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Hannah Arendt and the meanings of being of the world: belonging and origin

Hannah Arendt e os sentidos de ser do mundo: pertencimento e origem

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ABSTRACT:

In her final book, *The Life of the Mind*, Hannah Arendt uses the concept of "being-of-the-world" to interpret our relationship with reality, appearance, and its constitutive plurality. However, the concept is not extensively developed. The aim of this text is to examine what it means not only to be and exist in the world, but to be of the world. The argument unfolds by emphasizing the character of belonging and estrangement in the face of the alienation from the world and the Earth described by Arendt in *The Human Condition / Vita Activa*. The hypothesis is that being of the world expresses both a more original relation between human beings and the earth, in a natural sense, and a relation to the artificial world of things; as well as it concerns a political sense of belonging to a community and sharing the world intersubjectively, just as it is affirmed and realized through political action. Finally, the text points to an attempt to conceive of a reconciliation with the world under the sign of being-of-the-world in a critique of alienation from the world.

KEYWORDS: Being of the world, Being of the Earth, World of Things, Politics, Plurality.

RESUMO:

Em seu derradeiro livro, *A vida do espírito*, Hannah Arendt faz uso do conceito de "ser do mundo" como forma de interpretar nossa relação com a realidade, a aparência e sua pluralidade constitutiva. O conceito, contudo, não é ostensivamente desenvolvido. Frente a isso, o objetivo deste texto é examinar o que significa não apenas ser e estar no mundo, mas ser do mundo. O argumento se desenvolve ressaltando o caráter de pertencimento e estranhamento frente à situação de alienação do mundo e da Terra descrita por Arendt em *A condição humana*. A hipótese é a de que ser do mundo expressa tanto uma relação mais originária entre os seres humanos e a Terra, em sentido natural, quanto ao mundo artificial de coisas; bem como diz respeito a um sentido político de pertencer a uma comunidade e partilhar o mundo intersubjetivamente, assim como se afirma e realiza através da ação política. Por fim, o texto aponta para a tentativa de pensar uma reconciliação com o mundo sob o duplo signo de ser do mundo em uma crítica à alienação do mundo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Ser do mundo, Ser da Terra, Mundo de coisas, Política, Pluralidade.

INTRODUCTION

Belonging to a world – a country, a nation, in short, a community – is directly related to how we understand ourselves and how reality presents itself to each of us. Our experiences always occur relative to a specific space and time, generally involve other people, are expressed in a particular language, and concern a way of life. How then can we think that someone might not belong to a world?

According to data from the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR, 2025b), there are 117,3 million "Forcibly displaced people worldwide at mid-2025 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order". This number, which has doubled in the last 10 years, portrays one of the greatest calamities in human history, denying these people the dignity of living in their places of origin. Some of these displaced individuals may find shelter in their own countries, but many others become refugees, who, according to UNHCR, numbered 73.5 million worldwide by June 2024.

In this context, in recent years we have also witnessed the phenomenon of displacement due to climate change. According to UNHCR (2025a), "Climate impacts can also escalate tensions and conflicts over vital resources like water, fuel and arable land, threatening peaceful coexistence between displaced populations and host communities." Climate change, through increasingly extreme events, leaves us with environmental conditions that, on the one hand, promote destruction and create circumstances that force internal migrations of various groups, especially the most economically vulnerable, and, on the other hand, generate climate refugees, as in the case of the Tuvalu archipelago, which lost part of its territory due to the advance of sea levels and whose possible total disappearance by 2050 is estimated if environmental progress is not achieved worldwide.

Every forced displacement is traumatic, and when we talk about refugees, it highlights the fact that many of them find refuge in countries with customs and languages distinct from their own, a circumstance that often generates ethnic conflicts and gives rise to movements opposed to refuge. Integration is not an easy process and sometimes occurs at the expense of one's original identity. Arendt, for example, wrote in 1943 the text *We Refugees*, in which she narrates the common experience of several Jews, rendered stateless, who fled in search of a new life in the USA. I quote her:

> We lost our home, which means the familiarity of daily life. We lost our occupation, which means the confidence that we are of some use in this world. We lost our language, which means the naturalness of reactions, the simplicity of gestures, the unaffected expression of feelings. We left our relatives in the Polish ghettos, and our best friends have been killed in concentration camps, and this means the rupture of our private lives (Arendt, 2007, p. 264-265).

