**Book Link:** [**Hannah Arendt - The Origins of Totalitarianism-Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich (1973)-312-347.pdf**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1U7Vk2rnLZMsAFrUYmiFgjguuc6sDlaj3/view?usp=sharing)

**Page 267-269:**

The Explosive Impact of the First World War:

The First World War was like an explosion, causing a chain reaction that still affects us today. This explosion destroyed the unity of European nations, especially after World War I. The war brought serious problems like inflation, unemployment, and civil wars. People were displaced, becoming stateless and losing their rights.

Postwar Turmoil and Conflicts in Europe:

The aftermath of this explosion revealed the inner problems of Europe. The defeated countries and the new states formed after the collapse of empires faced conflicts between different groups. There was no unity; everyone was against each other. Minorities suffered, and the disappearance of a central authority fueled hatred and national conflicts.

Rise of Totalitarianism and the Targeting of Minorities:

The troubles were more visible in defeated countries and new states. The problems went beyond simple nationalist quarrels; they had consequences. Two groups emerged as victims—the stateless and minorities, which are termed "cousins-germane." These groups had no representation or protection and lived in lawless conditions. These two groups lost rights considered absolute—the Rights of Man.

Disintegration in Postwar Europe:

As minorities emerged in Eastern and Southern Europe and stateless people sought refuge in Central and Western Europe, a new problem emerged. Totalitarian governments used denationalization, taking away people's nationality, as a powerful tool. totalitarian politics refers to a type of political system that aggressively controls and influences every aspect of society. European nation-states could not protect human rights, allowing persecuting governments to impose their values.

Certain groups were labeled as the "scum of the earth," and this viewpoint gained support. the actions of totalitarian movements demonstrated their belief that human rights were not absolute, and the democracies were seen as insincere and fearful in dealing with the challenges of a changing and difficult world.

This situation created a new element of disintegration in postwar Europe. The notion of "human rights" became a symbol of either idealism or hypocrisy. The totalitarian movements claimed that inalienable human rights didn't exist, making democratic affirmations mere hypocrisy in the face of a harsh new reality

**I: The "Nation of Minorities" and the Stateless People**

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**Post-World War I Turmoil in Europe:**

After World War I, Europe faced big problems that messed up how countries worked together. Powerful nations, like Germany, and movements against certain groups made the situation worse. The Nazis' mistreatment of German Jews was not just about getting rid of them but also trying to make other countries not like Jews, especially Western democracies.

**Flaws in the Peace Treaties:**

The Peace Treaties, designed by people shaped by pre-war experiences, tried to regulate the nationality problem in Eastern and Southern Europe by creating nation-states and introducing minority treaties. However, this approach was flawed. The Treaties put different peoples in the same states, assumed equality among them (even if they weren't), and created an extra category called "minorities," making things more complicated for new states.

**Complexities and Unmet Promises of the Peace Treaties:**

The Peace Treaties put different groups together in single countries, calling some "state people" and assuming others were equal partners, even though they weren't. They also created a third group called "minorities," making it more complicated. This made some people unhappy, feeling like they were being treated unfairly. The new countries promised the same rights as Western nations but didn't follow through, causing more problems. Only new countries had to follow these rules, not even the ones that lost in the war.

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**Post-Dual Monarchy Challenges and Nation-Building Efforts:**

After World War I, when the Dual Monarchy fell apart and Poland and the Baltic countries became free, there was a big problem. After the breakup of empires like the Austro-Hungarian Empire, there were more than 100 million people in Europe who did not have independent nations. The leaders wanted to fix things but faced a tough situation.

**Flawed Attempt with Minority Treaties:**

To deal with this, leaders tried to make new countries and agreements called minority treaties. They wanted to keep things the way they were in Europe. However, this plan had flaws. It put different groups together, assumed they were equal, and created extra rules for some populations. Despite the creation of new countries, a significant portion of the population still needed extra measures to ensure their well-being and rights. The minority treaties were supposed to protect those without their governments, but they didn't cover everyone.

