

## **“Political Science and Territorial Borders”**

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### **Abstract**

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Abdallah Rahhal grew up in Aleppo, Syria, and he learned to sing in the Arabic Tarab style at Aleppo's Sabah Fakhri Institute of Music. He left Syria as a refugee and took a small boat across the Aegean Sea to Greece. Soon he moved with others north and ended up in Brandenburg, Germany. In order to keep spirits up, he sang throughout the entire trip from Syria to Germany, on sea and on land. In early 2016, he moved to Berlin and formed a band called *Musiqana*. That group of four has become popular in Berlin and is planning on playing in other locations as well. Abdallah does not think that music has borders, and his example raises tough questions about the meaning of borders in our troubled world. Listen to one of his songs and reflect on what its significance is for political scientists who both struggle with and attempt to analyze the importance and value of borders in modern times.

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### **Introduction**

Why have both students of and actors in global politics been of two minds about the significance of borders? On the one hand, Realist Theory upholds the fixed nature of borders and the right of nations to protect and uphold them. For example, the United Nations is committed to the inviolability of territorial borders in threatening situations. Both in 1950 and 1990, the U.N. sanctioned action to protect first South Korea and then Kuwait, after North Korea and Iraq, respectively, invaded each. On the other hand, Revised Realist Theory emphasizes the power of globalization forces in the last twenty years to penetrate the borders of many nation-states. Among those factors are migrants looking for more secure and prosperous lives in neighboring countries, economic organizations seeking more hospitable locations in foreign countries, information cross-national flows through rapidly developing social media, and cross-border connections among related terrorist cells.

Both of these theories have the power to illuminate how the territorially- and border-oriented developed nations in Europe have reacted to the outflow of refugees from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and other nations affected by the Arab Spring of 2011 and its aftermath? Difficult and violent civil wars have thrown Sunni Muslims, Shiite Muslims, Kurds, Christians, authoritarian leaders, al Qaeda and ISIS together in conflicts of unimaginable horrors. As a reaction, the outflow of persons from those conflicts peaked in the 2014-16 period, with the result that there was enormous pressure on European nations to admit them and provide them with basic economic necessities. European reactions varied depending on the nation, but they included a mix of erection of fences as in the case of Hungary or of relatively open invitations like the German. While the first response fits Realist Theory, the second is compatible with Revised Realist Theory. Each theory entails a profoundly different interpretation of the meaning of territorial borders. It is also important to consider a very different and also controversial “third way” solution that avoids, strictly speaking, the open permission for refugees to cross the border or the populist call for closing off the borders.

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The roots of this third way lie further east, with Moscow as the center of action. The West has watched as Russia has invaded Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014. In the former case they ended up in possession of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, while in the latter case they took the Crimean Peninsula and transformed it into another Russian Republic. Certainly, these moves compromised western understandings of national sovereignty as well as U.N. guidelines about border integrity. At the same time, it may be a mistake to consider Russia as historically wedded to the nation-state concept as the West has been since at least the nineteenth century. At the time when nationalism was on the rise in that century, with national unification in disparate nations such as Italy, Germany, and the United States; Russian borders were much more in flux. It is possible to argue that "Eurasianism" was the dominant concept in the minds of many of their leaders in the last two centuries. Eurasianism accepts the existence of borders but envisions them as in continuous flux.

Perhaps it is possible to develop more open concepts about borders that parallel in some ways the thrust of Eurasianism in Russia. For Europeans, the notion of a "Common European Home" can be a starting point for overcoming the divide between the reality of globalization with its attendant population flows and political commitments to preserving the intactness of territorial borders. That concept was a product of the knitting together of the European Union (EU) after the Single European Act (SEA) of 1989. In fact, the Soviet leader at the time, Michael Gorbachev, adopted this as the proper posture for a Moscow-based foreign policy at the time of the reforms that led to the undoing of the U.S.S.R. The post-Soviet Russian leadership did not opt for that choice, but still it is a tempting one for a Europe torn by the impact of the refugee flow that the civil wars to the east generated. Basically, the concept of a Common European Home could serve as an invitation to combine the traditional emphasis on border integrity with the modern need to accept the reality that tens of thousands of new migrants are looking to Europe as their future "home."

## **Two Theories**

### **Realism**

Hans Morgenthau is often cited as the father of Realism Theory, and his contributions heavily influenced the United States' foreign policy in a post World-War II Era (Morgenthau 1948). In traditional Realism, the international arena is viewed as being anarchic in nature, and thus the sole source of power and authority rests within the state, which is a single, unitary actor. The accepted perception among realists is that one state's security implies another state's insecurity, and thus, the international arena is a security-balancing act. McCormick expands the definition of modern realism to include three more assumptions. It is power and interests that drive the state rather than idealism or global values. Further, leaders of states focus primarily on maintenance both of the existing balance of power and of their position in it. Finally, domestic politics plays a very small role in the foreign policy and national security decisions of states, for state-to-state relations are the driving force (McCormick 2010, 102). They interact and collide much as the numbered pool balls do after the cue ball has its impact. Realism remains a popular theoretical framework, but it is not without critics. Booth argues that realism is not relevant in today's world as large threats also include either non-state actors or issues that transcend states such as disease, poverty, or famine (Booth 1995). In addition, Snyder argues that realism theory has a hard time accurately capturing the international situation in recent history with its focus on state-centered international power (2009).

Snyder explains his assertions with the example of the United States, the hegemonic state actor, declaring war on a non-state international terrorist group known as Al-Qaeda (Snyder 2009). With non-state actors and world forces that are at play in the global arena, a realist theoretical framework can appear to be less relevant. Despite criticism, traditional realism remains one of the most popular theoretical frameworks to view the international arena, and the powerful framework can remain pertinent with a slightly updated perspective that incorporates globalization. Power of the sovereign state remains a central theme of realism and Kay began to look at the intersection of the power of the state and how it interconnected with globalization. Kay argues that globalization changes the channels through which power is exercised and it impacts the distribution of power (Kay 2004). For realists, globalization can create conflict due to proximity of other states and thus promulgates a sense of vulnerability within a state (Kay 2004). Realism with a focus on globalization has been criticized by Donnelly who argues that Kay is a realist, and thus, he is subject to the perception that any failure of realism theory is due to a lack of fully implementing enough realism (Donnelly 2014).

Meaning, realism theory is often not effective because the stakeholders do not implement or subscribe to realist theory enough.

### **Revised Realism/Globalization**

There is also a state-centeredness to Realist Theory that does not correspond perfectly to the swirl of 21<sup>st</sup> Century dynamics. Correspondingly, protection of solely national interests does not necessarily guarantee preservation of national security in the broadest sense. Nations are not sharply divided from one another as they were in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, while national leaders often perceive themselves as powerless to shape events in ways that they might have in the past. In order to come to terms with the whirlpool of currents that affect both countries and leaders, it is imperative to examine Revised Realist Theory that preserves some of the elements of Realist Theory but modifies them in significant ways as well.

