

John Shattuck and America's "Duty" to Solve Europe's Refugee Crisis

The other day on NPR I heard John Shattuck, a former ambassador to Czechoslovakia and now the President and Rector of the Central European University in Budapest, declare the need for the United States to help more with the "refugee crisis" in Europe which, he said, threatened to break Europe apart.

His solution was for America to give more money to support even more refugees in Europe and to admit more of them ourselves from the Middle East. He spoke admiringly – to my mind alarmingly – of the 500,000 refugees Angela Merkel had let into Germany in 2015, and suggested America might do well to emulate Germany. We Americans have a "duty," he insisted, to help in the resettlement of more of these Middle Eastern refugees in the West. He never explained why Saudi Arabia or Kuwait or Qatar could not accept some refugees (they've accepted none), or at least contribute, given their vast wealth, to their upkeep (they've given almost nothing); nor did he explain why the four million Syrian refugees now in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon could not remain in those countries. Wouldn't it make sense for Muslim refugees to live among fellow Muslims, close to their country of origin and to which, one supposes, they could sooner or later return? Shattuck never mentioned these possibilities. Nor did he explain – perhaps it is so obvious to him that he thought it required no explanation – why America or indeed any country has a "duty" to allow in immigrants, bad or good, from anywhere. He never mentioned that there might be good reasons to discriminate among immigrants, to allow some in and keep others out, according to perfectly sensible criteria. What criteria? Well, what about this: Muslim would-be "immigrants"

or “refugees” are the adherents of an ideology, Islam, that teaches them to regard non-Muslims as enemies to be conquered through Jihad, the “struggle” for which there are many instruments aside from *qitaal* or combat, and among them, most notable in Europe is the Jihad through demography. And once conquered, those non-Muslims are to be converted, or killed, or subject to a host of humiliating disabilities, beginning with payment of the Jizyah. Is that reason enough to keep out, as a class, all those who, by self-identifying as Muslims, may be held to believe what the texts of Islam teach? Does such a quarantine seem like a sensible and prudent course to you, if not to John Shattuck?

Shattuck’s main concern in his NPR appearance was that, absent much greater American involvement in the “refugee crisis,” a united Europe would disunite, give way to “nationalism” (apparently always a Bad Thing) and to what he called “far-right” groups. We’re all used to this adjective and its variants by now. We know that “far right” and “extreme far-right” and “xenophobic far-right” are Homeric epithets systematically affixed *in terrorem* to those who are opposed to still more Muslim immigration to the West, no matter what their other views. The absurdity of such name-calling can be seen in the treatment of such celebrated anti-Islam campaigners as the Dutch politician Geert Wilders. In his economic views, his desire, for example, to increase social security payments, and to increase other benefits especially for the aged, Wilders would in any other context be considered on the left. So what makes him “far-right”? Only one thing: his concern about Muslim migrants in the Netherlands (who, he correctly points out, gobble up resources that would otherwise go to elderly Dutch). And the late Oriana Fallaci, the eloquent writer who reported so often from the Muslim Middle East, and for her entire life was known as Italy’s most famous *left-wing* journalist: the only thing that transformed her into a “right-wing” journalist was her ferocious opposition to Islam and Muslims.

Shattuck also exploited that handy charge of “racism” – those opposed to Muslim immigrants in Europe, he said, are “racist.” As has been pointed out *ad nauseam* at this site, Muslims are not a “race.” No one on the program took Shattuck to task, or asked him to justify his use of these off-the-rack epithets “far-right” and “racist.” Nor was he asked to explain why he thought we should ignore warnings about the nature of Islam and the consequent dangers from Muslim immigration, that come so steadily and soberly from such well-informed ex-Muslims as Magdi Allam, Wafa Sultan, Ayaan Hirsi Ali. I’m assuming that Shattuck has heard of them and – perhaps I give him too much credit? – that he’s actually read them. Did that reading have no effect on how he thinks about Islam?