**Limitations and Trust Issues with Minority Treaties:**

These treaties only covered nationalities with significant numbers in at least two new countries, leaving out others. In some countries, frustrated nationalities made up half the population. The worst part was that everyone believed real freedom and human rights could only come with full national independence. The League of Nations was supposed to protect these rights, but it wasn't trusted because it was made up of national leaders who supported the new governments. To address this, the creators of the Minority Treaties had to clarify that the treaties were intended for a smooth assimilation process. However, this clarification upset the minorities because They thought the treaties were just a way to force them to adopt the customs and ways of the more dominant culture.

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**Challenges to National Sovereignty and Assimilation:**

If the Minority Treaties were meant to be more than a temporary solution, they would have limited the national sovereignty of older European powers. Representatives of major nations knew that minorities within countries would eventually be assimilated or oppressed, regardless of humanitarian or political considerations. They were not willing or able to challenge the laws supporting nation-states. Neither the League of Nations nor the Minority Treaties could prevent new states from forcefully assimilating minorities. The main obstacle against assimilation was the weakness of state peoples in terms of numbers and culture. For example, Russian or Jewish minorities in Poland did not feel Polish culture was superior.

**Formation of a Defiant Minority Congress:**

A Minority Congress formed, going against the League treaties. It united nationalities, growing so much that their combined numbers exceeded the state populations. The Congress, dominated by Germans and Jews, impacted Eastern and Southern Europe. It showed that national interests, not just common minority interests, shaped its membership.

**Importance of Minority Treaties Beyond Practical Application:**

The real importance of the Minority Treaties was not their practical application but the fact that they were backed by the League of Nations. These treaties acknowledged the existence of millions living without legal protection and needing additional guarantees for their rights. They explicitly stated that only nationals could be citizens, and different nationalities required special laws until assimilated. This marked a new development in European history.

**Transformation of the State and the Erosion of Legal Rules:**

Statesmen without minority obligations admitted that the law of a country couldn't handle those insisting on a different nationality. This realization, demonstrated with the rise of stateless people, showed that the state had transformed from a legal instrument to one serving the interest of its own nation. The danger of this shift had always been present in the nation-state structure. The quick falling apart of this system happened at the same time everyone agreed that each country in Europe had the right to decide its own fate. This breakdown occurred just when people started to believe that what a nation wanted was more important than following the established legal rules.

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**Debate Over Minority Treaties and Established Nations:**

At the time of the Minority Treaties, some argued in their favor, saying that older nations with established constitutions, like France, were already based on the Rights of Man. They believed that these nations didn't need additional laws for other nationalities within their borders. They thought that only the newly established succession states required temporary enforcement of human rights as a compromise. However, the arrival of stateless people ended this belief.

**Partial Statelessness and the Need for Special Protection:**

These minorities were only partially stateless. While they belonged to some political body, they needed extra protection through special treaties. Certain rights, like speaking their own language, were in danger, but more essential rights like the right to live and work were not affected.

**Growing Concept of Statelessness and Totalitarian Exploitation:**

The concept of statelessness grew after World War I, with categories like Heimatlosen from the peace treaties who lost their homeland. and postwar refugees denationalized by their home governments. The mass denationalization revealed conflicts between neighboring countries and the fragility of full national sovereignty. Governments with a lot of control, called totalitarian regimes, used this power a lot. Totalitarian regimes used denationalization extensively, clearly showing the link between totalitarianism and the abandonment of common interests. Despite idealistic efforts, the situation of the stateless worsened, and many were placed in internment camps. The term "displaced persons" emerged during the war to ignore statelessness, and nonrecognition meant deportation or repatriation to a country that might refuse citizenship. Twelve years after the war, the number of stateless people increased, with over ten million "de facto" stateless, yet the core issue of statelessness remains largely unaddressed.

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**Challenges in Citizenship and the Erosion of Rights:**

The number of people without a country keeps increasing. Before, only dictatorships took away citizenship, but now even democracies like the United States were thinking about doing the same to native Americans who are Communists. This is a serious concern. The Nazis, for instance, made sure all Jews of non-German nationality lost their citizenship before deportation.

