



Rightlessness in an Age of Rights: Hannah Arendt and the Contemporary Struggles of Migrants

Ayten Gündođdu

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There have been remarkable developments in the field of human rights in the past few decades. Still, millions of asylum-seekers, refugees, and undocumented immigrants continue to find it challenging to access human rights. In this book, Ayten Gündogdu builds on Hannah Arendt's analysis of statelessness and argues that these challenges reveal the perplexities of human rights.

Human rights promise equal personhood regardless of citizenship status, yet their existing formulations are tied to the principle of territorial sovereignty. This situation leaves various categories of migrants in a condition of "rightlessness," with a very precarious legal, political, and human standing. Gündogdu examines this problem in the context of immigration detention, deportation, and refugee camps. Critical of the existing system of human rights without seeing it as a dead end, she argues for the need to pay closer attention to the political practices of migrants who challenge their condition of rightlessness and propose new understandings of human rights.

What arises from this critical reflection on human rights is also a novel reading of Arendt, one that offers refreshing insights into various dimensions of her political thought, including her account of the human condition, "the social question," and "the right to have rights." *Rightlessness in an Age of Rights* is a valuable addition to the literature on Hannah Arendt and a vital way of rethinking human rights as they relate to contemporary issues of immigration.

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