The loss of a frame of reference represents a type of rupture that we can call uprootlessness, that is, the brutal loss of a place on earth that has always been recognized as an origin and was established as the source from which the life of each person who inhabited the same space could be constituted. Arendt's example is not universal, but it sheds light on understanding this phenomenon of which we are now contemporaries.

Arendt's experience of not belonging to a world led her to seek ways of understanding what made it all possible. The result seen in 1951 in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* shows how uprootlessness and homelessness were able to engender a loss of experience itself, since both the world in which their experiences occurred and participation with a human plurality that shared these experiences were denied to several individuals. Non-belonging to a world is revealed here in a dual aspect: these people are denied a physical place where they can live, a home, a private space; as well as, being denied participation in the public sphere, rights do not reach them, and they become merely *animal laborans*. It is in this sense that, as Adriano Correia (2013) reveals, there are three meanings that can be inferred from the concept of *animal laborans* in Arendt, namely, the most fundamental one, linked to the human condition of life and labor; the social atomization resulting from an emptying of the public sphere, capable of producing loneliness [*Verlassenheit*]; and its consequent transformation into a way of life that persists in the modern world, where existence is reduced to the cycle of labor and consumption. Such experiences are contemporary to us and convert into a loss of the world, into a mode of alienation that strains the natural dimension of the human being for its entire existence, based on an economic conception of unlimited growth in a world of finite resources. Ultimately, there is a worldlessness that attacks even the very nature from which the *animal laborans* is interpreted, just as it fails to guarantee a stable, artificial world for it, since ephemerality gradually installs itself even in products that once had high durability, and removes them from any possibility of actively participating in the public sphere.

It is, therefore, with both the totalitarian experience and the advent of the modern world in mind that Arendt, in the text "Socrates"[1], sets out to consider this problem from two interconnected questions: a) "how man, if he is to live in a polis, can live outside of politics"? and b) "how it is possible to live without belonging to any polity, that is, in the condition of apolity, or what we today would call statelessness"? (2005a, p. 6). These questions take shape in *The Human Condition / Vita Activa*, where Arendt designates human plurality as a condition for political action, so that the public space is understood through the sign of appearance and the common world (1998, pp. 50-58; 2023, pp. 74-86). In this work, the fact that we are always alongside a plurality is what makes the very notion of uniqueness [*Einzigartigkeit*] possible, so that being in a world alongside other people becomes the way in which we can become unique beings without ceasing to share a common world and be part of a community.

This discussion here serves as an introduction, as it raises the broader problem of alienation from the world as a counterpoint to being-of-the-world, which points to the search for reconciliation with the world, or, as Arendt also tells us, how we can try to feel at home in the world (Arendt, 2005b). In this sense, on the theme of world alienation, Loidolt (2018, p. 100) explains that our worldliness – the fact

[1] The collection *The Promise of Politics* includes the text "Socrates". It is essentially the same text better known by the title "Philosophy and Politics", originally published as *Philosophy and Politics* in the journal *Social Research*.

that we are beings-of-the-world – has "negative counterparts," "modes of deficiency of 'world-alienation' and 'loss of the world'" that manifest themselves under different phenomena: natural ones, such as labor or pain, others that occur through love or faith, but mainly those developed "through the dynamization of the capital and the logic of production and consumption."

In order to reflect on these problems that are ours today, I make use of a late concept from Arendtian thought: the idea that we are *of the* world. This notion designates an original belonging of each of us to a reality that precedes us and that we share with so many other people. This concept, as I argue here, can be read in four directions that, in the end, meet again and that, therefore, are not competing, but rather are intimately intertwined, namely: that being of the world means being of the Earth, in a natural sense, but also means belonging to a world of things, a human plurality and a political world.

BEING OF THE WORLD AS BEING OF THE EARTH

Although the formulation of the concept of being-of-the-world appears only in her last and unfinished work, *The Life of the Mind*, its meaning can be grasped within the context of Arendt's entire oeuvre under the sign of the search to understand how we can reconcile ourselves with the world after the various ways in which we have been alienated from it.

One of the moments, though not the first, in which we can understand this original link is in *The Human Condition*. In this work, Arendt speaks to us of the double alienation that marks the modern world – that is, our time unfolding after the atomic explosions – as something made possible by the transformations of the modern age – a reality that begins in the 17th century and extends until the first half of the 20th century – namely: "flight from the earth into the universe and from the world to self" (Arendt, 1998, p. 6; 2023, p. 21)[2].

