
Secular States in a “Security Community”: The Migration-Terrorism Nexus?

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Introduction

The June 23, 2016 Brexit vote is the arguably the most striking illustration that transnational migration, given its evolving interface with economic insecurity and global terrorism, constitutes a strategic challenge for the European Union (EU) and European integration.¹ Given incessant transnational migration, Europe becomes less coherent as a Union and more contested as a migrant destination writ large: A nomadic hub in which identity is no longer the subject of binary oppositions.² As migratory flows exacerbate disintegrative dynamics in the EU,³ greater emphasis needs to be placed both on migration discourses and policy responses. This plea is particularly important now that religion has been used instrumentally in contemporary discourses on migration in Europe. This obscures our ability to conceptualize the challenge of today’s migration. In other words, the apparent inability of the EU to deal with the migration-inflicted challenges and tensions today suggests that the linkage between the discourses on migration and policy responses has not been adequately considered. Consequently, there is no strategy in Europe to address the migration challenge in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. At the level of discourse, this inability translates into a migration-terrorism nexus, a challenge in itself. This is particularly true taking into account that the instrumental use of religion resonates with three distinct features that define the current migration crisis in Europe and make it one of a kind. These features include: 1. the compression of time and space, which translates into an unprecedented number of migrants desperate to relocate to an extremely limited space in Europe; 2. the societal dynamics, to the extent that Europe is already saturated, without the addition of a migrant influx that provokes further tensions; 3. the post-1989 communications revolution, which changes the way migration is conveyed in the discourse to the masses.

The objective of this article is to address how migration tensions intertwine with “the unquestioned acceptance of the secularist division

¹ Will Somerville, “Brexit: The Role of Migration in the Upcoming EU Referendum,” *Migration Information Source* (May 4, 2016) available at: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/brexit-role-migration-upcoming-eu-referendum>.

² “Schengen: Controversial EU free movement deal explained,” *BBC News*, April, 24 2016, available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-13194723>.

³ Simon Bulmer and Jonathan Joseph, “European Integration in Crisis? Of Supranational Integration, Hegemonic Projects and Domestic Politics,” *European Journal of International Relations* (November, 2015): 1–24; Douglass Webber, “How Likely is it that the European Union will Disintegrate? A Critical Analysis of Competing Theoretical Perspectives,” *European Journal of International Relations* 20:2 (June, 2014): 341–365; Hans Vollaard, “Explaining European Disintegration,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 52:5 (September, 2014): 1142–1159.

between religion and politics.”⁴ The disintegration paradox is that religion used instrumentally is being reintroduced into the discourse of societies perceived as secular. Instrumentalism adds to the dynamics of disintegration manifested by the Brexit vote. Significantly, the article’s emphasis on the instrumental use of religion means that values, norms, and principles specific to a given religion are removed from the scope of the analysis.

This article opens up the debate concerning strategic options, which exist to navigate both our inability to understand implications of the migration wave and to generate adequate policy-responses. In-depth understanding of media discourse surrounding this issue is equally important. In this context, this article addresses two interconnected problems. Why has the current wave of migration brought the notion of religion into the debate in secular communities? And how do we conceptualize migration and the migrant today so as to make them fit to the specificities of the contemporary migration crisis in Europe and the context in which it unfolds? Only by addressing these two questions will we be able to identify the most pressing implications of the present migration wave and devise effective strategies in response.

In referencing Europe’s post-war construction, Kupchan “stressed Europe’s cultural homogeneity, not its dividing lines, drawing on the multiple dimensions of religious and ethnic similarity.”⁵ Taking this argument as our point of departure, this article proceeds initially to question the relevance of the security community to explain Europe’s integration in this century. The next sections are as follows: 1. explore the emergence of the migration-terrorism nexus as a corollary of the instrumentalization of religion; 2. re-visit the concepts of migration and the migrant in the postmodern context; and 3. suggest possible strategies to deal with the challenge of migration. The article generates prescriptions as to what could be done, arguing that the instrumentalized use of religion in the context of migratory flows is a “gray rhino.”⁶ The following sections demonstrate that, although raging on Europe’s horizon, the “gray rhino” does not command enough attention to make elites or societies act to prevent threats and challenges which are bound to emerge.

