc.org/publications/ghipubs/bu/039/79.pdf>. Last accessed 22 September 2015.

¹⁸ From a headline in the Russian state-controlled media portal *Sputnik*. See: "Fenced Out: EU Members Splashing the Cash to Keep Refugees Away." *Sputnik* [published online in English 10 August 2015]. <http://sputniknews.com/europe/20151008/1028205501/eu-refugee-crisis-fences-return-policy.html>. Last accessed 10 October 2015.

¹⁹ Hugo Brady (2014). "Schengen's maritime border: Another *annus horribilis* in the Med?" *ISSU Alert* (June 2014), 1. Published online in English European Union Institute for Security Studies. http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Alert_28_Schengen.pdf. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

²¹ Rebecca Kilberg (2014). "Turkey's Evolving Migration Identity." Migration Policy Institute [published online 24 July 2014]. <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/turkeys-evolving-migration-identity>. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

²² Law No. 6458 was intended as a comprehensive approach to migration management that would address the many gaps in Turkey's migration policies. A detailed summary is available here: https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/files/Publications/Briefings/TurkMiS/Brief_2_Ariner_Acikgoz_2014.pdf. Last accessed 7 October 2015. <http://euranetplus-inside.eu/turkeys-erdogan-and-eu-discuss-refugee-crisis/>. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

²³ "Turkey must play more active role to contain refugee influx: EU." PressTV [published online 6 October 2015].

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2015/10/06/432171/EU-Turkey-Erdogan-Donald-Tusk->. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

²⁴ "Turkey's Erdoğan and EU Discuss Refugee Crisis." EuranetPlus [published online 6 October 2015].

readmission agreement and the 2014 migration reform law that substantially closed traditional refugee land routes into Greece, which had the unintended effect of shifting refugees to more dangerous sea routes. The second factor is the unexplained movement of large number of refugees — 2 million persons by some estimates — to Europe who have spent years in Turkey. This confused state of affairs is captured by Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's somewhat quizzical declaration, "We understand the people who want to go to Europe from Turkey or any other country. We will not stop anyone who is willing to leave. We'll not say 'go' to someone who wants to stay."²⁵

Human rights activists and others accuse the EU of shifting responsibility for asylum seekers to Turkey and the countries of the western Balkans, especially Serbia and Macedonia. "Preventing uncontrolled migratory flows from Turkey to the EU" was the declared goal of a 6 October draft action plan published jointly by the European Union and Turkey. The recitation of each side's intentions boils down to the EU promising Turkey large sums of money (up to €1 billion over two years) to hold "Syrian and Iraqi refugees" in check within Turkey, and to prevent "irregular migration"²⁶ into Greece and Bulgaria. Turkey also is given access to additional amounts in the recently stepped-up EU Regional Trust Fund. The EU pledges to support Turkey in the execution of "joint return operations," which include "reintegration measures toward countries of origin" and "preventing irregular migration" from "Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Bangladesh."²⁷ Turkey remains officially noncommittal on the package of one-off measures: according to Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekçi, "We would be pleased with financial aid by the EU but this is not the solution. The solution is making those people happy in places where they were born and have lived. There is a need to make the environment there livable for them as soon as possible."²⁸

The European Union's other endpoint — this according to a leaked copy of a Council of the European Union position paper — is to "do more in terms of return. Increased return rates should act as a deterrent to irregular migration"²⁹ *The Times of London* condemned it as a "secret EU plan to throw out thousands of migrants."³⁰ That conclusion, albeit dramatic, is not altogether without basis. According to a September 2015 European Commission document titled "EU Action Plan on return:"

"[The EU's system to return irregular migrants is not sufficiently effective. In 2014 less than 40% of the irregular migrants that were ordered to leave the EU departed effectively. One of the most effective ways to address irregular migration is the systematic return, either voluntary or forced, of those who do not or no longer have the right to remain in Europe. Fewer people that do not need international protection might risk their lives and waste their money to reach the EU if they know they will be returned home swiftly."³¹

The means to this end is once again financial aid, here directed to a group of so-called "enlargement countries" via a funding channel known as the "Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance." The enlargement countries consist of five so-called "candidate countries" — Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey — and two "potential candidates" — Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. The EU committed €54 million in "overall pre-accession support for migration-related activities" in Serbia. This comes in addition to €1.5 million already allocated by the EU in August 2015 "to assist refugees and migrants in Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia." The latter is pledged an additional €24 million in "overall pre-accession support for migration-related activities (both past and planned)." Montenegro (€22.6

