

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's understanding of immanent justice, applied to German refugees, is today still relevant.

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1 Subject of the paper

Why this paper?

Nowadays, millions of refugees are suffering world-wide. Thousands of refugees who were leaving their tormented home countries knocked on the doors of European countries. Many of those who have been trying to enter a receiving country tended to experience hardship and injustice from the time that they left their home country until they eventually received the decision about whether they can stay or have to return. What might or should be the response of Christians to their demand to be treated with dignity? The central question of the paper is: Can Dietrich Bonhoeffer's engagement with people in danger as expressed in his writings and actions help us to adapt or strengthen our attitude and affect our behaviour with respect to receiving refugees?

The context, exclusion in the Third Reich

Exclusion of non-Aryan groups (Jews, Roma), inhabitants opposing the Nazi regime and handicapped and homosexual people, was prevalent in the Third Reich (1933-1945). This resulted in a flow of refugees trying to escape the Nazi regime. By far the largest group of excluded people concerned the Jews. The regime's policy was to classify, isolate and eventually murder these people. Measures which were subsequently taken against the Jews were: the boycott of shops run by Jewish people (1 April 1933), Jewish people were dismissed from public offices (7 April 1933); the proclamation of the Nuremberg Race Laws (15 September 1935); a mark "J" had to be imprinted in the passport of Jewish inhabitants (5 October 1938); the Kristallnacht of 9/10 November 1938 in which many synagogues were burnt down, about one hundred Jews were murdered and about 30,000 Jews were deported to concentration camps (Schlingensiepen 2005, 232); the destruction of the Jewish race in the Third Reich was announced by Hitler at 30 January 1939; all Jews had to wear a yellow star (2 September 1941) and, finally, the deportations to the death camps.

The world was not forthcoming with receiving German Jews who wanted to emigrate. In July 1938, representatives of over 30 countries met in Evian, France, to discuss how to respond to the refugees generated by Hitler's persecution of German Jews. All but one country refused to take in more refugees than the already existing quotas (Carens 2013, 192-193). This is illustrated with two examples.

In June 1939, about 900 Jewish refugees from Germany travelled to Cuba and North America to seek asylum and were refused permission to land. The boat returned to Europe and many of its passengers perished in the Holocaust (Carens, 193; the New York Times between 2 and 15 June 1939).

Walther Lüthi, a Basler pastor, preached in the Züricher Hallen Stadion to an audience of about 6,000 members of the "Junge Kirche" at 30 August 1942. The text of his sermon was Romans 8, 35: "What can separate us from the love of Christ?" He addressed the audience by saying that there is something that separates us from the love of Christ. We refused to

receive refugees who were seeking protection in our country. In this way we have remitted Christ from our borders, Christ, who declared his solidarity with the least among his brothers. They have Him on their side whereas we sinned (Ramstein 2016, 21-32).

Content of the paper

The paper continues with discussing several characteristics of immanent justice in Bonhoeffer's writings (section 2). In section 3, Bonhoeffer's responses to injustice with respect to refugees are related to these characteristics of immanent justice and illustrated with examples. Section 3 concludes with what we have learnt from Bonhoeffer. Section 4 shows what immanent justice means today with respect to refugees - in comparison with experiences in the Thirties. The paper ends with discussing a major challenge to come to terms with the predicament of refugees today.

2. Bonhoeffer about immanent justice

2.1 Immanent justice

Exclusion of non-Aryan groups, handicapped or homosexual people was prevalent in the Third Reich (1933-1945). This resulted in a flow of refugees trying to escape the Nazi regime. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was opposing this regime from the outset when he wrote his essay about the church and the Jewish question in April 1933. He defended human rights of victims of the regime both in ecclesiastical circles and at national level. He wrote at the turn of 1942 and 1943 in retrospect "After ten years": *The immanent righteousness of history rewards and punishes only men's deeds, but the eternal righteousness of God tries and judges their hearts* (DBWE 8, 11; DWB 8, 30) and in his letter from prison of 5 May 1944 to Eberhard Bethge he raised the question: "Aren't righteousness and the Kingdom of God on earth the focus of everything, ..." (DBWE 8, 286; DBW 8, 415). With the victims of Nazi ideology in mind Bonhoeffer wrote about how Christians or the church should react to injustice. In his writings, characteristics of immanent justice included esteem of humanity as opposed to contempt of humanity ("Menschenverachtung"), this-worldliness ("tiefe Diesseitigkeit") and responsibility and accountability ("Verantwortung") of the mandate holder which refers to the four mandates marriage, culture, government and the church, distinguished by Bonhoeffer as expressions of God's commandment (DBWE 6, 378; DBW 6, 383). Bonhoeffer opposed blatant injustice perpetrated by the Nazi regime by protesting, cooperating with peers in the ecumenism and taking other courageous actions.

