

## **Afghan Refugees as Perpetui Inimici: Revisiting an Early Modern Debate on Enemy Aliens**

**Authors :** Brian Smith

**Abstract :** This paper seeks to contrast the contemporary anti-immigration rhetoric since the US pullout of Afghanistan with the debate about enemy aliens in the early modern period. In the seventeenth century, Sir Edward Coke declared that “infidels” should be seen as perpetui inimici (perpetual enemies) since their values were inimical to those of Christian states. As such, they could be perpetually excluded and denied legal standing. Even at that time, these anti-“infidel” arguments clashed with the natural law tradition of hospitality, which assumed that states had a moral responsibility to admit and care for strangers. In particular, this paper looks at the conflict between Hugo Grotius, Samuel Pufendorf, and John Locke. Grotius argues that states have a duty to admit foreigners. He goes out of his way to plan for the admittance of Jewish immigrants. In contrast, Pufendorf claimed that sovereigns had a duty exclude foreigners who would alter the constitutional character of the state. Much like Grotius, Locke argued that non-Christian peoples should be treated as friends and admitted without reservation.

**Keywords :** enemy aliens, perpetual enemies, hospitality, refugees

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