Shattuck never discussed, nor did the program’s host, nor any of those who called in think to mention even a single verse from the Qur’an or a single story from the Hadith. It would have been salutary had even one caller read aloud, say, Qur’an 9:5 or 9:29, or any of a hundred similar verses, and asked Shattuck what he made of them. It might have served as a basis for a real discussion. Instead, Shattuck was just a spokesman of the Party of the Good declaring its goodness. As far as Shattuck was concerned, there was no need to actually look at the contents of Islam; it was “racist” and “far-right” to suggest that Muslims had some special connection to terrorism. They were, most of them, just like everyone else. And the handful that were not could be detected without much trouble, and kept out. How did John Shattuck know? Oh, he just did. Unless they were dressed in black balaclavas and waving the black flag of Islam as they stepped onto European soil, those Muslim immigrants represented no threat at all. John Shattuck knows, because for the Party of Good, People Are The Same The Whole World Over.

Europeans may beg to differ. Unlike Shattuck, they are not prepared to overlook the major terrorist attacks by Muslims in London, Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Madrid, Moscow, or the

many dozens of smaller attacks in many cities in Europe, or the more than 28,000 terrorist attacks by Muslims around the world since 9/11. Nor are Europeans quite so willing any longer to accept less sensational aspects of Muslim behavior that demonstrate a rejection of assimilation and an attempt to impose their own ways on European societies. These include attempts to separate men and women (at public pools, school gym classes, even grocery stores), to censor any unfavorable depictions of Muhammad (from cartoons in Danish and French newspapers, to Italian frescoes and Dante's *Divine Comedy*), to create Sharia-compliant mortgages, credit cards, bank accounts, to remove pork from school and prison menus and require what meat is served to be halal, to threaten with death those who forcefully criticize Islam, such as the French high school teacher Robert Redeker who, having published one article in *Le Figaro*, for his pains will have to remain in hiding for the rest of his life; to drive out of public gatherings those deemed hostile to Islam, such as the distinguished writer and member of the French Academy Alain Finkielkraut, and to kill those deemed guilty of blaspheming Muhammad, such as Lars Vilks (who survived) or those twelve employees of Charlie Hebdo (who didn't). And – does it need to be stated? – Muslims have been unique in their demands; no other group of immigrants has tried to impose itself on its European hosts.

None of this seems to bother John Shattuck. What does bother him is the possibility that the American government might actually heed the desires of many of its citizens and not increase the number of immigrants “from the Middle East” it is willing to take in. (The governors of more than 30 states have said they will refuse to accept refugees from “war-torn” areas.) And that, says Shattuck, can only fuel Muslim outrage that they are being discriminated against, and that outrage will naturally lead to more Muslim hatred, and even help the Islamic State with its recruiting efforts. In other words, Shattuck warns: we must take in more of those Muslim migrants,

or else. There is a name for this: it is called extortion. And it has no end. Keep taking in those Muslims, or else... Our putative "duty to Europe" turns out to be a "duty to Europe's Muslims" – to share in their resettlement and upkeep, rather than to come up with ways to keep them out of Europe in the first place.

Finally, John Shattuck mentions – he's leaving no polemical stone unturned – a visit he made to Auschwitz, and how that supreme example of "intolerance" naturally put him in mind of other acts of intolerance today, such as a willingness to distinguish Muslim from non-Muslim immigrants, based on a reading of Islamic texts and the observable behavior of Muslims over time and across space. Yes, how true. Doesn't the refusal of some Europeans to allow into their countries as many Muslims as want to come in make you think of Auschwitz? It's our friend the slippery slope – dare to suggest that the ideology of Muslims is dangerous for non-Muslims, quote chapter and verse from Qur'an and Hadith, adduce the evidence offered by ex-Muslims and dozens of Western experts on Islam – and you'll only be sliding right up to the barbed wire and *"Arbeit Macht Frei."*

David Cameron, Angela Merkel, the Pope, all making big plans for Europe, and bringing up their rear, clichés of compassion at the ready, assorted john-shattucks making big plans for the United States – truly, never have so many been undone by so few.

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