²⁵ Quoted in "Turkish PM to send letters to world leaders on behalf of Syrian refugees." *Hurriyet Daily News* [published online in English 20 September 2015]. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-pm-to-send-letters-to-world-leaders-on-behalf-of-syrian-refugees-.aspx?pageID=238&nid=88746&NewsCatID=338>. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

²⁶ The International Organization for Migration defines the term *irregular migrant* to mean "a person who, owing to unauthorized entry, breach of a condition of entry, or the expiry of his or her visa, lacks legal status in a transit or host country. The definition covers inter alia those persons who have entered a transit or host country lawfully but have stayed for a longer period than authorized or subsequently taken up unauthorized employment (also called clandestine/undocumented migrant or migrant in an irregular situation)." See: <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms#irregular-migrant>. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

²⁷ European Commission Fact Sheet. "Draft Action Plan: Stepping up EU-Turkey cooperation on support of refugees and migration management in view of the situation in Syria and Iraq" dated 6 October 2015. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-5777_en.htm. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

²⁸ "Turkey yet to agree on EU migrant action plan: Foreign Ministry." *Hurriyet Daily News* [published online in English 7 October 2015]. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-yet-to-agree-on-eu-migrant-action-plan-foreign-ministry.aspx?pageID=238&nID=89512&NewsCatID=510>. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

²⁹ Council of the European Union (2015). "Draft Council conclusions on the future of the EU return policy" dated 2 October 2015, 4. <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2015/oct/eu-council-draft-return-policy-conclusions-12420-15.pdf>. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

³⁰ <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/europe/article4578486.ec?shareToken=f8eb0ead32f15defe7fb90a7a3264556>. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

³¹ European Commission (2015). "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council: EU Action plan on return" dated 9 September 2015, 2. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/communication_from_the_ec_to_ep_and_council_-_eu_action_plan_on_return_en.pdf. Last accessed 8 October 2015.

million), Kosovo (€7.1 million), and Albania (€4.5 million) received similar EU funding pledges.³² A headline in the Russian state-controlled news portal *Sputnik* derided the EU plan as "Fenced Out: EU Members Splashing the Cash to Keep Refugees Away."³³ EU "cash splashing" goes in the direction of member-states as well. So far, the EU has paid out €48.3 million in emergency assistance and €14.5 million in border assistance to member-states. Over half (53.2%) of emergency assistance went to three countries — Italy, Germany and France — while about a fifth went to the two frontline member-states in the western Balkan migration pathway, Austria and Hungary. Over half of EU emergency border assistance went to Greece (52%) with the balance to Italy (37.8%) and Hungary (10.3%).³⁴

Rassegefühl³⁵

"Those who talk too much about race no longer have it in them. What is needed is not a pure race, but a strong one, which has a nation within it."³⁶
-- Oswald Spengler (1933)

Among its several effects, the refugee crisis radicalizes and redefines political space within the EU. A clear manifestation is an emerging European narrative galvanized around national political themes of immigration, and implicitly, race. Political parties that self-define around these themes — perhaps the most influential of which is Hungary's *Jobbik Magyarorszáért Mozgalom* ("Jobbik, the Movement for a Better Hungary") — are often dismissed as extremist, though that term is rarely defined explicitly.³⁷ The intentionally pejorative neo-fascist — the prefix *neo-* is meant to delink and liberate the root from a specific historical period³⁸ — is likewise unsatisfactory, insofar it remains nested in the concept of the extreme right, i.e., all fascist parties are extreme right parties, but not vice versa.³⁹

³² http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-5621_en.htm. Last accessed 7 October 2015.

³³ <http://sputniknews.com/europe/20151008/1028205501/eu-refugee-crisis-fences-return-policy.html>. Last accessed 8 October 2015.

³⁴ European Commission (2015). "Annex to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council. Managing the refugees crisis: immediate operational, budgetary and legal measures under the European Agenda on Migration. ANNEX IV. Financial Support to Member States under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund." Document dated 23 September 2015, 2-3. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/communication_on_managing_the_refugee_crisis_annex_4_en.pdf. Last accessed 8 October 2015.

³⁵ The German word *Rassegefühl* translates literally as "race feeling." It is perhaps most easily understood in the context of the phrase *den Rassesinn und das Rassegefühl instinkt* ("the instinctive racial sense and racial feeling"). It is from a longer passage in *Mein Kampf* that reads, "that inside burns the instinctive racial sense and racial feeling in the hearts and minds of youth" whose education is entrusted to the National State (*völkischen Staates*). See: Adolf Hitler (1936). *Mein Kampf*. (München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP), 475f.