In order to display the key features of Revised Realist Theory, it is helpful to focus mainly on the cross-national forces that often are classified as part of the globalization dynamic that so often transcends the parameters of the state and even makes national goals seem outdated. The two key players of Russia and America have been particularly affected by those dynamics. Some of those forces include globally based terrorism, immigrant flows across national borders, and economic imperialism by powerful corporations (Hook 2014, 14-17; Jentleson 2007, 461-504; Papp, Johnson, and Endicott 2005, 503-508; Snow 2004, 332-335). Perhaps, these globalization pressures disclose the extent to which long-standing civilizations that predate the existence of the nation-state may have become the predominant entities that “clash.” The attacks of global terrorists have at times provided a common ground of understanding for both Moscow and Washington. By demonstrating the vulnerability of the two states, they reinforce Revised Realism. For Russia, the attacks have emanated from one of their own republics, and Chechnya in 1991 declared itself to be an Islamic Republic. Thus, that group’s various attacks on public centers of activity almost seem to have originated on a planet very different from the one in which most Muscovites live.

Correspondingly, the al Qaeda attacks on the east coast of the United States in 2001 were unexpected and raised the question about the ability of U.S. security forces to protect the homeland, a question that had not emerged since the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, al Qaeda appeared to operate almost without control across the borders of Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Nigeria, Somalia, and Mali. Even more challenging to the national units of both West and East was the explosion of ISIS in 2014 and after. That barbaric group targeted soft spots in the public sphere that were relatively unprotected, and countries such as Australia, Tunisia, France, the United States, Iraq, and Syria suffered greatly in terms of personal and family tragedies as well as a profound sense of vulnerability. The powerful nation-state that Realist Theory celebrates was victim rather than initiator and actor.

The movement of populations across state borders in an uncontrolled way has come to constitute the fifth rail of public discussion in many of the world’s more economically developed nations. Such movements also fuel the assumptions of Revised Realism, for they reveal the apparent powerlessness of states to resist the flow of people. Again, the vastness of Russia explains why its challenges stem from areas in the south that used to be Republics in the Soviet Union but are now independent, but struggling, nations. Persons from those largely Muslim nations are met with hostility when they arrive looking for work in cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg. In America, the inflow of population from Hispanic societies across its southern border has caused considerable discussion and tension over several decades, and it became one of the key issues in the 2016 presidential campaign. In 2015-16 this phenomenon had a principal impact on Europe, as stories abounded of a tripling of the number of persons seeking admission to European nations.

The human tragedy was multiplied, for many fleeing refugees utilized faulty vessels that experienced disaster at sea, and the resulting pressure on EU nations to control the process became nearly overwhelming. Instead of coping with the earlier needs of citizens of North African countries to seek a better livelihood across the Mediterranean, European leaders had to cope with the civil wars in Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq that drove persons to seek a better life in Western Europe. Crises of a severe magnitude occurred at the point of crossing through the tunnel from France into the United Kingdom and in Balkan nations that had become a way station into the wealthier countries of West Europe. In fact, the nationalist government of Hungary erected a wall in an effort to halt the flow of immigrants. However, the enormous flow of refugees into Germany in September 2015, revealed the powerlessness of the nation-state that is at the heart of Realist Theory.

Economic forces of a global nature also undermined the authority of the state as well as the Realist Theory that depended on its intactness. As such, they add another building block to Revised Realism. A number of American-based companies such as Apple penetrated large foreign markets such as that of China until nationalist reactions and barriers resulted. Russia's Lukoil spread its wings into European markets such as Belgium and earned significant profits from gas-thirsty European drivers. Further, the growth of regional economic organizations became a factor that at least provided cues to national leaders and in some cases directions. For example, Russia stitched together a new Eurasian Economic Community in 2014, and its efforts were directed at Russian-directed coordination among the membership. In a broader fashion, the EU negotiated with the newly elected Greek government in 2015, and they offered both a carrot and a stick. On the one hand, they loaned Greece considerable amounts of money in order to lift their prospects of recovery. On the other hand, they demanded that the Greeks enact and follow a series of austerity measures in order to prevent the worst in future years. Cross-border economic pressures thus fit into an evolving pattern of interdependencies that again reinforced the theory of Revised Realism.

In the 1990s Samuel Huntington offered his thesis about the clash of the world's traditional civilizations as a substitute for the state-based conflict that was so characteristic of the Cold War and its antecedents (Huntington 1993, 22-28, 39-41, 48-49). In many ways, three of the key indicators of globalization reinforce this picture and point to the long-lasting credibility of the Huntington thesis. First, the terrorist challenge that ate away at the intactness of the state was frequently based on the clash between ancient Islamic civilizations and the Judeo-Christian world.

Offshoots such as the Taliban and ISIS reinforced that picture with their reliance on practices from earlier ages while they enacted their 21<sup>st</sup> century tactics that included restrictions on the role of women, inoculation of the young into the dreams that accompanied jihad, destruction of artifacts such as those in Palmyra, Syria, that predated the seventh century and life of Mohammed, and barbaric cruelty to basically innocent westerners who fell into their hands. Their announced plan to create a Caliphate based on traditional territorial lines that included portions of Syria and Iraq revealed an effort to replace modern national borders with older, civilization-based ones. Second, the Ukrainian conflict of 2014-15 included a minor theme of a clash between Russian Orthodox civilization and that of the West. Third, the movement of immigrants entailed a flow of many Muslims into Europe, while the influx into the United States greatly increased the presence of persons from Latin American civilizations and their families into the geographic U.S. Each of these examples revealed the extent to which underlying civilizational differences had become better explanations of regional conflict than national distinctions. The phenomenon of globalization thus reinforced the wisdom of Revised Realist Theory.

### **Territorial Borders and Realism Theory**

It is important to examine case studies that reinforce both theories. In glancing back at past decades, there are two situations in which Realism Theory notably stands out as the best explanation of the decisions made. Twice in its history, the United Nations voted to mobilize its collective military forces to protect the integrity of a nation whose borders had been violated. The first was the successful battle to dislodge North Korea from South Korea in 1950-53, while the second was the equally effective mission to push Iraq out of Kuwait in 1990-91. UN actions underlined the relevance of Realism Theory by supporting and essentially reinstating original territorial borders both of South Korea and Kuwait.

### **UN Defense of the Territorial Integrity of South Korea, 1950-53**

Territorial borders are one of the main distinctions of a sovereign nation-state. Geographical limitations are often defined and delineated as a required aspect of sovereignty. In keeping with realism theory, nation-states are the primary protectors of territorial designations; however, there are international governmental organizations that have sought to ensure the sanctity of nation-states' sovereignty. The ability of an international group, such as the United Nations, to police and maintain border security has been inconsistent throughout modern history. The original draft of the United Nations Charter varies from the current impression that the UN holds internationally. In the Post-World War II era, the United Nations at the inception was committed to maintaining the sanctity of borders and nation's sovereignty.