Arendt initially highlights the alienation from Earth through the feeling of relief of some U.S. journalist upon stating that the Soviet satellite *Sputnik I* would be humanity's first step toward escaping its earthly prison, or through the Russian scientist Konstantin Ziolkowski's statement that "Mankind will not remain bound to the earth forever" (Arendt, 1998, p. 1; 2023, p. 13). What astonishes the author is the perspective of the Earth being considered a prison, something from which we need to emancipate ourselves. In a way, what this reveals to us is precisely the perspective that sees the human being as an

[2] Throughout this article, I will occasionally cite both the German and English versions of *The Human Condition*. This choice is due to the fact that, in "translating" it into the German edition, Hannah Arendt not only returned to using one of the titles initially considered for her work, *Vita Activa*, but also rewrote several passages and introduced new formulations and arguments. When dealing with a common passage, I will cite both; when dealing with something more specific to one or the other, I will cite only the version used. Furthermore, when referring to the title *The Human Condition*, I am referring to the book in general; when using *Vita Activa*, the reference is to the German edition. Finally, when citing the German edition, the translation will be my own.

inhabitant of the Earth, but not necessarily bound to it. Arendt's reflective movement, however, is based on the existential dimension of belonging to the Earth.

In the U.S. edition of *The Human Condition*, Arendt emphatically states that "The earth is the very quintessence of the human condition" (1998, p. 2), and explains more extensively in the German edition that "the earth and earthly nature appear to be unique in the universe, at least insofar as they provide the conditions for beings such as humans to live, move, and breathe without any difficulty and without being dependent on means devised by themselves" (2023, p. 14). The development of the Earth over its estimated more than 4 billion years has provided, at the same time, both the development of biological beings and an ecosystem in which *Homo sapiens* could come to exist, as well as an atmosphere, gravity, climate, availability of adequate food, and so many other natural elements that, if modified, cause significant changes in how we live.

As far as we know, even though we have created numerous machines that are integrated into our lives to the point of conditioning how we exist, we have not been able to create a purely artificial environment in which we can live for an extended period. This seems to be one of the major obstacles to more daring space missions. If we observe the behavior of men and women returning from space missions, we can see how they become so accustomed to the new characteristics of space, especially the alteration in gravity, that many circumstances that are natural to us become astonishing to them. Conditioned by the near-zero gravity, for example, it is common for them to drop objects because they expect them to continue floating in front of them. Furthermore, and much more serious, are the alterations in the cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, neurovestibular, and immune systems, as well as the gut microbiota, and mental problems in readjusting to life on earth.

The becoming in a world proper to *Homo sapiens* is not that of an being who merely arrived in this environment by chance, but of a gestation that occurs within the planet earth itself and that remains bound to it through the mode of belonging. We can only be in this world because we originate from it. The artifices we have created throughout our history serve the function of making adjustments to environmental variations, seeking greater comfort and enabling greater adaptability, creating a world of our own within the earth that allows us to transcend the mere biological cycle, but without necessarily alienating ourselves from it.

What is at stake, however, is the gradual development of an understanding that the world we have produced is so distinct from nature that it can subsist at its expense. A critique of this conception, for example, is offered by the Brazilian indigenous thinker Ailton Krenak. In his *Idéias para adiar o fim do mundo* [*Ideas to Postpone the End of the World*], he reminds us how "we have become alienated from this organism of which we are a part, the Earth, and we have come to think that it is one thing and we are another"

(Krenak, 2020, p. 16)[3]. Now, this way of interpreting our relationship with nature has been oriented in such a way that "we, humanity, will live in artificial environments produced by the same corporations that devour forests, mountains, and rivers" (Krenak, 2020, p. 20). This way of being in the world, the indigenous philosopher continues, stems from a civilizational worldview typical of the West, in which we detach ourselves from the earth in favor of an artificially gestated way of life, and therefore more suited to our existence. What it carries, however, is a colonization of existence itself, because it "suppresses diversity, denies the plurality of forms of life, existence, and habits. It offers the same menu, the same costume, and, if possible, the same language to the whole world" (Krenak, 2020, pp. 22-23).