⁴ Hurd, Elizabeth Shakman, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford, UK: Princeton University Press, 2008), 1.

⁵ Kupchan, Charles, *How Enemies Become Friends* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford, UK: Princeton University Press, 2010), 216.

⁶ Wucker, Michele, *The Gray Rhino* (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, 2016).

From Falling Borders to “Liquid Frontiers” in Europe

The current migration crisis in Europe conveys a modern paradox: In secular states, this crisis allows religion to be instrumentalized during its reintroduction into the public discourse concurrently as disintegration begins. Specifically, religion entered the public discourse again in the post-1989 era. Its instrumentalization became more of a focus as Cold War dynamics faded. During the communications revolution at the close of the twentieth century, the propensity to instrumentalize the use of particular concepts such as religion,⁷ globalization,⁸ and the European social model⁹ increased.

In his book, Kupchan underscores that in the early years of post-war reconstruction community Europe “enjoyed the building blocks of a strong sense of cultural commonality.”¹⁰ Moreover, he asserts that during the twentieth century “European elites had a ready historical narrative on which to draw when, as they started work on building a political and economic union, they sought to reclaim the sense of commonality and solidarity that prevailed after the Napoleonic Wars.”¹¹ In contrast, this inquiry posits that the post-war European narrative of “no more war” never addressed the Continent’s tragic legacy of inter-state, fratricidal conflict. Specifically, post-war integration was not anchored in the unspoken narrative of “never again” in terms of the lengthy shadow cast by the Holocaust: The stories of displacement, and the silencing of the voices of those nomads who after World War II never could feel at home.¹²

The implications for secular states in a security community are ominous. Tensions within the public sphere cannot be confined to the private life in each European Union member state. Transnational migration transforms the single European market from a symbol of 1945-1993 European construction into a very different twenty-first century postmodern reality: The contested nature of religion in the public sphere prevents the emergence of a new post-Maastricht integration narrative.

⁷ Sarfati, Yusuf, *Mobilizing Religion in Middle East Politics: A Comparative Study of Israel and Turkey* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2014).

⁸ Colin Hay and Ben Rosamond, “Globalisation, European Integration and the Discursive Construction of Economic Imperatives,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 9:2 (2002): 147-167.

⁹ Daniel Wincott, “The Idea of the European Social Model: Limits and Paradoxes of Europeanization,” in Kevin Featherstone and Claudio M. Radaelli (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003), 279-302.

¹⁰ Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends*, 216.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Duyvendak, Jan Willem, *The Politics of Home Belonging and Nostalgia in Western Europe and the United States* (London, England: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011).

In light of competing pressures on states and societies, we assess if the concept of security community still resonates to explain the nature of the European integration process. Current developments suggest that the opposite dynamics of what Kupchan originally analyzed, as explained below, pertaining to the origins of the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Economic Community, are taking place. The specificity in this case is that the instrumentalization of religious differences is the variable leading to societal disintegration as well as the root cause of the lack of cultural commonality. The migration crisis is the most forceful manifestation of this specificity. Whereas Deutsch identifies the nature and scope of the security community in the North Atlantic area,¹³ Kupchan analyzes the mechanisms, which prompted its formation in the early years of post-war European reconstruction.¹⁴ The initial act of co-binding founding members in the European Coal and Steel Community in a way to make future war on the Continent impossible had to be followed by the establishment of a “rules-based order on the foundation of the emerging Franco-German coupling.”¹⁵ The unilateral restraint of the more powerful states in the European integration project was only the start of the process to create a security community. The elimination of geopolitical rivalry had to be complemented by societal integration and the generation of a European identity; in other words, a long-term objective was articulated in 1977 by then President G. Leone of Italy:

“We must now prepare to take a new step which, once internal solidarity becomes a reality, means that we really concentrate on creating conditions for the advent of the ‘European,’ a person who will find his spiritual, cultural, and social equilibrium in a new society.”¹⁶

Kupchan left the question open as to when, and indeed whether, a shared identity among Europeans, as well as a commonality in the cultural sense, “ultimately strengthened by the educational exchanges, community-wide flag and passport, a single currency, and other policy initiatives aimed at fostering a European identity”¹⁷ could ultimately become “a common identity, laying the foundation for Europe to mature into a federal union.”¹⁸

¹³ Deutsch, Karl W. et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).