³⁶ The full paragraph reads in English: "But in speaking of race, it is not intended in the sense in which it is the fashion among anti-Semites in Europe and America to use it today: Darwinistically, materially. Race purity is a grotesque word in view of the fact that for centuries all stocks and species have been mixed, and that warlike — that is, healthy — generations with a future before them have from time immemorial always welcomed a stranger into the family if he had 'race,' to whatever race it was he belonged. Those who talk too much about race no longer have it in them. What is needed is not a pure race, but a strong one, which has a nation within it." From Oswald Spengler (1934). *Die Jahre der Entscheidung, Erster Teil: Deutschland und die weltgeschichtliche Entwicklung*. (München: Beck), 114.

After the book sold 150 thousand copies within three months of its publication in 1933, the Nazi government forbade further mention of Spengler's name and took measures to suppress the book. While as Hildegard Kornhardt wrote, "These measures achieved the desired effect — but they could not prevent the surreptitious circulation of the thousands of copies that were already in the hands of the public." [Kornhardt, ed. (1948). " 'Deutschland in Gefahr': Frangmente zum II. Band der 'Jahre der Entscheidung' von Oswald Spengler," *Echo der Woche: Unabhängige Wochenzeitung* (17 September 1948), 6]. The first English translation was published in 1934 [*The Hour of Decision, Part One: Germany and World-Historical Evolution*, trans. Charles Francis Atkinson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf)].

³⁷ This is not, of course, a novel observation, as has been made by such scholars as the German political scientist Klaus von Beyme. [von Beyme (1988). "Right-Wing Extremism in Western Europe." *West European Politics*. 11:2 (Special Issue: Right-Wing Extremism in Western Europe), 2-18.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01402388808424678>. Last accessed 24 September 2015] The Dutch political scientist Cas Mudde, rejecting efforts to define the term on the basis of a single feature, analyzed more complex definitions by 26 different authors. His analysis identified 58 different features, of which five are mentioned by at least half the authors: *nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy* and *the strong state*. See: Cas Mudde (1996). "The War of Words: Defining of the Extreme Right Family." *Western European Politics*. 19:2, 225-48.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01402389608425132?instName=King%27s+College+London>. Last accessed 24 September 2015.

³⁸ Many historians follow the lead of Ernst Nolte, a German scholar best known for his comparative studies of fascism and communism. He argued for limiting the concept of fascism to a specific historical period (1920-1945) and for reserving the *fascist* label for four specific political movements: the Italian *Partito Nazionale Fascista*; the German *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*; the Austrian *Austrofaschismus* movement led by Engelbert Dollfuß and his *Vaterländische Front* party; and the French *Action française*. See: Nolte (1963). *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche: die Action française der italienische Faschismus, der Nationalsozialismus*. (München: R. Piper).

³⁹ This argument is expanded in Meindert Fennema (1997). "Some conceptual Issues and Problems in the Comparison of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe." *Party Politics*. 3:4, 481-482.

<http://ppq.sagepub.com/content/3/4/473.full.pdf?hwhshb2=authn%3A1443122437%3A20150923%253A7f8aa8a5-6faa-4920-891a-6e5ec8850642%3A0%3A0%3A0%3ATvPjSgv2JJ0OkQfcemN4A%3D%3D>. Last accessed 24 September 2015.

A more useful label from German political discourse, *Rechttradikalismus* ("Radical Right"), contextualizes and distinguishes radicalism from extremism.⁴⁰ A c.1973 determination by Germany's federal internal security agency deemed extremism "tantamount to the full or partial elimination of democratic order."⁴¹ On this basis Germany bans extremist parties as unconstitutional (*verfassungswidrig*) while radical parties remain permissible, as they are deemed merely anti-constitutional (*verfassungsfeindlich*).⁴² Radical parties participate in mainstream European political institutions — four *Jobbik* members sit in the European Parliament, for example — as well as inter-party political associations. It is common for European political denominations to form transnational federations to serve as a platform for cross-border collaboration on broader matters of European policy. *Rechttradikalismus* parties are no exception though their associations are smaller: the European National Front counts six member parties and four MEPs,⁴³ while the Alliance of European National Movements⁴⁴ (to which *Jobbik* and six other parties belong) claims eight MEPs. Both exclude extremist parties from their ranks.⁴⁵