Looking again at Arendt, we realize how the development of the modern era, centered first on the elevation of *homo faber,* conditioned our contemporary situation of the victory of *animal laborans*. This is because the exaltation of our capacity to create worlds gradually became uniform in an "ideal world" and was consummated in the form of life proper to the capitalist production process, that is, one that can only subsist through increasingly exacerbated consumption. The uniformization of human beings solely to the form of *animal laborans* seems to contradict a basic conception of what it also means to be of the earth in Arendtian thought: that "nothing that is [...] exists in the singular; everything that is, is meant to be perceived by somebody. Not Man but men inhabit this *planet*. Plurality is the law of the e*arth*" (Arendt, 1978, p. 19, my emphasis).

Being of the earth, in this sense, implies a plural existence, not only of human plurality, but also of the plurality that exists among the various beings that are also of the earth; in other words, being earthlings is something that is given as a plural existence on many distinct levels. What we call alienation from the earth, therefore, implies the negation not only of this origin and belonging, but of everything that stems from it. Reaffirming humanity's originary connection to this ecosystem is, thus, the foundation for rethinking "what we are doing" (Arendt, 1998, p. 5) and calls into question what it also means to be of the world in a political sense. After all, if alienation from the earth seems to stem from this separation from the natural environment, the question arises as to what extent being of the political world can lead us to a deepening of this alienation, or whether there are other ways to confront this problem.

BEING OF THE WORLD AS BELONGING TO HUMAN PLURALITY

Just as our belonging to the earth calls into question the fact of plurality in a broader sense, affirming the condition of being of the Earth evokes an original belonging to human plurality through which we can understand the being of the world. It is no coincidence that Arendt says that human beings inhabit this planet and that this plurality asserts itself as the "law of the *Earth*". This is a more specific

[3] Translations from Krenak's book are from my responsibility.

perspective of an original emergence of each of us as part of human plurality, which will allow us, later on, to think about the being of the world alongside a politically organized community.

According to Loidolt (2018, p. 64), "to 'be-of-the-world' means to fundamentally belong to the realm of appearance", so it is a matter of realizing that "for Arendt, taking our being-of-the-world seriously, implying recognizing the borders of thinking and situating this activity as a whole" (Loidolt, 2018, p. 73). Arendt's description, in *The Human Condition*, of the meaning of the term public highlights the concepts of appearance and common world, both of which evoke an intrinsic relationship with human plurality. Belonging to a realm of appearances that is common to those who are in it is one of the ways by which we can understand the being of the world.

Likewise, in *The Life of the Mind*, Arendt tells us how appearing always implies the existence not only of the one who appears, but of another capable of grasping the appearance. There is a primacy of appearance not only for human beings, but for "all living creatures to whom the world appears in the form of a 'seems to me'" (Arendt, 1978, p. 22); there is a kind of worldliness, of being-of-the-world, that makes it so that there is no subject separate from an object, that is, "The worldliness of living things means that there is no subject that is not also an object and appears as such to somebody else, who guarantees its 'objective' reality" (Arendt 1978, p. 19). This perspective leads Arendt to a phenomenological position through what she calls an intentionality of appearances. Arendt emphasizes:

> Husserl's basic and greatest discovery takes up in exhaustive detail the intentionality of all acts of consciousness, that is, the fact that no subjective act is ever without an object: though the seen tree may be an illusion, for the act of seeing it is an object nevertheless; though the dreamt-of landscape is visible only to the dreamer, it is the object of his dream. Objectivity is built into the very subjectivity of consciousness by virtue of intentionality. Conversely and with the same justness, one may speak of the intentionality of appearances and their built-in subjectivity. All objects because they appear indicate a subject, and, just as every subjective act has its intentional object, so every appearing object has its intentional subject. […] Whatever appears is meant for a perceiver, a potential subject no less inherent in all objectivity than a potential object is inherent in the subjectivity of every intentional act. (Arendt, 1978, pp. 46).

The light reflected from an object reaches our retina, the texture of a rock is transmitted to my skin, sound waves are captured by my eardrums, my tongue tastes the food that reaches my mouth, and my nostrils are invaded by molecules translated into the form of smell. Our senses are affected. Of course, we can direct them in a specific way to find an object, but the movement is not only from the sensory organs toward the objects; they often present themselves to our senses even without our consent. I did not choose to hear that song, I did not want to smell that odor, but they are nevertheless perceived. Similarly, consciousness can autonomously direct itself toward an object, but at other times, it is the objects that appear to consciousness. It is clear that the intentionality of appearances, thinking with Arendt, implies both the very capacity something has to appear and, in the same movement, the capacity each of us has to grasp its appearance.