Schliesser (2016) discussed ambiguity of language ("Zweisprachigkeit") as a characteristic of public theology. This means that theological concepts can also have a non-theological meaning. I will apply the idea of ambiguity when discussing the three characteristics of immanent justice.

2.2 Characteristics of immanent justice

Esteem instead of contempt of humanity

Contempt of humanity tends to be based on latent or overt feelings of superiority of one person over another person or group of persons. This concept has a negative connotation ("the more, the worse") while Bonhoeffer believed that we need to aim at the opposite: esteem instead of contempt of humanity, for which holds "the more, the better". This is the

reason why I use 'esteem of humanity' in the analysis that follows. This is in line with the positive connotation of the two other concepts that I selected from Bonhoeffer's writings. Bonhoeffer's interpretation of esteem of humanity is clarified with the following quote. *While we are distinguishing the pious from the ungodly, the good from the wicked, the noble from the mean, God makes no distinction at all in His love for the real man. He does not permit us to classify men and the world according to our own standards and to set ourselves up as judges over them* (DBWE 6, 73; DBW 6, 70 - 71; 1940). This is the opposite of what happened with minorities in the period 1933 – 1945. People who were considered to be "a problem" for society were labelled as "Untermenschen" and treated accordingly. I selected human dignity as leading characteristic of 'esteem of humanity'.

Attitude of this-worldliness or "tiefe Diesseitigkeit"

This-worldliness represents a deep moral commitment to the world. Bonhoeffer wrote already about this in "Thy kingdom come! The prayer of the church-community for God's kingdom on earth" (DBWE 12, 289; DBW 12, 268-269, 1932-'33). *The hour in which we pray today for God's kingdom is the hour of the most profound solidarity with the world, an hour of clenched teeth and trembling fists.* The concept was expressed clearly in Bonhoeffer's letter from prison of 21 July 1944 to Eberhard Bethge: *I discovered later, that it is only by living completely in this world that one learns to have faith. By this-worldliness I mean living unreservedly in life's duties, problems, successes and failures, experiences and perplexities* (DBWE 8 369-370; DBW 8, 542). I selected living in solidarity as leading characteristic of the attitude of this-worldliness.

Responsibility and accountability to the call of God and to the call of another person or institution ("Verantwortung")

A main concept in Bonhoeffer's writings is to reply responsibly to the call of both God and that of other persons. He wrote for example: *Christ died for the church community so that it may live one life with each other and for each other* (DBWE 1, 184; DBW 1, 121). Two levels of responsibility and accountability can be discerned: a personal level and a church level (Schliesser, 2009). Bonhoeffer's interest during the hard time of the Third Reich focused on a person's responsibility which can be illustrated with the following quote from his evening sermon in London 1934/35: *A man's heart devises his way, but the Lord directs his steps, (Proverbs 16, 9). This, of course, seems very unsatisfactory to man. Man wants to foresee the whole of his life at once, but God's way goes only step by step* (DBWE 13, 399; DBW 13, 407). Besides, the responsibility of the church was in the centre of Bonhoeffer's attention. Take his three point agenda in case a state endangers the Christian proclamation (1933): *questioning the state as to legitimate its actions, rendering service to the victims of state actions, and not just binding up the wounds of the victims beneath the wheel but seizing the wheel itself* (DBWE 12, 365; DBW 12, 353) which is also reflected in: *Part of the church's role as a guardian is to call sin by name and to warn human beings of sin; for righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people* (Proverbs 14, 34; DBWE, 16, 524; DBW 16, 531, Spring 1941). In short, a person's and a church's responsibility are selected as the attributes of "Verantwortung".

3. Bonhoeffer's responses to injustice with respect to refugees are examples of immanent justice

3.1 Two dimensions of immanent justice

One dimension of immanent justice regards Bonhoeffer's characteristics of immanent justice as discussed in section 2:

- Esteem of humanity with selected attribute: strengthening human dignity.
- Attitude of this-worldliness with selected attribute: living in solidarity with victims.
- Responsibility and accountability of the mandate holder in relation to the call of both God and other persons with selected attribute: a person's and a church's (or institution's) responsibility.