**Impact of Stateless Arrivals on Nation-States:**

When hundreds of thousands of stateless people arrived, it damaged nation-states. The first big problem caused by the arrival of stateless people is that the right of asylum, a symbol of human rights, is disappearing. The right of asylum has been protecting refugees and the countries that take them in for a long time. But now, it's seen as old-fashioned and conflicting with a country's international rights. The right of asylum is not written in any law or constitution, and the League of Nations never talked about it. It's similar to the fate of the Rights of Man, which were ideals but not laws.

**Challenges in Repatriation and Naturalization:**

The second big shock from the refugees is that it's impossible to send them back to their home country or make them citizens of the country they're in. Everyone agreed that there were two ways to solve the problem: sending them back (repatriation) or making them citizens (naturalization). But when sending people back didn't work, countries started refusing to recognize statelessness in new arrivals, making things even worse for the refugees. Governments were scared that those kicked out from their old countries were just the beginning of a bigger problem. The European world realized this when, in 1938, it became clear that all German and Austrian Jews could become stateless. The minorities, especially Jews and Armenians, faced a high risk of statelessness. Minority treaties meant to protect them sometimes became tools for their expulsion.

1. **New Behavior in European Conflicts:**

* In ideological conflicts, people from Western democracies joined civil wars abroad, like the Spanish Civil War.
* European governments were worried because these stateless individuals were no longer seen as having an uncertain nationality. Even after giving up citizenship, they strongly identified with their nationality.

2**. Failed Solutions:**

* Attempts to send stateless people back to their home countries or make them citizens didn't work.
* Repatriation failed because no country wanted to take in stateless individuals.
* Governments, insisting on their right to expel people, resorted to illegal acts. Stateless people were at the mercy of the police.

Governments, insisting on their right to kick people out, were forced into illegal acts because statelessness was an anomaly for which there was no place in the law. Stateless people faced a tough situation because the police, without hesitation, did illegal things to remove them as they were considered undesirable. When stateless individuals were kicked out and secretly taken to nearby countries, it caused clashes between different police groups. This resulted in stateless people getting arrested and ending up with jail sentences.

3. International Conferences and Legal Status:

* Efforts in international conferences to provide legal status for stateless people failed.
* The main challenge discussed was how to make refugees deportable again.

4. Internment Camps as a Solution:

* With no homeland, the only practical solution for stateless people became internment camps.
* Even in the thirties, internment camps were the only "country" offered to stateless individuals.

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**Naturalization Failure:**

* European countries' naturalization system collapsed when dealing with stateless people.
* Naturalization, designed for individuals, couldn't handle mass applications.

Naturalization, which is the process of becoming a citizen of a country, didn't work well when dealing with stateless people. Naturalization usually worked for individuals in exceptional cases, but when it came to handling large groups of stateless people, the system fell apart. European countries couldn't handle the administrative challenges of mass naturalization.

**Cancellation of Naturalization:**

* Instead of accepting new arrivals, countries canceled naturalizations, creating uncertainty.
* Measures threatened those already naturalized, pushing them toward statelessness.

Instead of making some of the new arrivals citizens, countries began to undo the citizenship status of those who were already naturalized. This occurred due to panic and the shift in the status of naturalized citizens caused by the arrival of a large number of newcomers. The cancellation of naturalization or the introduction of new laws enabling mass denaturalization created challenges for refugees trying to adapt to a new normal life.

**Helplessness of Governments:**

* European governments struggled to prevent the spread of statelessness.
* Statelessness, once introduced, quickly affected living conditions for all aliens.

Governments were helpless in dealing with the danger of statelessness. Once a few stateless people were accepted into a country, statelessness spread. When statelessness became a widespread issue, it created challenges and changes in the living conditions not just for those without citizenship but for all foreign residents. The difficulties and uncertainties associated with statelessness had a broader impact, influencing the general conditions experienced by non-citizens or aliens within a particular country.

**Stateless Person's Struggle:**

* Stateless individuals had no right to residence or work, leading to constant lawbreaking.
* The anomaly of being stateless forced many into criminal activities for basic rights.