¹⁴ Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends*, 201-17.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 205-06.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 210.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 216-17.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 217.

The present crisis in Europe illustrates that the excluded immigrant has no loyalty to the established system; his or her voice is heard only in the violence of a revisionist nomad, which, in turn, determines the way in which exit occurs. As the 2005 riots in the suburbs of Paris demonstrated, the exit is by definition revolutionary: Violence is explicit as grievances arise out of the inability of the secular state to fulfill the basic human needs of the migrant.¹⁹ In this context, there is a need to address the underlying, root causes that lead to persistent violence²⁰ or, as Burton argued, a need to “provent”²¹ violence. Prevention, in contrast, fails to address the root causes in question. For this reason, prevention is a wasted opportunity to stop violence such as the acts that marked the Paris tragedies in 2015.

The nature of the violence that persists in the migration context recalls the emotion that colors Europe’s geopolitical reality according to Moïsi, namely, fear,²² specifically, a fear of the “other,”²³ which in the European Union, increasingly, is rooted less in questions of race or nationalism and more in contested matters of religion.²⁴ The influence of religion given the potential for societal disintegration and cultural fragmentation in the European Union does not point to its demise from the realist perspective: Conflict is not between states. The violence that arises is within states, owing to the ease of transnational migratory flows made possible as borders fell within the single European market. The disappearance of external borders, which are by definition fixed in place and time, makes way for the emergence of “liquid frontiers,” defined in this article as being socially constructed, religiously as well as culturally, through migrant

¹⁹ Ziad Achkar, “Diaspora: Old Actors, New Methods,” in *ICTs and Mass Atrocities Research and Response*, Colette Mazzucelli and Anna Visvizi (eds.), Special Issue, *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 10:3 (December, 2016), <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/gsp/>.

²⁰ Christoph Koettl, “Sensors Everywhere: Using Satellites and Mobile Phones to Reduce Information Uncertainty in Human Rights Research,” in *ICTs and Mass Atrocities Research and Response*, Colette Mazzucelli and Anna Visvizi (eds.), Special Issue, *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 10:3 (December, 2016), <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/gsp/>.

²¹ Dunn, David J., *From Power Politics to Conflict Resolution the Work of John W. Burton* (London, England: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004).

²² Moïsi, Dominique, *The Geopolitics of Emotion* (New York: Anchor Books, 2010), Ethics Matter, Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, Series Presentation, uploaded on May 21, 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grC5XSzSCFM>.

²³ Kapuściński, Ryszard, *The Other* (London, England and New York, NY: Verso, 2006), 53-61.

²⁴ Nussbaum, Martha C., *The New Religious Intolerance Overcoming the Politics of Fear in an Anxious Age* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012).

experiences referenced along spatial and temporal dimensions in what Burton defines as “world society.”²⁵

Exploring the Migration-Terrorism Nexus

Terrorist attacks continue to mar the public sphere across Europe and so many other places around the world spreading death and suffering. In Europe, particularly, a dubious connection has been established linking, even if only implicitly at times, migration and terrorism. In the aftermath of the Paris and Brussels attacks, the migration-terrorism nexus has come to occupy a prominent position in the dominant discourse on migration and its challenges for Europe and its societies. The nexus evokes frequently hostile approaches to migrants at the level of society and government resulting in acts of xenophobia, border closings, erecting fences, and confiscating the valuables of migrants. On yet a different level of the migration debate, the nexus has been effectively employed by political parties of diverse breeds to win the voters’ support thereby contributing to the consolidation of the alleged correlation between migration and terrorism.