The Dutch political scientist Meindert Fennema distinguishes protest parties from parties (like *Jobbik*) that profess a genuine racist ideology. While protest parties sometimes venture into generalizing assertions about disfavored ethnic groups, such assertions mostly lack policy content. Protest party voters express discontent rather than endorse a political program.⁴⁶ Racist parties in contrast oppose immigration and demand the return of foreign residents to their countries of origin. They exemplify what Fennema calls New Racism, which he says is distinguished from traditional, often colonial-era racism⁴⁷ (and how it is conventionally understood by Americans) because it aims for expulsion, not subordination.⁴⁸

New Racism is predicated on claimed cultural incompatibility rather than a racial or cultural hierarchy. It fits neatly into the political narrative of *Jobbik Magyarism* and like ethnic conceptions of nationhood:

"The argumentative essence of new racism is that culture cannot change...In the words of a columnist of the *Daily Telegraph*: 'Parliament can no more turn a Chinese into an Englishman than it can turn a man into a woman.' [It] differs from the traditional racist argument because it uses biological metaphors rather than biological arguments."⁴⁹

With this distinction in mind we proceed to the matter of immigration generally, and the European Union's recent influx of asylum-seekers specifically. Political parties like *Jobbik* use immigration (and by extension, race) instrumentally to radicalize and redefine political space, in *Jobbik*'s case to exploit Hungary's geographic position at the epicenter of the current refugee crisis.⁵⁰

⁴⁰ The author uses the German term prophylactically to make clear that it would be unsound to extend American populist connotations to what here is a distinctly European political phenomena.

⁴¹ The quoted text is from Peter Frisch (1990). "Die Herausforderung unseres demokratischen Rechtsstaats durch Extremismus und Terrorismus." In *Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. (Bonn: Der Bundesminister des Innern), 8-9. Germany's domestic security agency is known as the *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz* or "Federal Office for Protection of the Constitution."

⁴² Mudde (1996), 231. Germany's *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* ("National Democratic Party of Germany") is testing the line between radical and extremist. In 2012 the *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz* ("Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution") declared the NPD a "threat to the constitutional order" and recommended its banishment. The matter was referred to Germany's Constitutional Court in 2013 where it is pending today. A similar 2003 recommendation was rejected by the Constitutional Court.

⁴³ And like all *Rechttradikalismus* parties, share Mudde's roster of nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy, and the strong state.

⁴⁴ Its September 2009 Political Declaration states that the Alliance is "conscious of our common responsibility for the European peoples and the diversity of cultures and languages they represent" and "mindful of the inalienable values of Christianity, natural law, peace and freedom in Europe." See: <http://aemn.info/political-declaration/>

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 233. The European Parliament defers to national authorities to distinguish permissible radical from impermissible extremist parties, and defers to the results of valid national elections.

⁴⁶ Van der Eijk, Franklin and Marsh offer the following distinction. Ideological voters vote for the party that is closest to their own ideological preference. Their motive is ideological proximity. Protest voters vote for the party that is despised by all other parties in order to "put in the boot." See: Mark N. Franklin, Cees van der Eijk & Michael Marsh (1996). "The Electoral Connection and the Democratic Deficit." In Cees van der Eijk & Mark N. Franklin, et al., eds. *Choosing Europe? The European Electorate and National Politics in the Face of Union*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), 366-389.

⁴⁷ Colonial-type racism aims to subordinate a racially defined group within the nation rather than to expel it, and to legitimize the socio-economic inferiority of a racialized underclass.

⁴⁸ It might be argued that the language of the increasingly contentious debate over immigration in the United States may be signaling that the narrative of racism has changed here, too.

⁴⁹ Meindert Fennema (2005). "Populist Parties of the Right." In Jens Rydgren, ed. *Movements of Exclusion: Radical Right-Wing Populism in the Western World*. (Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers), 9.

⁵⁰ It must in fairness be acknowledged that *Jobbik* disputes this characterization. It claims a more nuanced position on matters of race, advocating in some circumstances what an American audience would recognize as the doctrine of "separate but equal." In education, for example, *Jobbik* spokesperson Dúró Dóra said "everyone should attend a school that is best suited for them, and that does not endanger others' safety or their right to live under normal conditions." She went on that "Jobbik considers there are cases where segregation is progressive and in the interest of all parties." See: "A spontán szegregáció bizonyítja az integráció teljes csődjét" ("Self-segregation demonstrates integration's complete failure"). *Jobbik.hu* [published online in Hungarian 5 February 2015]. <https://jobbik.hu/hireink/spontan-szegregacio-bizonyitja-az-integracio-teljes-csodjet>. Last accessed 25 September 2015.