Statelessness caused problems for legal national institutions. As the number of stateless residents increased, more people lived outside the laws without any protection. Stateless individuals had to break the law to survive, and they were at risk of jail sentences even without committing a crime. The legal hierarchy in civilized countries was reversed for stateless people.

Being stateless meant having no right to residence or work, forcing stateless individuals to constantly break the law. The stateless person was treated like a criminal, and committing a crime became a way to gain some human equality. Statelessness damaged the distinction between nationals and foreigners and undermined the sovereign right of states in matters of nationality and expulsion.

**Police Authority Grows:**

* The nation-state, unable to address the needs of stateless individuals, handed control to the police.
* Police authority grew as the number of stateless and potentially stateless people increased.

The nation-state, unable to provide laws for those without the protection of a national government, handed over the matter to the police. This marked the first time the police in Western Europe gained authority to act independently, becoming a ruling authority separate from the government. The strength of the police and its independence from law and government increased as the number of stateless people grew, posing a risk of transforming into a police state.

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Totalitarian regimes, where the police had a lot of power, were eager to strengthen this power by controlling large groups of people, even if they hadn't committed any crimes. For example, in Nazi Germany, laws were made to distinguish between full citizens and second-class citizens without political rights. This paved the way for later laws that could make anyone with "alien blood" lose their citizenship. In non-totalitarian countries, the growing number of stateless people led to a form of lawlessness organized by the police. The lack of legal status for stateless individuals contributed to this breakdown in the normal legal framework, and the police played a major role in dealing with or controlling this growing population.

Concentration camps were eventually set up for similar groups in all countries, showing coordination between free nations and totalitarian countries. Before the war, police in Western countries had close connections with organizations like the Gestapo. Even if the official governments were against certain regimes, the police sometimes had independent foreign policies and sympathies. This police power over stateless and refugee populations contributed to little resistance when the Nazis occupied countries.

**Jews' Important Role in Minority History and Statelessness**

Jews played a big role in the history of minorities and statelessness. They led a group seeking protection through international connections. After Hitler persecuted them, many ended up stateless. Some governments wrongly said statelessness was mainly a Jewish problem to avoid dealing with it. Hitler's cruel solution showed how to get rid of minority and stateless issues.

**Challenges After World War II and the Unsettled Jewish Question**

While the Jewish question was deemed solved after World War II, it failed to resolve the broader problems of minorities and statelessness. The creation of Israel didn't solve the problem of minorities or statelessness. Instead, it led to new refugees, like the Arabs in Palestine. The establishment of new states post-Peace Treaties faced challenges with the influx of refugees and stateless individuals. For these newly established nations, having stateless people around posed a threat to the fundamental principle of equality before the law, crucial for the existence of nation-states. The inability to treat stateless individuals as legal persons resulted in arbitrary police rule, which means decisions were made without following any clear rules or laws. This situation created a tempting scenario for some countries. Faced with the challenge of dealing with stateless people, these nations were tempted to strip away the legal status of all citizens and govern them with unchecked police power.

**II: The Perplexities of the Rights of Man**

**290-294:**

**Declaration of Rights of Man:**

In the late 1700s, the Declaration of the Rights of Man marked a crucial moment. It declared that from then on, the source of law would be Man, not God or historical customs. This meant people were now emancipated from external authority. The declaration aimed to protect individuals in a new era of uncertainty, where people weren't secure based on their birth or religious beliefs.

***Protection in the New Era***

These human rights were seen as protection in a new era where individuals were no longer secure in their born estates. In the secularized society, they needed rights against the state's power and society's new arbitrariness.

**Rights of Man as Inalienable:**

The Rights of Man were considered "inalienable," not dependent on other rights or laws. They were believed to be inherent and self-evident, with no need for a specific law to protect them. These rights were seen as the foundation for a people's sovereign self-government.

**Paradox of Individual and People:**

While emphasizing individual rights, the concept of the Rights of Man became entwined with national identity. Instead of focusing on an "abstract" human, attention shifted to people as a whole. This shift was significant in the European nation-state system where everyone has certain rights, but these rights somehow depend on being part of a larger group or nation.