According to Schlesinger, the most important aspect of the new charter of the UN included Article 2, section 1, that ensured the sovereignty of all its members and further meaning, that no longer would aggressive nations seize borders and territories (Schlesinger 2013, 205). Schlesinger further interpreted this to mean that the geographic borders of every member nation were unimpeachable (Schlesinger 2013, 205). The question remains whether the United Nations should actively protect borders and maintain territorial sovereignty of member nations. The original intentions of the United Nations and the subsequent activities of the institution have proven to be less than consistent. The UN focuses on a number of non-military activities that center on economic and social efforts. A few exceptions to this "docile" role of the United Nations exist in a clear dedication to maintain the sanctity of borders.

The Korean War serves as an example of the United Nations acting to support territorial sovereignty in the post-World War II era. The burgeoning Korean conflict was promulgated by the "proxy" war that was waged between the Soviet Union and the United States. The two super powers were briefly allies to defeat Nazi Germany, but were subsequently poised to break up the Korean peninsula along the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. The United Nations had a general refusal to accept one Korea based on the ideals of ideological separation and the United States' infused support as outlined by President Truman, who was a staunch supporter of self-determination defined as a nation's ability to determine its own future (Chang-II 2010). North Korea was better equipped and supported by China and the Soviet Union, which put South Korea at a more vulnerable position. The two separated regions were under the "trusteeship" of the United States and Soviet Union. Upon further pressure to withdraw US forces from the region, an anxious South Korea inquired about next steps to find further support.

The United States encouraged South Korean leadership to seek assistance from the United Nations (Chang-II 2010, 31). North Korea attacked South Korea on June 25, 1950, and President Truman attempted to garner support from the United Nations Security Council to authorize the restoration of peace. The Russians boycotted the Security Council proceedings because of an unrelated issue involving China. Truman had an astute understanding of the United Nations, and he maneuvered carefully to ensure that a mandate allowing military intervention in the South Korean issue. In addition to the military assistance pledged by the United States, the United Nations also approved unified command of all UN forces under the direction of the United States; subsequently, military members from 16 of the 60 member states served under the U.S military efforts with the United States providing 90% of total personnel and equipment (Schlesinger 2013, 208). Ultimately, despite the concerted international efforts, the war ended in a stalemate with military efforts subsiding into armed tensions. This is the first instance of the United Nations living up to the commitment to protect sovereignty and the protection of borders. The United Nations would not intervene with military efforts to protect a nation-state again for nearly 40 years, but rather, their international organization would be seen as a vehicle for humanitarian and economic efforts.

### **UN Protection of the National Borders of Kuwait, 1990-91**

In 1990, the United Nations reawakened with military efforts in the Middle East. Iraq encroached upon and overtook the nation-state, Kuwait, and the United States took steps to liberate Kuwait. United States President George H.W. Bush started a concerted effort to garner support from the international arena through a United Nations' mandate. Kuwait, would serve as another test of the role of military intervention in accordance to the guidelines of the original UN charter. President George H.W. Bush would concurrently prepare to use American military forces while securing international agreement and support through the United Nations. After a great deal of diplomatic efforts, Bush persuaded the Security Council in a Special Meeting to approve Resolution 678, which authorized "all use of necessary means" to remove Iraq from the sovereign borders of Kuwait (Council on Foreign Relations 1990). The United Nations once again also agreed to allow the United States to oversee the military efforts. In addition, Bush worked through the American Legislative system to garner support for military intervention on behalf of Kuwait.

The UN coalition began a five-week air campaign followed by ground forces, and Hussein and the Iraqi forces were driven out of Kuwait. The second successful military intervention mandated by the United Nations saw some similarities with the first international intervention in the Korean conflict. In both instances, the United Nations approved intervention and recommended the United States should provide the bulk of the military direction and resources, but also supported by member nations.

## **Territorial Borders and Revised Realism Theory**

It is also vital to examine more recent case studies that reveal the explanatory power of Revised Realism. First, careful scrutiny of the rising powers of globalization since the UN action in Kuwait in 1990-91 is imperative. All of these illustrations of globalization reveal sharp threats to the power of territorial borders that Realism Theory celebrated and that the Persian Gulf War protected. Second, extended analysis of the refugee crisis of recent vintage bears careful analysis, for, in 2015 and after, a wide variety of nations struggled in Realist ways to protect borders across which a wide variety of populations flowed in a way that was in tune with Revised Realism.

## **Rise of Globalization Forces**

Globalization makes the sanctity of borders feel threatened, and overall, borders become more porous and meaningless, and thus, the relevance of Revised Realism becomes more apparent. Globalization has many definitions, but is generally defined as the exchange of goods, services, people, and ideas across nation-states. Globalization has many causes that require the exchange of varied items across borders. Anderson and O'Dowd note that the role of territorial borders shape and are shaped by what they contain and what passes through them (1999, 594). The flow of persons seeking jobs, security, and resources across borders is a reality in the international arena. A value-proposition quickly demonstrates the motivation behind the flow of individuals and companies across borders. Individuals that are seeking economic benefit and companies that are exploring international expansion are both compelling reasons for borders to be crossed. In both instances, the individuals and the companies are valuing economic opportunity as the motivation for expanding into other geographical regions.

Individuals seeking economic opportunity serve as a prime reason for immigration. For example, numerous Polish Nationals have migrated to the United Kingdom in search of better jobs and economic conditions. Poland Joined the European Union in 2004 and became part of the "free movement" conditions of the European Union. It is estimated that 2 million Poles left since 2004, with some fleeing to Germany, but the majority settling in the United Kingdom (Taylor 2016). Poland experienced poor economic conditions and the ability to leave their own nation. Since the United Kingdom allowed immigrants to work immediately, the result was a massive influx of Polish immigrants into the United Kingdom. Presently, the Polish community is large and is estimated to be 850,000 residents in the United Kingdom, which makes up the second largest foreign national group within the population, only behind India (Taylor, 2016). The large Polish population within the United Kingdom has demonstrated the mobility of large groups across borders. It is important to note, the recent "Brexit vote" for Britain to exit the European Union, may convey a veiled message from Britain's polity about the "free movement ideals" of the European Union. Individuals move for economic opportunity and so do companies and organizations.

The movement of economic interests and companies into other nations is a reality of economic globalization. For example, Apple, which is leader in computer and telephone technologies, has developed a complicated multinational structure that provides advantageous tax considerations (Schwartz & DuHigg 2013). It is estimated that Apple's international structure provides a method for Apple to save billions in taxes (Schwartz & DuHigg 2013). Part of the plan includes having subsidiaries that do not have a country of origin, which means that the corporation does not have an extensive tax liability. Other large companies have an impressive footprint on the international arena too. Wal-Mart, which is a large retailer that provides groceries and consumables to customers at reduced prices, has expanded at a rapid pace.