The German historian Oswald Spengler anticipated New Racism by several decades. He, too, rejected biological arguments — "race purity is a grotesque word"⁵¹ — but made a forceful case for a cultural one:

"It cannot be accepted, surely, that a people were ever held together by the mere unity of physical origin, or, if it were, could maintain that unity for ten generations...no people was ever stirred to enthusiasm by this ideal of blood purity."⁵²

Spengler's use of such phrases as "having race" and "of race" not in a biological sense, but instead, a metaphysical one. He names it *Destiny*, something that operates in the course of history much as cause does in the natural sciences, along with decidedly deterministic overtones. Destiny, he writes, "is a word whose content one *feels*."⁵³

Jobbik sees Hungary is much as Spengler did Russia, *viz.*, as a nation whose destiny is separate from that of Western Europe, a nation forced into "a false and artificial history."⁵⁴ Consider this screed published on the Jobbik website:

"In spite of being European, Hungary is one of the countries that have suffered the most from the arrogance of great Western powers. Today's Hungary and Central Europe still bear the consequences of the narrow-minded Western approach up to this day. The Trianon Pact, which concluded World War I, was devised by the same powers that are the spearheads of liberal democracy today. These powers crushed an organic structure based on the traditions of a millennium. The territory of Hungary, which had been the key to regional stability until the early 20th century, was split up in order to create artificial state formations. In spite of the above, Hungary has canonized the subservient support of Western and Euro-Atlantic interests. Although Hungary's national wealth was stolen under the aegis of privatization, which is considered as the cornerstone of neoliberal economic policy, and then the remaining industry was destroyed by forcing us to turn our backs on the post-Soviet region, and then we were required to abandon the Hungarian communities living outside our borders, yet the Hungarian governments, regardless of their ideological stance or the parties forming them, remained dedicated followers of Euro-Atlantism."⁵⁵

Metaphysical arguments aside, today's immigration debate occurs in the context of Europe-wide population stagnation rooted in negligible to negative birth rates. No doubt the economic stagnation likewise afflicting Europe reflects what Spengler called "the idiotic idea that economic crises can be surmounted by an atrophied population."⁵⁶ Hungary's population remained static from 2005-2015 against a below-replacement birth rate because of immigration.⁵⁷ About 1 resident in every 20 (4.7%) residents of Hungary is foreign-born,⁵⁸ slightly less than half (44.4%) of which are Romanian by birth.⁵⁹ Spengler would no doubt take a dim view of Jobbik ethnic nationalist claims. He wrote, "The test of race is the speed with which it can replace itself. A Russian once said to me: 'The Russian woman will make good in ten years what we sacrificed in the Revolution.' That

⁵¹ Oswald Spengler (1934). *Die Jahre der Entscheidung, Erster Teil: Deutschland und die weltgeschichtliche Entwicklung*. (München: Beck), 114. The first English publication is: Oswald Spengler (1934). *The Hour of Decision, Part One: Germany and World-Historical Evolution*, trans. Charles Francis Atkinson. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf).

⁵² Spengler (1962). *op cit.*, 265.

⁵³ Quoted in H. Stuart Hughes (1991). *Oswald Spengler*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers), 70.

⁵⁴ The quoted text is from a 1971 English language edition of *Decline*. See: Spengler (1971). *The Decline of The West, Volume II*. (London: George Allen & Unwin), 193.

⁵⁵ "Europe's Future: At the Crossroads of Eastern Relations and Western Fall." Undated tract published in English on the Jobbik website. http://www.jobbik.com/europes_future_at_the_crossroads_of_eastern_relations_and_western_fall. Last accessed 29 September 2015.

⁵⁶, 115. Proponents of racially-charged ethnic nationalism might well reflect on Spengler's assertion that "the instinct of a strong race" lies in large families.

⁵⁷ According to statistics published by the United Nations, Hungary has experienced slow but steady population decline for at least a decade: from 2005-2010, it was -0.16%, and from 2010-2015 was -0.32%. This reflects the country's low fertility rate, defined as the number of live births per woman. A fertility rate of 2.1 is considered the minimum replacement level in industrialized countries., Hungary's birth rate has remained below the replacement rate since at least 1960, dipping to 1.32 in 2000 where it basically remains today according to EUROSTAT See: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Total_fertility_rate,_1960-2013_\(live_births_per_woman\)_YB15.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Total_fertility_rate,_1960-2013_(live_births_per_woman)_YB15.png). Last accessed 29 September 2015.