Certainly, the critical word in the phrase is “nexus,” which equates all migration to terrorism and, in this way, denigrates legitimate migration thereby leading to a trap of wider intolerance. In this view, the primary goal is to decouple the link between migration and terrorism and instead to focus on the point that terrorism may create migration. Migration on its own does not prompt terrorism. Scholars cannot ignore the fact that migratory movements may, under specific circumstances, be the source of soft security threats, such as illicit drugs, trafficking, the export of regional civil wars or inter-state conflicts.²⁶ Barring these instances of threat, the alarming feature of the migration-terrorism nexus, which has come to play a pronounced role in the European discourse on migration today, is the implicit reference the nexus makes to Islam. The link prominently established between Islam as a religion and terrorism victimizes the entire Muslim community. Although the debate on political Islam is outside the scope of this analysis, the aim is to focus on a largely ignored aspect of the phenomenon that establishes a linkage between migration-Islam and terrorism: The instrumentalization of religion and its role in contemporary societies, especially in countries that define themselves with pride as being

²⁵ Burton, John W., *World Society* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 23-51.

²⁶ Volker Perthes, “Germany Gradually Becoming a Mediterranean State,” *EuroMeSCO Papers* (January, 1998) available at: http://www.euromesco.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=132%3A%20paper-1-germany-gradually-becoming-a-mediterranean-state&catid=102%3Aprevious-papers&Itemid=102&lang=en.

secular. At this point, it is striking that the migration-terrorism nexus as well as the debate in which it is a distinct reference, expose the notion of religion and its role in the social construction and functioning of contemporary societies. This is an issue as well as a challenge otherwise neglected in contemporary analyses. Presently, we bear witness to the paradox of secular societies more or less implicitly referencing religion, Islam as well as Christianity, in the dominant media discourse and in those societies’ conceptualization of reality. This context, in turn, prompts the question of how religion matters in contemporary societies, in other words, in which way, and by means of which mechanisms, religion contributes to the construction of specific conceptualizations of the reality in which societies operate. The case of migration to Europe lends itself to the kind of analysis that might shed light on that question. This specific context also prompts the question of why narratives drawing on the migration-terrorism nexus resonate so widely across Europe at present—at levels of the political establishment and society.

In the political establishment, the migration-terrorism nexus serves the purpose of deflecting attention from the very much needed new common narrative on Europe and its twenty-first century integration. This narrative is absent for a variety of reasons, including ideational void, economic distress, and emerging and perceived inequalities, which explain why no new integrative narrative is in sight. The terrorist threat discursively attached to migration comes in handy in an attempt to bypass the real problem of ideational void and economic distress, which Europe faces. The narrative on migration, and even more so the migration-terrorism nexus, provides European audiences with a false alternative of how to interpret reality; in other words, the narrative and the nexus lure with an illusion of what Europe, and, more specifically, what the Union must confront as a challenge and the appropriate response to that challenge. As a result, this illusion precludes, on the one hand, the possibility to establish a new, valid narrative of European integration. On the other hand, devoid of an accurate conceptualization of both migration and migrant, the narrative on migration as well as the political discourse that feeds into the narrative are doomed to lead to inaccurate responses to challenges that migratory flows of today’s scale and type generate.

The role that the discursive use of the migration-terrorism nexus plays at the societal level is of a slightly different nature than in the case of its use by the political establishment. Religion plays a powerful role in the construction of society, not necessarily regarding the principles and dogmas upon which society is built; rather pertaining to the loyalties and affiliations that construction presupposes. These loyalties and affiliations serve as the key to delineating and securing claims to the public sphere

against similar claims made by competing societal groups. In this view, loyalties and affiliations to, rather than the actual ideology of, any given religion, are employed in the process of “othering” competing societal groups, crowding out the “other” from the public sphere. Interestingly, by establishing and exploiting the migration-terrorism nexus rather than bringing religion to the surface of the debate on how societies function today, religion has been deflected from the narrative on migration and once again made, at best, implicit in the conversation.

As Bramadat asserts,

“...it is often the case that religion is framed merely as a ‘multiplier’ in conflicts that are not actually ‘about’ religion. When faced with violent political acts articulated ‘in the name of’ a particular religion, a great many journalists, politicians, and representatives of the religion in the spotlight tacitly agree to articulate the same core argument: That [insert religion here] is the religion of peace but has regrettably been hijacked by a miniscule number of despicable people whose real motives are actually economic, political, or perhaps simply idiosyncratically pathological (and thus, presumably, not subject to critical social analysis).”²⁷