**Challenges for Stateless People**

The Rights of Man were meant to be independent of all governments. However, when people lacked their government, no authority protected them. Stateless individuals were convinced that loss of national rights meant loss of human rights, emphasizing a link between human rights and national identity. Excluded from legal rights, they sought reintegration into their own national communities. Various groups, like Russian refugees, fiercely defended their national identity. This connection between national and human rights became central to their struggle.

***Failure to Enforce Rights***

Efforts to protect human rights faced challenges. Societies formed for this purpose lacked political support. Governments and political parties did not take these rights seriously. Despite being denied their rights, victims didn't ask for their rights to be respected or protected. The Rights of Man faced difficulties when individuals were not citizens of any sovereign state.

**Losses Faced by the Rightless**

The rightless faced unprecedented challenges. They lost their homes, and the world offered no place without severe restrictions. This wasn't about overpopulation but a problem of political organization. The second loss was government protection, leaving stateless individuals outside legality.

**Loss of Government Protection:**

The second loss was the absence of government protection, not just in their own country but globally. Treaties and agreements had created a legal framework for citizens, but the rightless found themselves without any legal standing. Losing government protection became a significant challenge, especially as the number of persecuted people increased.

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**Rising Numbers of Rightless People:**

When more people lost their rights, there was a growing tendency to ignore the actions of persecuting governments. Instead, attention shifted to the status of those being persecuted. The obvious fact was that these persecuted people, even though targeted for political reasons, weren't seen as enemies by those mistreating them. Instead, they were seen simply as regular humans who were unfortunate because of their innocence. This innocence, meaning they had no responsibility for what was happening, marked their lack of rights and loss of political standing.

**Plight of the Rightless**

The problem wasn't just about losing certain rights; it was about losing the community that could protect any rights. People without a country faced a situation where there were no laws for them. Their right to live was only in danger when they were considered unnecessary, highlighting that the main issue was the loss of community, not specific rights.

**Fundamental Deprivation of Human Rights:**

The calamity for the rightless wasn't just the loss of life, liberty, or happiness, as traditionally defined in human rights. The real tragedy was that they no longer belonged to any community. They were not equal before the law, not because they were oppressed, but because no law existed for them. Their right to live was only threatened if no one or no entity was willing to acknowledge or "claim" these individuals.

**Freedom Beyond Legal Boundaries:**

The right to freedom, often seen as a core human right, took an ironic turn. Those outside legal boundaries might have more freedom of movement and opinion than a lawfully imprisoned criminal. However, this freedom didn't change their fundamental situation of rightlessness. Their lives were sustained by charity, not by legal rights, and their freedom of opinion didn't matter much.

**Loss of a Place in the World:**

The deprivation of human rights went beyond freedom and justice. It was about losing a place in the world where opinions mattered and actions had an impact. The essential issue was belonging to a community, which, when lost, meant that one's treatment by others no longer depended on what they did or didn't do.

**Emergence of a Right to Have Rights:**

The awareness of a "right to have rights" and the right to belong to an organized community became evident when millions of people lost these rights due to new global political situations. The calamity arose not from a lack of civilization or tyranny, but because there was no longer any "uncivilized" spot on Earth. A completely organized humanity became crucial to prevent expulsion from humanity.

Its importance to recognize everyone's right to be part of a community, especially when changes in the world made it easy for people to lose this right. Being organized as a global community became crucial to make sure nobody feels completely excluded from being human.

Humanity's Role and Challenges:

In the 20th century, people distanced themselves from nature, similar to how they had distanced themselves from history in the 18th century. This separation led to new problems, especially in determining laws and rights from nature. Some now believe that the right to have rights should be guaranteed by humanity itself. However, this idea goes beyond current international law, which is based on agreements between countries. Even a "world government" might not solve the problem, as violations of human rights could still be justified for the supposed greater good.

Complexities of Political Philosophy:

As traditional authorities like religion or natural law lose influence, there's a need for laws that connect what's right with what's good for a group. The challenge is that a highly organized humanity might decide, by majority rule, that it's better to eliminate certain parts. This raises old questions in political philosophy about how we measure what's right, emphasizing the need for a clear framework in a changing world.