MMIGRATION, JURISDICTION, AND EXCLUSION


When states assert the right to exclude unwanted would-be immigrants, they are asserting a right to use coercive force. Those who attempt to cross the borders of the state will be met with violence; borders have guards, after all, and these guards have guns. That these facts are rarely questioned in our world does not mean that they are not morally exceptional. Those who propose to use violence must justify to others, in a manner that respects the moral equality of all, why they have a right to do so. If the state demands the right to use coercive force in repelling would-be immigrants, it has to justify its right to do so.

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