All things considered, what needs to be stressed is that the fallacy of the migration-terrorism nexus notwithstanding, careful examination of the meanings entailed and implications borne highlight the instrumental use of religion in the current debate on migration. Actual values, beliefs, and ideologies constituting religion, most notably Islam, are irrelevant in face of political manipulation and the process of “othering” aimed at the consolidation and maintenance of the public sphere. It is imperative that future research inquiries go beyond the basic statement that the essence of a given religion has been rendered irrelevant. More research into the role played by the misuse of religion in modern societies and in secular states is needed to understand how societies function. This is particularly important within the context defined by processes whereby cities are transformed into megacities just as urban areas, rather than nation-states, become hubs that attract migration. By bringing the misuse of religion into the analysis, this opens up the possibility to gain insights into its particular impact on societal disintegration and the lack of communal integrity in contemporary Europe. In contrast, bracketing religion excludes the possibility of exploring perhaps the most important processes

²⁷ Paul Bramadat, “The Public, the Political, and the Possible: Religion and Radicalization in Canada and Beyond,” in Paul Bramadat and Lorne Dawson (eds.), *Religious Radicalization and Securitization in Canada and Beyond* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 15.

and mechanisms shaping contemporary Europe, which, in turn, may well help explain the nature of its apparent disintegrative dynamics in the early twenty-first century.

Migration and the Migrant Re-Visited

At the heart of the present migration debate in the EU is a frequently unspoken realization that the Union as a polity has failed to address the variety of challenges perpetuated by successive waves of migration to Europe’s shores. We argue that the EU’s misplaced policy responses toward migration are a function of two processes. On the one hand, the current disintegrative dynamics within the EU polity resulted either in too little and to no avail policy responses at the EU-level or in too harsh, too restrictive, too intrusive policy actions taken at the domestic level in different member states. Considerable disjunction between these two has taken place as well. On the other hand, it has passed largely unobserved in the migration debate that the concept of migration has to be re-visited in order to account for the evolution of the context in which it unfolds. As a result of the confluence of these two processes, policy responses in the EU have been limited to two instruments, i.e. admittance and relocation quota. Paradoxically, although the migration-related challenges multiplied, the policy focus remained quite narrow. Although the migrants move across Europe in an absolute disregard to borders and the Schengen regime, the policy responses have remained limited to the space within states. This inability to embrace the implications of the migration wave by the political establishment in the EU suggests that the opposite of what Kupchan suggested is taking place in the EU today. We argue that effective ways and sustainable strategies of dealing with the challenge of migration exist. To this end, it is necessary: 1. to re-visit the concept of migration; and 2. to re-visit the concept of the migrant.

There has been a tendency in the literature to view migration flows as largely passive phenomena, in other words, as a flow of poor and helpless people and a problem that needs to be dealt with from the top down. Moreover, born out of the international tradition of conceptualizing reality, traditional approaches viewed migration as a phenomenon placed in the context of state borders and border controls. These approaches used to build on a binary perception of reality, i.e. border/non-border, poor/rich, helpless/able to take care of himself, pitiful/fortunate, good/bad. Therefore, these approaches have always had difficulty to account for migratory movements that by definition disregarded binary delimitations of space and, to a large extent, time. As the demise of the Westphalian state system proceeds, the gradual erosion of the binary delimitation of borders and state-bound loyalties and affiliations intensifies. The world changes and the realm of *inter-national* relations is

undermined by regulatory regimes that transcend national borders, loyalties, and affiliations. We argue that it is necessary to place migration in the broader context that cuts through time and space. This context transcends borders as well as border controls and the delimitation of space, territory, loyalty, and affiliation. Therefore, rather than looking at migration as a concept entrenched in the context of physical delimitations of state territory, it is imperative that it is inserted in a context defined by megacities, communities, and regions.²⁸ One way of conceptualizing the context in which migration unfolds today is by reference to the concept of “liquid times.”²⁹ This concept presupposes ceaseless reordering and re-bordering of the world, compression of time and space, overlapping loyalties and affiliation that are not necessarily bound to the existence of a nation-state. That post-modern take on migration requires that the concept of migrant be re-visited as well. To this end, we deploy Hirschman’s concepts of “exit” and “voice.”³⁰