Wal-Mart's international footprint is impressive with over 11,000 stores in 27 countries and is one of the largest employers in the World, only behind U.S. Department of Defense and the Chinese Army (Fortune 2016). The global expansion of Wal-Mart certainly illustrates the expansion of the international giant across nation-states and renders the perceived obstacle of borders as irrelevant. International economic globalization is not distinct among these two major industries, but also is relevant to Toyota and countless other examples. In addition, to economic expansion, which causes corporations to spread across international borders, technology can also mitigate the importance of borders.

Technology has the ability to render geography and the importance of borders meaningless. Technology via social media methodologies allows virtual communities to develop across borders and internationally. Social media comes in many technological forms, but in general refers to the creation of social communities to share ideas (Merriam-Webster). Social media is generally understood to be a myriad of communication methods to include Twitter, You-tube, Blogs, Forums, and Facebook.

The use of social media is not exclusive to good purposes; it is the desired method of communication for terrorist groups. For example, ISIS or the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, has among its members those that are technically savvy and able to maneuver social media (Secara 2016, 79). Further, Cross notes that one of the most serious threats the international community faces includes restraining the utilization of social media and the Internet by violent extremists (Cross 2013, 2). Terrorist groups utilize technology to organize their decentralized members and resources in an effective manner; furthermore, technology provides a mechanism to allow terrorist groups to seek needed support. ISIS uses technology, and specifically, social media to distribute its "message", recruit members, and seek financial support. Secara analyzed the technology usage of both ISIS and Al-Qaeda and noted that ISIS utilizes social media networks more frequently while Al-Qaeda uses social media but favors the usage of forums (2016, 82). Both terrorist groups have effective technology strategies to organize themselves and resources. This information does not exist in a vacuum; rather, it is open access to users, which also renders information susceptible to intelligence agencies, too. The ability to "govern" or restrict the usage of social media is difficult at best due to civil liberty restrictions, lack of cooperation among independent nation-states, and the inability to monitor the wide-scope of the social media terrain. Overall, there is a need to develop a plan to address the international utilization of social media by terrorists remains.

The importance of terrorists using social media has garnered attention from international groups that are seeking further governance and regulation responses from the United Nations. The biggest obstacle to regulating terrorist use of social media sources includes the need to balance the civil-liberty interest in freedom of speech against the public interest in restricting terrorist activity. The United Nations has broadly expressed concern over the need to curtail terrorist use of social media sources; however, there are various factors that are complicating the road to international action including the accepted definition of terrorist and the "common area" of the internet or the fact that the internet transcends borders, regions, and territories (Wu 2015, 292). Due to the inherent issues posed by regulations aimed at terrorist activity on the internet, the United Nations may be best served to simply take on a coordinator role that will help facilitate cooperation among member-nations that desire assistance with regulation (Wu 2015, 311). The United Nations taking on administrative functions that provide "best practices" in regulation, and methods to ensure cooperation across borders will not remedy the issue; however, the United Nations is uniquely able to provide these services as distinct from an individual nation-state.

### **Refugee Crisis in 2015 and After**

Exaggerating the porous nature of borders includes the instability of nations caused by conflict. Refugees are individuals that are seeking security by fleeing to nations that have more stable conditions. The Middle East has turmoil across various nation-states that has caused a dramatic influx of refugees seeking security and relief. The ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan have unique root causes; however, each nation provides the international arena with a specific refugee and humanitarian struggle.

### **Instability as Source of the Refugee Flow**

The Syrian Civil War had many causes and continues to rage on without any signal of change. The Ba'athist party has been in power since the inception of a stable Syrian form of government. Bashar al-Assad has been in power since the death of his father, Hafez al-Assad. The Ba'athist party, like all political groups has had an evolving party ideology, but in general has a secular, socialist agenda. The Syrian people began to have grievances against the Assad regime that were based on economic inequality and a secular agenda (Zisser 2013). In 2011, the anti-government demonstrations began to occur throughout Syria and the regime responded with violent attempts to retain control. The Assad regime is accused of severe military reaction to the protestors. The United States Government has repeatedly called for Bashar al-Assad to step down and for a representative form of government to be formed; in addition, strong sanctions have been implemented by Europe, Asia, and the United States (U.S Department of State 2012b).

The anti-government rebel group demanded an end to the government corruption, release of political prisoners, and an end to the 48-year-old emergency law (Abouzeid 2011). The protestors were met with brutal and swift response by the regime. In April 2011, in the wake of massive human rights violations, the United States imposed additional sanctions for those that are in support of or responsible for human rights violations (U.S Department of State 2012b). In addition, the United States offered support to Syrian anti-government rebels in the form of non-lethal assistance including medical kits, uniforms, food, and night vision goggles (Myre 2013). The deadly toll in Syria continues to rise with the addition of the militant group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) continues to escalate violence and destruction. The citizens of Syria are seeking a safety and security and these refugees are on the rise. There are an estimated 4.8 million registered refugees, which is an increase of over 1 million from 2015, and the percent of growth continues to rise each year (United Nations Syria).

Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan all have civil conflict and sectarian violence that has caused the flow of refugees to spill over into neighboring nations and throughout Europe and North America. The role of existing sectarian divisions within Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan contribute to the ongoing instability. In many ways, the existing conflicts converts something as benign as ethnic identity into a tool that is used to promote further violence. The ensuing violence and instability has caused the residents of Iraq to seek security and flee the region. There are approximately 4.7 million persons of concern or refugees due to the crisis in Iraq (United Nations Iraq). In addition, the rate of refugees has dramatically increased over the last several years with a 33% increase in 2015 for a total of 1.7 million people of concern (United Nations- Afghanistan).

The United Nations noted that the refugee crisis is not unique to the Middle East, but that there are more than an estimated 65 million refugees or displaced individuals worldwide (Gaynor 2016 ). There is not an easy solution to remedy the high number of displaced individuals, and complicating the issue, the movement of refugees is not without political resistance from receiving nations. Developed nations are hesitant to host refugees that are thought to not be able to contribute economically, and thus, it is estimated that 9 out of 10 refugees are hosted in a developing nation (Gaynor 2016).

### **Reactions by Nations in the Middle East and Europe to the Refugee Influx**

For those who have passed through the Keleti train station in Budapest, memories of that experience would include probably its quietness, order, cleanliness, and maybe even a smile at the visible and nearby McDonalds to which American travelers would particularly repair prior to a long trip. However, the scene was profoundly different in the first few days of September 2015. Migrants, numbering in the thousands, from the civil wars in Syria, Afghanistan, and Eritrea flooded the station in an effort to make their way to Austria and eventually Germany for sanctuary and probably new homes. Prevented from leaving the station by train, over one thousand left by foot for the 300-mile walk to the Austrian border.

The Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban took a tough stand and labeled the migrants as illegal entrants to Hungary. While building a fence to keep them out, he also provided buses to take those on foot to their targeted border to the west (*The New York Times*, 2015a). The reception at the Main Train Station in Munich, Germany was quite different than the scene at Keleti, for the gathered welcoming crowd greeted the newcomers with applause for the adults and teddy bears for the children. Estimates were that 5,000 to 10,000 migrants came into Munich on the first day after their departure from Hungary (*SME*, 2015a). Germans were prepared for the numbers of persons, for they permitted many to stay in Bavaria but also prepared to dispatch many to other German states (*Sueddeutsche*, 2015a).

Sadly, the eventual closing of the border into Hungary through building of a barbed wire fence led to a repetition of the crunch in other countries. For example, refugees shifted their route from Hungary to Croatia in an effort still to gain admission to Germany or states further north such as Sweden. After receiving 8,000 refugees in one day, Croatia also closed its border to Serbia. They did this in the fear that another 20,000 would likely cross over in the next few days. Not only did the migrants confront the local police but also the military that the government had dispatched to back up the police (*iDNES*, September 17, 2015). The Croatian plan to direct its migrants towards Hungary and Slovenia led to sharp criticism from the Hungarian government (*USA TODAY* 2015a.)

In 2016, instability in additional Middle Eastern nations contributed to the shakiness of borders, and Yemen was one of them. Due to its location on the southern border of Saudi Arabia, there was great concern in that giant about the instability flowing north into their midst. Further, the turmoil produced temporarily one notable refugee, namely Yemen's President Hadi. The rebelling Shiite minority group, the Hauthis, forced that Sunni newly chosen President to leave the nation with the result that there was no effective government in the bitterly divided nation. In February, Saudi air attacks struck close to the capital Sanaa with the result that 30 mainly civilians were killed (*USATODAY* 2016a). One month later there was increasing controversy over America's quiet support for the Saudis. Saudi Arabia sought to counter Iranian support for the Hauthis at just the time when the western agreement with Iran was in its touchiest stages.

Thus, America confined its support of the Saudi military to intelligence, airborne fuel tankers, and advanced munitions. It remained in the interests of both the United States and Saudi Arabia that Iran not be entrenched in the Arabian Peninsula. With 6,000 deaths in one year in Yemen and with the United Arab Emirates also militarily involved in there, it was not a location that western powers could ignore (*The New York Times* 2016a). Involvement of al Qaeda in the city of Mukalla in Yemen was the impetus that led the Obama Administration to assist in Yemen through dispatch of a naval force from its position in the Gulf of Aden. This was partially a reward for Saudi willingness itself to take on al Qaeda (*USATODAY* 2016b). Part of the reason for somewhat closer U.S.-Saudi links was the American expectation that Riyadh would also continue to assist in working towards a solution of the Syrian conflict (*USATODAY* 2016c).

Concern about turmoil in Libya was also a related factor, for so many of the refugees had passed its shores on the way to a hopefully safe landing in southern Europe. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter advised President Obama in late February that airstrikes on 30-40 targets in Libya might damage the growing strength of the Islamic State in that nation. There was no endorsement of the military plan at that time, for diplomatic efforts focused on creation of a unity government in Libya among the various domestic factions and political movements. Since so many terrorists had crossed the border from Libya to Tunisia, the British leadership sent military trainers to the latter to assist in stopping the flow. American armed drones also had access to an air base in Sicily, in order to defend the allies who were fighting the Islamic State militants in Libya. In January, U.S. warplanes had actually hit an ISIS training camp in Sabratha and killed a militant commander (*The New York Times* 2016b). Any allied success in Libya would assist in establishing a more secure beachhead in North Africa of partial benefit to refugees on the nearby waterways.

Of course, the Syrian civil war was a central topic of discussion in light of the enormous refugee outflow from that nation in 2015-16. In late April 2016, President Obama increased by four times the U.S. Special Forces operation there, to 300 troops. Their role was predominately advisory and also entailed cooperative projects with Kurdish militia fighters. There was a clear understanding that easing somewhat the hardship of the continuing civil war would have a positive effect on the personal decisions of those persons who were considering fleeing the troubled country for points west. The cease-fire that had been in place early in the year had unraveled, and thus it was an open question what the next step should be (*The Washington Post* 2016a).

President Putin and Russia had entered the arena in fall 2015 with insertion of military forces that would mainly fight terrorism by propping up President Assad. However, in mid-March 2016, the Russian President announced withdrawal of their main military contingent from Syria. However, a Russian presence would remain, for they still controlled their inherited naval refueling base in Tartus, a presence that stemmed back to the time of the Soviet Union. They had recently acquired an air base in Latakia on the Mediterranean Sea, and that site would remain in their hands after the formal departure of combat forces (*The New York Times* 2016c). As the Russian Su-24 bombers returned to Russia, their leadership stated that the goal had been to preserve the security of the Syrian regime but not necessarily the role of President Assad himself (*USATODAY* 2016d).

Dealing with the Kurds in Syria, Turkey, and Iraq had been a perplexing and troubling undercurrent during the discussions over what the correct policy steps should be. In fact, about this time the Kurds declared that their goal was creation of a federal region in Turkey. There would be representation for Turks and Arabs in addition to Kurds in that region. Russia seemed to support evolution to a federal system, but the Syrian regime indicated that it had no interest in movement to a political system of that type. Turkish leaders were also suspicious due to their conviction that Kurdish autonomist movements were linked to the allegedly terrorist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) (*USATODAY* 2016e).

In terms of the response of European nations to the Syrian refugee flow, both the tone and results in 2016 were very different from those in 2015. Individual European nations were focusing on tightened border controls, more restricted asylum rules, and a higher number of deportations. In fact, Macedonia, Slovenia, and Hungary all built substantial fences that kept any refugees at all from entering their countries. The land route through the Balkans was in effect closed, after the EU and Turkey came up with an agreement that aimed at reducing the number of migrants taking the life-threatening trip across the Aegean Sea. For example, the number of persons landing on the Greek Islands of Lesbos and Kos per day fell from 7,000 in October 2015 to 100 in August 2016. However, Greece still had an obligation to work towards a better life for the 60,000 migrants still located in their refugee camps (*USATODAY* 2016f).

Perhaps, German Chancellor Angela Merkel had been the most welcoming of European leaders to the Syrian refugees in mid-2015. However, her popular support in Germany had fallen from 75% to 45% after that crucial decision to admit so many who had been blocked in Hungary and elsewhere. In early September 2016, her party and coalition were rebuked in her home state of Mecklenburg-West Pomerania. The rise of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) both had made a dent in her popularity and had made political gains in the system as well. Any gains in the fall would build on March 2016 state elections, in which the AfD gained entry to eight of the sixteen state parliaments. If that party was able to gain entry to the federal Bundestag in the 2017 elections, that would be another signal about German resistance to the Syrian refugee flow into their midst (*USATODAY* 2016g). In this symbolic way, public reactions in the key European state had come full cycle. Rebuke at the polls had replaced distribution of toys and snacks to the children of Syrian refugees who had courageously made their way from their homeland across the Aegean and Balkan route to the economic prize that Germany represented.