A second dimension of immanent justice concerns Bonhoeffer's responses to injustice:

- Protesting against violence, arbitrariness and pride of power (DBWE 13, 402; DBW 13, 411).
- Collaborating with peers during ecumenical journeys. For example, he informed leading theologians or religious leaders about what was going on in Germany in general and with respect to the Bekennende Kirche in particular (Schlingensiepen 2005, 99 - 111, 171 - 179, 243 - 248).
- Being courageous, for example, in civil disobedience: *Civil courage can grow only out of the free responsibility of free men* (DBWE 8, 6; DBW 8, 24).

These two dimensions of immanent justice are represented by the axes of table 1. The nine boxes give selected examples of combinations of a characteristic of immanent justice and a particular response of Bonhoeffer to injustice. Next, each of the nine boxes of table 1 is briefly explained.

Bonhoeffer's protest against injustice

Human dignity (a): Bonhoeffer wrote the Non-Aryan declaration "The church and the Jewish question" in April 1933 (DBWE 12, 361 - 370; DBW 12, 349 - 358) in which he protested against exclusion of baptized Jews from positions of ecclesiastical leadership. He wrote letters to friends and neighbours going into exile because they were subjected to racial laws. Solidarity (b): By receiving refugees in London, Bonhoeffer indirectly protested against what was happening in Germany (1933-35).

Responsibility (c): What can I do for refugees? *I feel strongly the necessity of that spiritual help for our refugees. When I was a pastor in London I spent most of my time with these people and I felt it was a great privilege to do so* (Bonhoeffer's letter to Henry Smith Leiper, June 1939; DBWE 15, 183; DBW15, 188).

Bonhoeffer's collaboration with peers in the ecumenism

Human dignity (d): Peers helped to receive refugees, for example, Bishop George Bell was instrumental in accommodating forty German pastors (Schlingensiepen 2005, 239).

Solidarity (e): Writing peers about the fate of refugees. Bonhoeffer wrote Bishop George Bell about the number of expected refugees as a consequence of the Saar plebiscite in January 1935 (DBWE 13, 280; DBW13, 267): *The thing which occupies me most in the present moment is the question what could be done for the refugees from the Saar. I am thinking of taking a few children and giving them into the homes of my people in the (London) congregation.*

Responsibility (f and i) deals with churches outside Germany regarding their attitude and behaviour about receiving refugees in a world which refused to receive more German Jews (section 1). Bonhoeffer asked his friends in the ecumenism to accommodate these refugees.

Table 1 Examples of characteristics of immanent justice used by Bonhoeffer in relation to aspects of his response to injustice perpetrated by the state against refugees, applied to the period of Nazi regime in Germany, 1933-1945

Characteristics of immanent justice		Esteem of humanity	Attitude of this-worldliness	Responsibility and Accountability
Attributes of these characteristics		Strengthening human dignity	Living in solidarity with victims	Responsibility as a person or a church
Bonhoeffer's response to injustice perpetrated	Protesting against injustice	a. The church and the Jewish question, April 1933	b. Receiving refugees in London, 1933-35	c. What can I do for refugees?
by the state against refugees	Collaborating with peers in the ecumenism	d. Asking peers to help to receive refugees, (e.g. George Bell, 1937-1939)	e. Writing peers about the fate of refugees, e.g. because of the Saar plebiscite, 1935.	f. Churches in Sweden, Switzerland and USA regarding their attitude with respect to refugees
	Being courageous	g. Helping Jews to escape from Germany, 1938,1942	h. Returning from the USA, July 1939	i. Churches in the world regarding their conduct with respect to refugees

Bonhoeffer's courage

Human dignity (g): Bonhoeffer helped Jews to escape from Germany. He dropped, together with Bethge, his brother in law Gerhard and sister Sabine Leibholz-Bonhoeffer, near the Swiss border, 9 September 1938 (Marianne Leibholz in Zimmermann (1964, part V). He smuggled 14 Jews into Switzerland in "Unternehmen Sieben", September 1942 (Schlingensiepen 2005, 287; Ramstein (2016, 8-9, 13).

Solidarity (h): Bonhoeffer returned to Germany from the USA early July 1939 to participate in the political conspiracy (DBWE 15, 217 – 238; DBW 15, 235 - 258).

Responsibility (f and i) deals with the conduct of churches all over the world with respect to German refugees. In general, they were not willing to receive German Jews while Bonhoeffer tried - with the help of his friends in the ecumenism - to accommodate them.