⁵⁸ See: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Foreign_and_foreign-born_population_by_group_of_citizenship_and_country_of_birth_2012.png. Last accessed 29 September 2015.

⁵⁹ See: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/3/37/Main_countries_of_citizenship_and_birth_of_the_foreign_foreign-born_population%2C_1_January_2014_%28%29_%28in_absolute_numbers_and_as_a_percentage_of_the_total_foreign_foreign-born_population%29_YB15.png. Last accessed 29 September 2015. It is also worth noting that a recent Bloomberg survey found that foreign-born residents of Hungarian were more likely to be employed than native-born Hungarians by 67.9% to 58.2%. See: "What Hungary Can Teach Europe About Absorbing Migrants." *Bloomberg Business* [published online 8 September 2015].

is the right instinct. Such races are irresistible."⁶⁰

Modern Hungary is Europe's frontline against radical Islam according to Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who regularly alludes to Hungary as a veritable *végvár* or border fortress.⁶¹ It is a common allusion in Hungarian political discourse: "Fortress Hungary" blocking an invasion force of asylum-seeking Muslims. Or as the political commentator Máté Gyula asked laconically during the current crisis, "A *végvár* again?"⁶²

Hungary acts as "Europe's bulwark," said Jobbik vice president Dániel Z. Kárpát, while the country is "hypocritically smeared" by other EU member-states that likewise do not want to accept immigrants. The EU has taken "the sword and the shield" out of Hungary's hands, he declared, continuing that he "respects each religion and culture, but only in its natural place." Hungary will not become "a failed experiment in multiculturalism, an unsuccessful *mélange* of religions and cultures."⁶³ Jobbik takes the cultural meme to the extreme: with Kárpát deriding refugee camps as "invasion centers," Jobbik cites approvingly "Syrian Christians going into war against the Islamic State." That from a Facebook post by László Toroczkai, the mayor of Ásotthalom, a Hungarian town on the border with Serbia:

"[T]hey are men of military enlistment age who do not flee but arm themselves in order to protect their houses, homes and their motherland. Toroczkai points out that, interestingly enough, nearly all of the men of enlistment age flooding in Hungary at the area of Ásotthalom are Muslim. Allegedly, these people are refugees, who took refuge from something, in other words, they turned tail and ran from their homeland."⁶⁴

Kárpát proclaimed "Hungary for the Hungarians!" during a late September rally held in Nagykanizsán, in southwestern Hungary near the Croatian border along the Zagreb-to-Budapest migration route. The visual message of a poster⁶⁵ announcing the rally was unambiguous:



⁶⁰ Spengler (1934), *op cit.*, 219–20. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-09-08/what-hungary-can-teach-europe-about-absorbing-immigrants>. Last accessed 5 October 2015.

⁶¹ "Tusványos – Orbán: a tét ma már Európa." Szegedma.hu [published online in Hungarian 25 July 2015]. <http://szegedma.hu/hir/szeged/2015/07/tusvanyos-orban-a-tet-ma-mar-europa.html>. Last accessed 5 October 2015. Mr. Orbán was addressing the closing session of the Hungarian government's "National Consultation on Immigration and Terrorism," a national public opinion survey of some 8 million persons conducted in mid-2015.

⁶² See: Máté T. Gyula (2015). "Újra végvár?" *Magyarhirlap.hu* [published online in Hungarian 24 April 2015]. http://magyarhirlap.hu/cikk/23207/Ujra_vegvar. Last accessed 5 October 2015.

⁶³ "Ez nem pártkérdés, ez nemzeti ügy!" *Jobbik* [published online in Hungarian 25 September 2015]. <https://jobbik.hu/hireink/ez-nem-partkerdes-ez-nemzeti-ugy>. Last accessed 9 October 2015.

⁶⁴ "Europe welcomes illegal immigrants while abandoning real refugees." *Jobbik.com* [published online in English 31 August 2015]. http://jobbik.com/europe_welcomes_illegal_immigrants_while_abandoning_real_refugees. Last accessed 9 October 2015.

⁶⁵ <https://jobbik.hu/esemenyek/nagykanizsa-magyarorszag-magyaroke>. Last accessed 9 October 2015.

