

MOSCOW PERSPECTIVE: THE MIDDLE EAST KNOT

ALEXANDER VAVILOV. MIGRATION DEADLOCKS OF THE COLLECTIVE WEST (INTERVIEW)

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Abstract. This interview make an attempt to explore the influx of migrants, one of the most pressing issues facing the countries of the Collective West, to identify its origins and impact on the region, and to determine possible challenges in the future. The interviewee discusses migration as an explosive component of the current international situation and a consequence of the subversive policies of the West; the West's inability to adopt a collective approach and address the issue; the failure of multiculturalism; and Russia's pragmatic analysis of the root of the problem and ways to deal with it.

One of the most severe consequences of the ill-conceived actions of Western strategists in the Middle East and Africa for European, and indeed global, politics and economics, has been the influx of migrants. Many analysts have called it the largest humanitarian catastrophe of our time, comparable in scale and consequences to the great cataclysms of human history. The origins of this complex problem should be sought in

the growing and deepening gap in living standards and development between the “golden billion” people in developed countries, who control half of our planet’s resources and wealth, and the rest of humanity. At the end of 2017, international humanitarian organizations revealed to the world that eight families of the wealthiest oligarchs at that time owned the same amount of material resources as the rest of the world’s population.

In search of a better life and a happy future for themselves and their children, many people from Asia, Africa, and Latin America have long headed to Europe and North America, swelling the already numerous ranks of labor or economic migrants. Nowadays, they have been joined by thousands of refugees from the Middle East and North Africa, seeking refuge from the deadly dangers caused by bloody and destructive conflicts, to the ignition and perpetuation of which Western countries have been directly implicated. Alongside the economic burden of maintaining and settling uninvited guests, European countries, as the recent sad experience of many of them shows, have been overwhelmed by the grave danger of increased terrorist activity. Many terrorists, disguised as refugees, have seeped into the continent. They have augmented the already explosive potential of homegrown, young, poorly educated, previously naturalized foreigners who were already “on the ground” and ready to fight, driven by resentment and social dissatisfaction. As the experience of Western European states clearly demonstrates, the ranks of extremists were constantly swelled by immigrant youth who were poorly settled and therefore dissatisfied with their lives. They cannot find a desired and dignified place for themselves in a prosperous Western society that is closed to outsiders – a society interested in migrants only as labor and forced, due to low birth rates among the European population, to attract outsiders only for menial, unskilled, and low-paid work.

In recent years, EU countries have tried to somehow limit and control the immigrant wave sweeping the West, but economic needs have proven stronger. As the EU’s emigration representative in Tunisia told the author of these lines, an African guest worker only needed to evade the coast guard of Lampedusa, the island closest to Africa (about 150 km from the Tunisian coast), and after six months of illegal work in Italy, he would receive a residence permit, and within a year, he would bring his entire family. The dire socio-economic situation in many countries on the African continent, and more recently in North Africa and the Middle East, has multiplied the number of migrants and refugees willing to risk their lives in search of a better lot for themselves