Efforts to end the Syrian Civil War were partly aimed at bringing a halt to the enormous outflow of citizens from that nation. In September 2016, the G-20 Summit in China provided a backdrop for discussions among a number of key players in that effort. Presidents Obama and Putin met to discuss some common agreement that would ease the intensity of the civil war, but they came to no understanding and turned continuation of the talks over to Minister of Defense Sergei Lavrov and Secretary of State John Kerry. Key issues involved how best to combat ISIS, what means could be used to provide aid to civilians in desperate need, and what concrete steps could prevent President Assad from pummeling America's allies as well as its enemies. Incorporation of the new British Prime Minister Theresa May was also vital in light of the recent Brexit decision made by British voters. In addition, President Obama met with Turkish President Erdogan, a particularly important move in light of the recent failed coup against him and his general domestic policy of tightening up (*USATODAY* 2016h).

In mid-September, the major parties involved in Syria agreed to a cease-fire that included all groups and nations with the exception of ISIS and al Qaeda affiliates. If the cease-fire worked and if there was an opening up of the delivery of humanitarian supplies to civilians in desperate straits, then Russia and America would consider broader military cooperation. After a few days, however, Russia charged that an American air strike had gone off course with the result that 62 Syrian military personnel were killed. The American Central Command halted the strikes immediately, but Syrian military spokespersons claimed that it was a purposeful attack on the Syrian Army. In turn, the American leaders charged that the Russians were preventing the needed humanitarian supplies from getting to Aleppo, a condition for establishment of a joint implementation center (*USATODAY* 2016i).

By the end of the month, relations between America and Russia had worsened with the emergence of evidence that Russia was engaged in a bombing campaign in Aleppo itself, with the resulting deaths of civilians and destruction of schools and hospitals. For years, the American plan had been to support the non-radical opposition groups who had no links to al Qaeda and its affiliates. However, some on the American side perceived the Russia attacks as an effort to drive all opposition groups together with the result that Assad would be the only alternative (*The New York Times* 2016d). Since Moscow was thereby not observing the conditions of the ceasefire, personnel in the U.S. State Department halted engagement with Moscow on the questions that were central to the cease-fire (*iDnes* 2016). What is the connection between the continuing uncertainty about the Syrian War and the flow of people into the countries of Europe? Mainly, the continuous uncertainty and suffering awakened the western fears of a continuous stream of people out of Syria and into Turkey, Greece, Italy, and beyond. It is the case that there were difficult civil wars in other nations such as Yemen.

However, the West was less clear on what that struggle was about and not as interested in the Houthi revolt there against a duly elected government. There was not the huge flow of immigration outwards, as there was in Syria, and western nations did not feel pressure from that war. ISIS also played a small role in that war, and that was a sharp contrast to Syria. (*The New York Times* 2016e).

In early October, there was a powerful impact of the refugee exodus on Hungary, as their citizens cast ballots on the question of whether their nation should comply with the European Union imposed quotas on the number of asylum seekers that each member state should accept. Simultaneously with the vote, the government of Prime Minister Victor Orban was endeavoring to recruit 3,000 "border hunters" to defuse the possibility that migrants who might later become a public security threat might slip through the fence that they had built. In addition, Hungary had joined with the other Visegrad nations of Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Poland in filing a lawsuit in the EU Court of Justice for establishing the quotas during the past year (*The Washington Post* 2016b). The October 2 referendum vote in Hungary produced an unusual result. A full 98% of those who voted supported the government in answering "no" to the question: "Do you want the European Union to be able to prescribe the mandatory settlement of non-Hungarian citizens in Hungary even without the consent of Parliament?" However, the Hungarian Constitution required that a majority of eligible voters turn out and cast ballots for the referendum to be valid. Surprisingly, only 43.9% turned out, according to the National Election Office (*USATODAY* 2016j). Thus, the government needed to sift through the other alternatives in order to achieve the goal of avoiding the EU quotas.

### **Impact on the European Union**

António Guterres, Head of the UN Refugee Agency, early on called upon the EU in 2015, to take in a full 200,000 refugees. As mentioned above, this approach did raise serious questions about the EU's Dublin System that put the major responsibility for a refugee on the country that first received that person (*The New York Times*, 2015i). A day later he placed the emphasis on the need for a "common effort" that would surely need to underpin such an influx (*USATODAY*, 2015d). Another UN official who took a lead in the response was its top humanitarian official in Syria, Yacoub El Hillo. He had been warning for some time about the magnitude of the damage done by the Syrian Civil War, and he argued now that the current earthquake of people revealed that the global humanitarian system of aid was nearly broken (*The New York Times*, 2015j). In fact, the EU itself may have been part of the problem, for their long-standing Schengen Agreement implied that the primary organizational standard was freedom of movement from one country to the other (*The New York Times*, 2015k).

Federica Mogherini, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, pointed out that the impact on Europe was emotional as well as political. She appealed for the European leaders and peoples to accept first the emergency "psychologically," and that adjustment could then lead to an understanding of the needed solutions (*USATODAY*, 2015d). The incoming EU Commissioner Jean-Claude Juncker, in his first speech in the new position, harked back to the early days of the Iraq War, by imploring Europe not to divide into an East and West on this momentous issue (*SME*, 2015e). Since the UN and EU had not expected this type of crisis to result from the Syrian Civil War, there had not been the luxury of time to prepare a step-by-step response. A sharp reaction against these UN and EU appeals emanated from the region under pressure itself. The Visegrad Four (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary) went on record as not supporting the EU quotas that were being developed for each participant nation (*SME*, 2015e). While Hungary had built a wall to keep the refugees out, Slovakia took the additional step of declaring that it would challenge those quotas in the EU Court (*USATODAY*, 2015e).

Later on the Central European nations softened up somewhat, as Poland gave its approval first, with the Czech Republic following soon thereafter. The final EU vote on the quotas for redistribution of 120,000 refugees was 23-4-1 (*The New York Times*, 2015l). Romania had also been reluctant but later followed the lead of the Czech Republic and Poland. Part of the problem was the fact that some of the nations first hit by the refugee flow were not yet in the EU, for they were still struggling to recover from the devastating Balkan wars of the 1990s. Nations that had emerged from the old Yugoslavia were particularly helpless in this situation. Serbia and Macedonia were the ones most directly affected, but Kosovo and Bosnia also received an indirect impact (*The New York Times*, 2015m).

On March 18, 2016, the EU and Turkey made a landmark agreement that called for return of some refugees and resettlement of others. Greece would continue to investigate the refugees who came across the Aegean and made it to their territory. They would then return to Turkey any refugees who came in through an irregular process.