Prime Minister Orbán declares the refugee crisis "a German problem" visited upon Hungarians.⁶⁶ While "Personally, I am an admirer of Islam," Mr. Orbán warned:

"We must not delude ourselves: immigration will allow Muslims to become a majority in Europe within the foreseeable future. If Europe allows a competition of cultures, then Christians will lose. These are the facts. The only way out for those who want to preserve Europe's Christian culture is this: don't always let more Muslims in! But the leaders of Europe do not like this kind of talk."⁶⁷

This narrative has found its way onto European *Rechttradikalismus* portals, for example, *The Brussels Journal*:

"The Magyars are not a cause célèbre (as are Jews provided they are already dead) and focusing on them is not 'easy'. It so happens that...Hungarians are, just by being where the last 1100 years put them [...] Brussels seems to feel that Magyar collective rights are more a hindrance to achieve the mirage of 'brotherhood' in Europe than a criterion of democracy."⁶⁸

Concluding Thoughts

"What is dearer to us than our children? What is dearer to any nation? To any mother? To any father? But who counts how many children are killed by war, which kills them twice? It kills those that been born. And it kills those that could, that ought to have come into this world."
-- Svetlana Alexiyevich, *The Last Witnesses: the Book of Unchildlike Stories*.

Svetlana Alexiyevich's moving passage reminds us why asylum-seekers flee the Syrian-Iraqi conflict zone. None of the solidly grounded nation-states of the Middle East owes its existence to Sykes-Picot, writes Ron Tira, but "within the region carved up by Sykes and Picot...non-state actors now hold unprecedented power" in its failed or failing states.⁶⁹ Another underweighted factor (and migration-driver) is that "the collapse of the state system in much of the Middle East has strengthened historically subjugated groups such as the Druze and the Kurds."⁷⁰

We are accustomed to periodic exoduses of disfavored and persecuted minorities, whose small numbers most often are easily accommodated. We are unaccustomed, however, to mainstream populations fleeing a conflict zone and landing on Western doorsteps en masse. The strategic map of Asia Minor has changed beyond all recognition: the violent erasure (and in fewer instances, redrawing) of political boundaries to reflect this new reality is in the process displacing populations long settled there. It is of course easy to sit at a distance and criticize the actions of political leaders on the ground. The United States' own challenges with immigration serves as a humbling reminder of how politically intractable these challenges can be. None of this excuses Turkey's instrumental use of refugees as a virtual currency in bargaining with the European Union, however, nor the yawning gap between European words and deeds. Nor for that matter the failure of the United States to lead from the front and address a crisis substantially of its own making.

The author is empathetic with the position of the Hungarian government if not its often-inflammatory tone. Navigating between Brussels irresolution and Jobbik radicalism is an unenviable task. The degree to which the refugee crisis — unarguably not one of Hungary's own making — has buoyed Jobbik and other unapologetically racist parties across Europe should sound political alarms. As the German political leaders Sigmar Gabriel and Frank-Walter Steinmeier⁷¹ said recently, the debate over asylum-seekers cannot be limited to the polar opposites "We can do it" and "The boat is full" without "the refugee issue tearing our society apart."⁷² The fractures are already showing: the German Interior Minister declared just last week, "We

⁶⁶ "Darum baut Ungarn einen Zaun gegen Flüchtlinge." *Bild* [published online in German 12 September 2015].

<http://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/viktor-orban/darum-baut-ungarn-einen-zaun-gegen-fluechtlinge-42544402.bild.html>. Last accessed 9 October 2015.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ "EU Remains Silent While Anti-Hungarian Violence Grows in Slovakia." *The Brussels Journal* [published online in English 30 August 2006].

<http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/1281>. Last accessed 28 September 2015.

⁶⁹ Ron Tira (2015). "Israeli Strategy for a New Middle East." *Jewish Review of Books*. 6:3 (Fall 2015), 13. Tira was referring to Israel, Egypt and Iran, and to Turkey (which he writes "basically consists of the Ottoman Empire, minus the territories targeted by the British-French agreement").

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁷¹ Sigmar Gabriel is the German Vice Chancellor and chairman of the Social Democratic Party. Frank-Walter Steinmeier is the German Foreign Affairs Minister, and the former Social Democratic Party leader in the Bundestag.

⁷² "Flüchtlingskrise: Gabriel und Steinmeier fordern Begrenzung der Zuwanderung." *Spiegel Online Politik* [published online in German 9 October 2015].