3.2 Bonhoeffer's ambivalence in staying in Germany or leaving

Eberhard Bethge (1969, 88 - 115) described Bonhoeffer's personal choices to stay in - or to leave - Germany as multifaceted. Bethge distinguished three types of migration in

Bonhoeffer's life. The first type concerned Bonhoeffer's migration to Germany while he was a pastor in London (1935). The strengthened religious opposition in Germany was calling Bonhoeffer to become director of Finkenwalde, the newly erected educational institute for young pastors of the Bekennende Kirche. Bonhoeffer developed Finkenwalde into a centre with a devout, theological education of pastors which became a hallmark against the compromising and self-protective steps of the Deutsch Evangelische Kirche (Bethge 1969, 101-104). The second type was Bonhoeffer's migration into the ecumenism in New York because of an expected call to join the army in June 1939. There was a necessary and timely invitation from America before a border crossing for Bonhoeffer might become impossible. He needed a "time-out" to think about his position. The third type regarded Bonhoeffer's decision to return from New York to Germany early July 1939. Already on arrival in the USA Bonhoeffer doubted whether to stay or to return. He was daily in conversation with the Bible on this subject. At 24 June 1939 he wrote the daily text in his diary: *Whoever believes will not flee. I think of the work at home.* (DBWE 15, 231; DBW 15, 233; Isaiah 28, 16). This confirmed him in his decision of 20 June 1939 to return home (Schlingensiepen 2005, 243). He felt he could only remain the person he was by participating in the ambiguous political conspiracy. This decision changed Bonhoeffer's life radically (Bethge 1969, 107-110).

In this respect, it seems plausible to assume that Bonhoeffer could imagine very well what it meant to flee for the threat of violence when he was preparing a sermon for Sunday 7 January 1940 about the escape of Joseph, Maria and Jesus to Egypt (Matthew 2, 13-23),. He wrote: *If God's Word to us is to be fulfilled, we must be obedient and if necessary get up at night in order to do His will* (DBWE 15, 492; DBW 15, 494).

3.3. What can we learn from Bonhoeffer?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's ethical-theological ideas of people suffering from injustice are based on his insight in the meaning of immanent justice during the Third Reich (section 2). The analysis in section 3 shows that Bonhoeffer's responses to injustice perpetrated to the so-called "Untermenschen" was an integral part of his life. His ethical-theological equipment, strengthened by his insight in what right and righteousness in the Bible meant to him, inspired him to combat injustice and to do good to victims of the Nazi regime i.e. refugees. Bethge's analysis (1969) made clear that Bonhoeffer became a migrant himself.

What can we learn from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life as expressed in his faith, his ethical stance and his responses to injustice? The answer is that Dietrich Bonhoeffer inspires both people and institutions, including Christians and churches, to show mercy and charity to victims of injustice like refugees and grant them their rights. This leads - referring to table 1 - to the following recommendations: strengthen your "ethical-theological equipment" (the columns), distinguish good from evil and take appropriate action by means of a protest (the first row), consider to combat injustice by collaborating with others (the second row) and, ultimately, consider whether civil disobedience might be necessary and can be justified (the third row).

4. Immanent justice with respect to refugees in Europe 2013 – 2016

4.1 Attitudes regarding refugees in receiving countries, 2013 - 2016

Table 2 shows - based on articles in the Dutch daily newspaper Trouw and letters sent by European churches or church-based organisations to EU-authorities in the period 2013 – 2016 - examples on how people and institutions in Europe reacted to the flow of incoming refugees. These examples are classified in nine boxes in which combinations of a characteristic of immanent justice and a particular response to injustice are given. Next, each of the nine boxes of table 2 is briefly explained.

Table 2 Types and frequency of reactions by Europeans to the flow of refugees, 2013 – 2016

Characteristics of immanent justice		Esteem of humanity	Attitude of this-worldliness	Responsibility and Accountability
Attributes of these characteristics		Strengthening human dignity	Living in solidarity with victims	Responsibility as a person or an institution (NGO, church)
Type of concern for refugees	Protesting against injustice	a. Esteeming instead of despising refugees (21)	b. What can I do for society? (1)	c. NGO's point to responsibility of EU bodies (9)
	Collaborating within the ecumenism	d. Church-based organisations stand up for refugees	e. Church-based organisations stand up for refugees	f. Church-based organisations stand up for refugees
	Being courageous	g. Refugees are created in God's image (4),	h. Participating in the reception of refugees (1)	i. Leaders stand up for refugees (7)

Sources: 112 articles in the Dutch daily newspaper Trouw and letters sent by European churches or church-based organisations to EU-authorities in the period 2013 - 2016. The phrase in a box of the Table represents the indicated number of journal articles or one or more letters to EU-authorities.