In return the EU nations would be obligated to settle those refugees who were already in their nations and also accept from Turkey those who qualified for entry. The EU would provide visa free travel to citizens of Turkey and also considerable budgetary assistance to them to be used in care for the refugees. Negotiations during previous weeks had centered on EU promises to provide \$3 billion in assistance to Turkey in order to provide help to the 2 million Syrian refugees who were already living there. Turkey put pressure on for a quick solution, but the EU held out as long as possible due to the need to consider carefully the terms of the assistance (*USATODAY* 2016k). In the background was the long-standing hope of Turkey to embark upon a path that would lead to its membership in the EU itself. However, the refugee crisis combined with the authoritarian turn of the Erdogan Presidency to postpone the day on which that might occur (*The New York Times* 2016f). Between March and May of the year, Erdogan took steps that would result in awarding substantial executive powers to the ceremonial presidency, and he lost his Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu through resignation in the process (*USATODAY* 2016l). Even more troubling for resolutions to both the Turkish EU path and the plight of so many refugees in Turkey was the attempted coup against his government later in the summer. He fired thousands of public employees, imprisoned hundreds of others, and put huge pressure on the United States to extradite the Turkish émigré whom they argued had been the brains behind the coup.

Individual EU nations were often shaking with the emergence of nationalistic political forces that challenged governmental decisions to go along with the refugee influx. As noted, Chancellor Merkel in Germany experienced a sharp drop in popularity as well as election losses at the state level in spring-summer of the year. Further, the pro-Brexit vote movement in the United Kingdom obtained some of its fuel from anger about the rise in the immigrant population as well as isolated acts of violence by a few of them. Ironically, the largest number of immigrants in the UK consisted of Poles, and so the anger against them paralleled the hostility further south to Syrians but was had a very different source.

In Austria, an EU nation that had also been on the direct link of the immigrant flow in 2015, there was a sharp reaction against the two major parties that had managed the process. As a result, the Social Democrats and People's Party were unable to get their candidates into the run-off for the ceremonial presidential position in May 2016. Norbert Hofer of the Freedom Party was the front-runner in the polls just prior to the election and barely lost with 49.7% of the vote. He had campaigned on an anti-immigrant platform and had proposed a fence to keep out the "Muslim invasion" (*The Washington Post* 2016c). As a result, the Green Party Chair Alexander Van der Bellen became the new President, and the former Social Democratic Chancellor also yielded his spot to a party colleague in the turmoil (*USATODAY* 2016m). Truly, the refugee crisis shook both the EU as an institution and many of the foundation stone nations within it.

In the midst of all this turmoil in 2016, the EU held a September summit in Bratislava, Slovakia. The decision by the United Kingdom via referendum to leave the EU was a key agenda item. In fact the Brexit vote in the UK was largely due to the presence of so many immigrants in their midst. Just prior to the summit, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker addressed this issue in a frontal way in his annual State of the Union address. For him, the free movement of workers throughout the EU was a European value. Development of a common military force and European Solidarity Corps were additional proposals that related in part to the refugee crisis. For example, the latter would consist of idealistic young persons who would assist in crises such as the flow of refugees into the EU nations (*USATODAY* 2016n).

The host of the summit was Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico, and he underlined the commitment of the EU to demonstrate its strength by coming to an agreement on the continuing challenge of the refugees. There were additional refugee-related agenda items that preoccupied the leaders at the Bratislava meeting. One was assistance to Bulgaria in strengthening its border with non-member Turkey, and another was emphasis on plans to increase the reaction time of both border guards and coast guard personnel (*USATODAY* 2016o). Angela Merkel, the German Chancellor who had given the green light to so many immigrants through Munich in 2015, gave an important summit speech in which she called for strong efforts to establish common ground among all members. In light of the entry of over one million persons who had flooded into EU territory, the conferees paid attention to a number of new proposals that would spur economic growth and trade as well as provide border security (*USATODAY* 2016p).

This particular summit could only embrace open discussion about new proposals, for passage of concrete EU policy proposals would have to await their spring meeting.

### **Alternative to Realism and Revised Realism Theories: Russia and “Eurasianism”**

Is there an alternative to walling off borders or to permitting the powers of globalization to render borders meaningless? Are Realism and Revised Realism the only applicable analytical models? Looking further east, it is worth considering the Eurasian Model that serves partially as an explanation for Russian thinking and policy moves in its orbit of operations. A central feature of this model is its assumption that borders historically have been ever changing and never permanently fixed. The key disadvantage of this model is that it permits a strong Moscow-centered state to violate borders when its leaders envision a threat across them. However, its advantage is that movement of various peoples and ethnic groups across them may be less startling than it proves to be for populations and leaders in Europe and the United States. Therefore, examination of the Eurasian concept may prove fruitful in sorting through the debris of the unholy mix of nationalism and globalization in individual country situations.

### **Annexations in 2008 and 2014**

On the downside, Russia has violated national borders established in 1991 on two momentous occasions in the last decade. In both cases, minority groups in contiguous, relatively new states claimed a sense of threat and were open to assistance from Russia. Both situations generated sharp condemnation by the West, for a war was the tool used by Moscow to protect and then take control of those aggrieved minority groups. A sharp clash ensued between the West with its focus on border integrity and a Russia that still partially retained the mind-set of the Soviet Union as well as the Russian Empire that had a long history prior to the 1991 break-up of the U.S.S.R.

The Georgian crisis occurred in August 2008, and its essence was a Russian invasion to protect the northern territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia from threats that emanated from their own Georgian leaders in Tbilisi. Documentation later revealed that Georgian troops had initiated the conflict with moves into both of those Russian-leaning territories. However, the Russian response was disproportionate to the provocation, and their troops drove beyond the two enclaves that they sought to protect. As a result, Russia took over both South Ossetia and Abkhazia and administered them as if they were part of their own country. It was clear that President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin did not place much weight on the territorial division between Georgia and Russia. To many observers, the move was reminiscent of Russia's continuing administration of the eastern Transdniestrian territory of Moldova. Russia had maintained a military presence there after the end of the Cold War that revealed its lack of acknowledgement of the significance of the Russian-Moldovan border.

If the western reaction to the Russian invasion of Georgia was strong and univocal, it was even more so to the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Moscow in the spring of 2014. From President Putin's perspective, the Ukrainians had been provocative by demonstrating against the decision of President Viktor Yanukovich to accept financial assistance of \$15 billion from Russia as a substitute for making strong overtures to the European Union (Kalb 2015 143). Yanukovich was an ethnic Russian as the national Ukrainian President, and he hit the demonstrators in Kiev very hard with the resulting deaths of about 100 of them. Soon Ukrainian nationalist pressures forced him to leave the nation and take up residence in Russia. With its 60% Russian ethnic population, the leaders in the Crimean Republic of Ukraine worked closely with Russian state leaders to break away and join Russia. Russia still had its military base in Crimea at Sevastopol, and more troops arrive from Russia proper to protect their Crimean counterparts as they prepared a referendum on separation. The referendum resulted in an overwhelming vote to join the Russian federation, and the Russian Duma responded by incorporating that territorial unit within a few days. The western response was a substantial one that entailed both movement of NATO troops from southern Europe into the Baltic States that felt the Russian threat and imposition of economic sanctions against key figures in the Russian economic and political establishment. Once again, it was clear that Russia did not place much importance on the territorial border established in 1991 between its own state and Ukraine. Thus, a third case study reveals the quite different Russian view of borders than would be found in the West.