<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/sigmar-gabriel-und-frank-walter-steinmeier-fordern-begrenzung-der-zuwanderung-a-1057006.html>. Last accessed 10 October 2015. Messrs. Gabriel and Steinmeier propose a numeric cap on admitting asylum-seekers to Germany.

have a massive increase in xenophobic attacks on asylum seekers."⁷³

Bavarian State Premier Horst Seehofer — he also chairs the Christian Social Union in Bavaria, sister party to Chancellor Angela Merkel's ruling Christian Democratic Union — threatened last week to implement "explicit self-defense measures to limit immigration, to include turning people back at the Austrian border."⁷⁴ Two other CSU members of the Bundestag, Stephan Mayer and Florian Hahn, called for "concrete measures to contain the flow of refugees" from Turkey, including the temporary suspension of asylum-seekers' right to family unification.⁷⁵

If the Hungarian news portal *VS.hu* is correct that "the German *Willkommenskultur* is gradually disappearing," it is not due to Chancellor Merkel. As it points out, "However incomprehensible it may seem to Hungarians given widely held cynicism about politics, Merkel's values determine her refugee policies."⁷⁶ In contrast, "the Hungarian government is hiding behind the national consultation" — a reference to the "National Consultation on Immigration" questionnaire circulated to all Hungarians this summer — "and claiming not to take a position." Chancellor Merkel asserts, "I have to defend the dignity of Europe" and expresses disappointment in the position of newly acceded EU member-states toward asylum-seekers. In the face of an ongoing human tragedy, Europe's loss of dignity may be the least consequential outcome.

The purpose of this recitation is to make the point that if Germany is unable to act in unison, then Brussels most certainly cannot. Frontline member-states such as Hungary and Austria will act unilaterally, and Brussels will continue to "splash the cash," in *Sputnik's* memorable phrase, in a cynical effort to contain asylum-seekers in situ. All this amounts to no more than a dubious effort to insulate political Europe from the inconvenient consequences of a directionless policy in the Syria-Iraq conflict zone. And the current crisis is bound to worsen, not improve, with the introduction of Russian armed forces.

The West has no plan whatsoever to resolve the cause of the refugee crisis. Europe is temperamentally unprepared to deal with asylum-seekers who are already there, let alone the number likely on the way. Yet Turkey and Jordan each have far larger refugee populations on a relative basis than any European country. And the astringent migration debate in many countries is bolstering radical positions long condemned to the political margins. Altogether missing is the United States, which bears much of the responsibility for the crisis that is engulfing Asia Minor with consequences for a wholly unprepared Europe.

Amidst political finger pointing, the German theologian Margot Kässmann reminds us of the moral dimension:

"The talk of 'self-defense' is incomprehensible, irresponsible, and unworthy of a people who live in prosperity and freedom. There is no hunger at a German dinner table because people look to our country for protection. And I want to see the case where a German loses his job because Germany accepts a refugee...We are talking about people who look to us for protection, who do not attack us but instead who are themselves attacked...They must be protected."⁷⁷

For an America that continues to act in the Syria-Iraq conflict zone while at the same time it searches for a coherent policy, the protection of non-combatants in the conflict zone might be an ideal place to start.

⁷³ "Undesinnenminister schlägt Alarm." *Bild* [published online in German 10 October 2015].

<http://www.bild.de/politik/inland/fluechtlingskrise/bundesinnenminister-warnt-vor-zunehmender-gewalt-gegen-fluechtlinge-42949528.bild.html>. Last accessed 10 October 2015.

⁷⁴ "Seehofer droht Merkel mit Verfassungsklage: Auch die SPD-Politiker Steinmeier und Gabriel wollen den Flüchtlingsstrom drosseln." *Bild* [published online in German 10 October 2015]. <http://www.bild.de/politik/inland/fluechtlingskrise/und-frank-walter-steinmeier-gegen-unbegrenzte-zuwanderung-42953970.bild.html>. Last accessed 10 October 2015.

⁷⁵ "Master-Plan Zur Flüchtlingskrise." *Bild* [published online in German 10 October 2015]. <http://www.bild.de/politik/inland/csu/hardliner-wollen-familiennachzug-kippen-42957112.bild.html>. Last accessed 10 October 2015.

⁷⁶ "Merkel Vagy Hülye, Vagy Tud Valamit." *VS.hu* [published online in Hungarian 9 October 2015]. <http://vs.hu/kozelet/osszes/merkel-vagy-hulye-vagy-tud-valamit-1009#!s0>. Last accessed 10 October 2015.

⁷⁷ "Wer Christ ist, schützt die Schwachen." *Bild* [published online in German 11 October 2015].

<http://www.bild.de/politik/inland/fluechtlingskrise/maessigen-sie-sich-42963354.bild.html>. Last accessed 11 October 2015.