People or institutions protesting against injustice

Human dignity (a): Esteeming instead of despising refugees. Examples of esteeming refugees are: *What daily happens at the southern border of the EU is unacceptable for a Union based on solidarity, respect for human rights and dignity for all* (Federica Mogherini, EU coordinator foreign affairs, about the news that 700-800 refugees drowned in disaster with a boat at the Mediterranean Sea, 20 April 2015).

Solidarity (b): What can I do for society? *The refugee issue is presently the greatest ethical problem. We know what we have to do, but why don't we do so? The question what I can do for society or for my country is perceived as outdated. We did it during WW1 and during the*

Hungarian revolution of 1956. Now the politician declares – on behalf of “the citizen” – that we cannot take more refugees (Van Tongeren and Robeyns, 14 August 2015).

Responsibility (c): NGO's point to the responsibility of EU authorities: For example: *EU member-states must not shift their responsibility with respect to refugee protection to other member-states* (WCC/UN, 20 Jan. 2016; CCME/CEC/others, 17 March 2016); and: *It is self-defeating to mistreat or demean any future member of our societies* (UNCR, 8 Sept. 2015).

Institutions collaborating within the ecumenism

Human dignity (d), solidarity (e) and responsibility (f): Church-based organisations stand up for refugees:

- CEC, on behalf of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, alleges that the Dutch government failed to fulfil its obligations under the European Social Charter to respect the rights to food, clothing and shelter of undocumented adults (17 January 2013).
- WCC/UN Conference calls for coordinated action in the refugee crisis from origin to transit, reception and refuge (20 January 2016). Church-based European organisations call on EU governments to develop more humane responses for refugee protection and express their commitment to global solidarity and a society that welcomes strangers (17 March and 19 April 2016).

People being courageous

- Human dignity (g): Refugees deserve individual treatment because they are created in the image of God, for example: Priest Mussie Zerai (Switzerland) supported migrants originating from Africa (11 November 2015); and: Prime Minister Angela Merkel explained in a political party address: *CDU's basis is the God-given dignity of each human being. This implies that not crowds of people are entering Germany but individuals* (16 December 2015).
- Solidarity (h): Participating in the reception of refugees: Unexpected EU agreement on the distribution of 120,000 asylum seekers among member-states (23 September 2015). However, EU-member countries have been hesitating or dismissive to put this agreement into practice.
- Responsibility (i): Leaders stand up for refugees, for example: Pope Francis stands up for refugees in parliaments of the EU (26 November 2014) and the USA (25 September 2015). And: *It is a challenge for the EU member-states - each having its own rules and regulations - to cope timely with the needs of the increasing number of refugees* (Elizabeth Collet, Migration Policy Institute Europe, 14 March 2015).

Given the discussion in preceding sections, we can interpret Bonhoeffer's legacy in the sense that we are called to respond - not to shy away - by means of protesting, cooperating with others, or take any other responsible action when we encounter injustice. In this respect we can draw as the conclusion from section 4.1 that there are actors including policy-makers and institutions in EU member countries that have been inspired to do good to refugees by applying values similar to those of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's. However, there are also actors, including political leaders and institutions, which apparently have not been inspired by these or similar values and have not learnt from earlier experiences and learning's on how refugees should be received.

4.2 Comparing 2015 - 2016 with 1938 - 1939

When one looks at the responses to Jewish refugees in the late 1930s, it is striking to see the similarities with contemporary concerns and attitudes. Many people took a view more or less like the following quote taken from Carens (2013, 193-194):

“What is happening to the Jews is too bad, but it’s not our fault. Besides, while Jews may be subject to discrimination and occasional acts of violence, things are not as bad as their advocacy groups say. Many of the Jews really just want better economic opportunities than they now have at home. In fact, the ones who do manage to make it to North America to seek asylum cannot be among the worst off because they have enough economic resources to cross the Atlantic. We have an obligation to look out for our own needy first. A large influx of Jews could be a cultural and political threat. They don’t share our religious traditions or our democratic values. Some of them are communists and pose a basic security threat, but it is hard to be sure which ones, so it is better to err on the side of caution in restricting entry. Many have shown that they don’t really respect the law because they have purchased forged documents, they have hired smugglers to transport them illegally, and they have lied to our immigration officials”.