It must also be acknowledged that the authoritarian thrust of President Putin's policies after his rise to power in 2000 contributed to the decisions to intervene in Georgia and Ukraine, as well as to retain the Russian hold over Transdniestria in Moldova.

This authoritarian consolidation had much to do with the “asymmetrical and far-reaching” Kremlin reaction to the Crimean Crisis of 2014 (Gel'man 2015, 99-101). It is also the case that Putin was technically in second command as Prime Minister to President Medvedev in 2008. However, his profile was higher than that of any previous Prime Minister and this enabled him to play a key role in the decision to intervene during the 2008 Georgia War (Gill 2016, 187). Thus, the development of authoritarian leadership after the weakness of the latter years under President Boris Yeltsin facilitated implementation of a Eurasian policy that downplayed the significance of territorial borders.

### **Russian Historical Self-Perception of Eurasianism**

In fact, there is an historical basis for this controversial Russian self-perception, and its roots actually penetrate back to the fifth century. Powerful empires pushed through much of Inner Asia in the deep historical past. For example, Attila the Hun in the fifth century put together a powerful Hunnic Empire that penetrated in many directions, one of which was the Byzantine Empire. During the thirteenth century, Genghis Khan and the Mongol Horde drove through from the east and conquered many of the peoples of the region as well (Clover 2016, 53) and in 1228 he actually brought in an army of 300,000 (Kalb 2015, 37). In the fourteenth century Tamerlane conquered the Eurasian Steppe from the Caucasus through South Russia. Part of his goal was to restore the collapsed Mongol Empire and he also brought the Muslim faith to those peoples (Clover 2016, 134-135). Each of these conquests erased borders and became part of the mind-set of those located further north about historical waves and shifting borders.

Equally important was the rise of Kievan Rus' in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and its rule by Vladimir the Great. The origins of the Russian Empire were thus in Kiev, the capital of modern Ukraine. Further, Vladimir traveled to the Crimean Peninsula and there had the revelation that led to adoption of Orthodoxy as the official faith for Russia, rather than Islam or Judaism (Kalb 2015, 28-36). This event was commemorated with construction of a Russian Orthodox Church on the very site at which the conversion took place. Ironically, that church is located near Sevastopol and within striking distance of the controversial Russian military base that played a key role in the 2014 events. These historical facts have linked Russian and Ukrainian history in ways that pay little heed to the existence of permanent borders that separate different cultures. In his March 18, 2014 address to the Duma with a request to declare Crimea as a new Republic in Russia, the President made reference to those historical roots (Kalb 2015, 20)!

### **Moscow as the Center of Eurasia rather than of the Russian State**

In practical ways, the emergent Eurasianism helps explain certain features of the Russian experience in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. First, groups formed a Eurasian Party in 2001, as a means for pulling Orthodoxy and Islam together as a buffer against the West. This enabled Russian leaders to have a tool for creating dialogue with the Chechens after the two wars with them as well as the lingering tensions within the Caucasus region (Clover 2016, 259-264). It is also true that the concept provided an instrument for the regime to use in countering the street gangs and skinhead youths that resisted the infiltration of Central Asian persons seeking work in major Russian cities (Clover 2016, 285-288). There had also been among the Russian population a considerable lack of trust in groups from the Caucasus as well as the Roma (Mickiewicz 2014, 87-107). In addition, in 2011, President Putin announced a policy objective of creating a Eurasian Union that would establish a common forum for discussion among a wide variety of peoples across many nation states. That policy became reality in 2015 (Clover 2016, 14). In a way, that structure was another counter-example to a West that was tied up with the details and results of European Union and NATO expansion (Clover 2016, 319). Moscow would be at the center of that Union, and perhaps its work would contribute to the decreasing importance of national borders in the region.

### **Eurasianism as a Model for the West?**

First, in what ways could Eurasianism offer a third way to a Europe that currently preoccupies itself with protection of national territorial borders against the refugee tides, terrorism, economic penetration, and electronic information flows that constitute the key forces of globalization? The Eurasian Model developed in the East can offer important insights that could serve to construct the building blocks of a transformed vision for Europe. In the 1980s and 90s, there was an emphasis on building a Common European Home. Ironically, much of the discussion came from the collapsing Soviet Union, as their leader Michael Gorbachev offered this as a way out for the Soviet

Union. He had in mind Russian participation in a Europe that was unifying as an alternative to the break-up of the Soviet Union, with its probable resulting isolation of Russia in the East. The Soviet leader pointedly wrote that the concept occurred to him as a needed departure from the old "multi-colored patchwork-quilt-like political map of Europe." Symbolically, he presented the concept in person in Czechoslovakia, a nation that he described as "exactly at the geographical center of Europe."

He acknowledged the differences among the various European nations by asserting that "the home is common" but that "each family has its own apartment" (Gorbachev 1987, 194-195). Others have agreed that there are sharp social and political differences but have also maintained that Europe has a "certain integrity." The end of the Cold War led to a deep need "for the reshaping of Europe." In such a time of great transition, it would be possible to utilize existing institutions and alliances but also make important changes "incrementally" (Malcolm 1989, 664-676). Although this concept emerged from the East as a way of rechanneling energy after the end of the Cold War, the idea of a Common European Home has a renewed relevance at a time when the fragility of the EU is so apparent.

Within Europe itself, there was a heavy emphasis on European integration after passage in 1989, of the Single European Act. Acceptance of the Euro as a currency by many EU nations was a symbol of this movement a decade later. As the nations that formerly had been part of the communist world applied for admission to the EU, they had to pass through a checklist of more than 30 criteria set by Brussels for admission. This entire process contributed to a picture of a Europe that was offering a center of loyalties and obligations that would supplement those that existed within each member state. Simultaneously, NATO was offering membership to many of the same states, and this contributed to the idea of a common defense organization that would offer the promise of support under Article V during a time of threat. Both the United States and Canada were part of this military organization, but the European theater and its environs were the area of military concern. Importantly, integration into a unifying EU also meant the Schengen Accords that permitted freer movement from one state to another and less reliance on border divisions. Thereby, there would be emphasis on an emotional European bond that could transcend the border differences and also cope with the results of the immigration flow. Immigrants would enter a "home" rather than a target state.

Second, it may also be the case that those in the western hemisphere have something to learn from the Eurasian experience, and one forward-looking concept might be a focus on shaping a common American home that would include the nations of South as well as North America. Histories are intertwined, as Canada, the United States, and the peoples of Latin America all experienced a common colonial past. Prior to the Mexican War of the 1840s, Mexico controlled the geographic area that now constitutes Arizona, New Mexico, and Southern California. There will be no change in nation-state borders in the Americas, but a spotlight on the common threads of culture and historical experiences together can point to an emotional overcoming of the territorial borders themselves.

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