Hirschman defines exit and voice as,

“two contrasting responses of consumers or members of organizations to what they sense as deterioration in the quality of the goods they buy, or the services and benefits they receive. Exit is the act of simply leaving, generally because a better good or service is believed to be provided by another firm or organization. (...) Voice is the act of complaining or of organizing to complain or to protest, with the intent of achieving directly a recuperation of the quality that has been impaired.”³¹

Exit is a singular expression of dissatisfaction. Migration in this view is a set of individual, largely uncoordinated, random expressions of dissatisfaction; migration constitutes a set of singular acts of “voting by feet.” Central to the understanding of Hirschman’s take on consumers’ dissatisfaction is the concept of voice. That is, if “exit” is to be meaningful, the protest that it presupposes has to be perceived as such by those who were the source of the dissatisfaction. This is what the concept of “voice” implies. The point is that if “voice” is to be meaningful, i.e. embodying a certain capacity to influence a given (social) reality, it has to be plural. To

²⁸ Ulrike Guérot, “Europe as a Republic: the Story of Europe in the Twenty First Century,” *open Democracy*, June 29, 2015, available at: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/ulrike-guerot/europe-as-republic-story-of-europe-in-twenty-first-century>.

²⁹ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Liquid Times* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007.)

³⁰ Hirschman, Albert O., *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Response to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970).

³¹ Albert O. Hirschman, “Exit, Voice, and the Fate of the German Democratic Republic: An Essay in Conceptual History,” *World Politics*, 45:2 (January, 1993): 173-202; 175-176.

put it differently, if hundreds of individuals take the decision to “exit,” yet only one individual succeeds to use the tool of “voice,” then it is a pointless act of protest. If, however, hundreds of individuals in one way or another make their voice “heard,” then the situation is quite different.

In the context of the migration debate and policy-responses that are needed, the really interesting insight that the reading of Hirschman offers is the following. The act of each individual “exit” is an expression of a purposeful individual agency. “Voice” assumes a collective agency on the part of those that have exited. And yet, a brief insight into the depictions of migration and migrants—helpless and pitiful—that fill the dominant discourse and media coverage on current migration crisis in Europe seem to ignore agency, be it individual or collective. We refer to it as the “agency bias.” It has two implications: On the one hand, it limits the repertoire of policy-responses that are considered by political establishments at national and EU levels. On the other hand, it perpetuates the specific media narrative that reproduces that bias and leads to simplifications, such as the migration-terrorism nexus.

Conclusion

This article explored the question of how migration tensions directly threaten the post-war European security community. This issue speaks to the influence of religious pluralism internal to Western European states perceived as secular. The implications of the instrumentalization of religion have been highlighted. We argued that the concepts of migration and the migrant should be revisited. The value of this article is threefold. At the diagnostic level, the argument developed offers an insight into the reasons underlying the inability of the European Union to address the challenge of migration effectively. At the explanatory level, this article makes a case that national leaders in the European Council are unable to establish a new integrative narrative of European integration. Migration serves as a handy opportunity to offer European audiences a vision of the Union, a largely inaccurate image of reality that, nevertheless, as the Brexit referendum suggests, feeds into the imaginations and expectations of large segments of the electorate. And at the conceptual level, the argument developed makes a case to revisit the concepts of migration and the migrant in the postmodern context. We assert that the present-day European Union has been transformed into a migration hub on a continental scale. This transformation aggravates the density problem of too many diverse peoples in too limited a connected space. In order to understand migration, this article posits that it is necessary to restore the migrant question including, most significantly, the agency of the migrant, to the analysis. In this way, migration can be viewed as a complex phenomenon that is a function of the postmodern and post-Westphalian

reality in the realm of social, political, and economic processes. By means of restoring agency to the migrant, be it plural or singular, meaningful and appropriate responses to the migration challenge can be generated. The migrant's agency serves as the key to decode a complex matrix of strategies that are plausible. The specific dimensions of this matrix are defined by different levels of political actions and the specific set of actors operating at each of these levels. The big question is what type of tools the actors operating at different levels are willing to commit themselves to use in order to make these strategies workable. Whereas violence may be employed as a tool in order to make the migrant's voice heard, it takes recognizing that the "gray rhino" is raging to propose measures to stop its terrifying charge.