Parallels between the recent flow of refugees and those between 1933 and 1945 were derived from several articles in Trouw (2015-2016):

- Are we Jews no longer welcome in Europe? (Judith Frishman, University of Leyden, 2 May 2015).
- See the parallels between refugees now and in the run up to the Second World War (Frans Weisglas, former chairman of Dutch parliament 5 May 2015; and Tineke Ceelen, Stichting Vluchteling, 17 March 2016).
- It is distressing to see so many similarities between the story of my mother who fled to Switzerland and the fate of refugees now (Gijsbert Oonk, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 18 May 2015).
- Certain events must be no repeat of the past. See the case of steamship St. Louis with 900 German refugees along the coast of North America, 1939 (Tamar de Waal, journalist and University of Amsterdam, 27 February 2016).

The conclusion of section 4.2 is the observation that currently similar arguments are found in the western world to refuse refugees to enter a country like in pre-war years.

4.3 Have we learnt from past experiences?

To what extent we tend to learn from past experiences was discussed by Carens (2013, 194) when he asked: Did we take into account the experience and learning from the way in which the international community dealt with German refugees in the late 1930s when we are dealing with the current flow of refugees? He wrote:

Yet, I take it to be incontestable that the response of the democratic states to Jewish refugees during the 1930s was a profound moral failure, something that we should acknowledge as a shameful moment of our histories and resolve never to repeat. Whatever principles or approaches we propose, we should always ask ourselves at some point, “What should this have meant if we had applied it to Jews fleeing Hitler?”

It is remarkable to observe that nowadays similar arguments like in pre-war years can be heard to refuse refugees to enter a safe country. The conclusion of section 4, therefore, is that in Europe many of its leaders and its institutions, apparently, did not learn from pre-war experiences in accepting refugees. However, there are others who feel and practise solidarity with refugees and protest against their fate, for example by seeking alliances to give them the treatment they are entitled to under international law.

Bonhoeffer's vision on respecting human rights is clearly manifested by one of his favourite texts in the Bible: "Speak out for those who have no voice" (Proverbs 31, 8; DBWE 4, 237, note 41; DBW 4, 253). It is a challenge for all of us, persons and institutions, to wonder how Bonhoeffer's legacy as expressed in his writings and deeds can help us to try to improve the fate of refugees who are victim of conditions in their environment.

5. A major challenge today

Several arguments have been raised why democratic states should take in refugees. One argument is that this fact emerges from the presuppositions of the modern state system, which organises the world in such a way that all inhabited land is divided among sovereign states, which have exclusive authority to limit entry to their territories. Being assigned to a particular sovereign state works well for most people, it clearly does not work well for refugees. Their state has failed and rebuffed them, either deliberately or through its incapacity. However, one of our responsibilities when we construct an institution is to anticipate the ways in which it might fail and at the same time build in solutions for those failures. If people flee from the state of their citizenship because it fails to provide them with a location where they can live safely, then other states will have the duty to provide a safe haven (Carens 2013, 195-196).

Similarly, Aristide Zolberg (2012, 1204-1222) raised the question: Why do we live in a world where borders prevent movement? I cite:

"If we start with a theoretical world without borders, we are led to ask a more radical question: What gives a group the right to exclude others? (1217). Under present conditions of global inequality, in the absence of border controls, the affluent and relatively affluent countries in the world would be quickly overwhelmed by truly massive flows of international migrants in search of work and safety (1218). Since a limit on immigration will be imposed, selection will necessarily be brought into operation. The most important ethical questions pertain to the criteria of selection (1219). There is a fairly widespread agreement in the present international regime that priority must be attributed to political refugees ahead of the economically desperate. But there is considerable disagreement on who is a refugee. Moreover, the category should be expanded to include not only the victims of violence, but also victims of economic deprivation" (1220).

Subsequently, the answer to this challenge is: A limit on immigration under present conditions of global inequality may seem necessary but the main ethical question concerns which selection criteria one has to take. Carens (1987) gave a review of contingencies on immigration from the perspective of priority to freedom of movement. As to this delicate matter Bonhoeffer vigorously wrote: *He (God) does not permit us to classify men and the world according to our own standards and to set ourselves up as judges over them* (DBWE 6, 73; DBW 6, 70 - 71; 1940)

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