The way in which appearance is perceived by each of us, however, is conditioned not only by our senses, but also by a set of experiences that have always been formed in relation to other people. Looking at a particular object for the first time is not the same as for someone who already has a prior relationship with it – for example, a radiologist does not see the same thing I see when looking at an X-ray, an oenologist is able to decipher flavors and odors that an untrained individual might consider absurd – because we learn ways to direct our senses, in addition to training them in a shared daily experience. Furthermore, we learn from the experiences of other people with whom we live and share a common world. In *The Life of the Mind*, Arendt tells us that appearance reveals a threefold commonness capable of engendering a sensation of reality:

> In a world of appearances, filled with error and semblance, reality is guaranteed by this three-fold commonness: the five senses, utterly different from each other, have the same object in common; members of the same species have the context in common that endows each single object with its particular meaning; and all other sense-endowed beings, though perceiving this object from utterly different perspectives, agree on its identity. Out of this threefold commonness arises the *sensation* of reality (Arendt, 1978, p. 50. Italics in the original).

The experience of an object that is seen but does not engage other senses, as in a mirage, fails when its perception is restricted to one of our sensory organs. What I narrate to others, but that only I could verify, may sound dubious. When, however, there is a plurality capable of attesting to this experience, the perception of its reality becomes stronger. The perception of reality, in this line of thought, does not occur through immediate access. The naivety of modern inductivism – according to which observational propositions are the beginning of science – does not take into account that the observations themselves are conditioned by contexts shared with other people.

The appearances that reach each of us, in this sense, are not always apprehended in the same way. The object that appears can be, and usually is, perceived by a plurality of spectators. Through our capacity to speak about what and how something affects us, we can then present our worldview, our opinion about something. However, when someone communicates their opinion, their *doxa* , what is revealed is not only a subjective perspective about the person, it is not just a subjective point of view, but also how the world presents itself to that person, how their experience unfolds, and how reality appears to them. The *it seems to me*, *dokei moi*, reveals the experience and the world that conditions it. In *Philosophy and Politics*, Arendt tells us that the

> virtue of the statesman (...) consists in understanding the greatest possible number of realities – not subjective viewpoints (...) – as those realities opens themselves up to the various opinions of the citizens; and, at the same time, in being able to communicate between the citizens and their opinions so that the common-ness of this world becomes apparent (1990, p. 84).

The ability to understand an opinion can transform into an opening of the world, an access to an angle of vision that was once a blind spot, an experience that can now be understood. This virtue, as Arendt calls it, is political par excellence, insofar as what is at stake is not the knowledge of a subjectivity, but communication about a space that is simultaneously equal and different for each of us. Human

plurality, here, enables us to understand the plurality of ways in which the same world is experienced; that is, what is common to us, this world, reveals facets that are not always the same. Since we do not have access to all of them, the closest we can get is, through communication, to share the world as it appears to us.

The sensation of reality, following Arendtian thought, does not dispense with an original belonging to human plurality, but rather establishes it as an inescapable condition. Existence does not occur in the singular, but is always linked to other existences. The experience that each individual has of the world is permeated by the fact that, originally, the very constitution of subjectivity entails a prior insertion into human plurality. It is in this perspective that Arendt's phrase about the human condition of plurality resonates, that "men, not Man, live on Earth and inhabit the world" (Arendt, 1998, p. 7)[4].

The original belonging to human plurality can still be glimpsed in Arendtian thought when she circumscribes the biblical difference in the creation of human beings: there is version 1) in which God created man and then, from his rib, woman – which Arendt sees as a mere multiplication and repetition; and there is version 2) in which God created human beings, that is, a creation of existence in the plural. In *Vita activa*, Arendt demarcates this original belonging to human plurality when she tells us that the second version of creation, distinct from the first, speaks of a "human being created in the plural" [*im Plural erschaffene Mensch*], so that in the first version "plurality is not originally inherent to human beings" [*ist die Pluralität den Mensch nothing ursprünglich zu eigen*] (Arendt, 2023, p. 24).[5]

Being of the world appears to us now under the dimension of being part of human plurality; that is, we are originally, as human beings, members of a world that expresses itself through the irreducibility to singularity as the primary source by which we recognize ourselves as one, since it is through plurality and our relationship with other individuals that we show ourselves to others and become one for ourselves. Regarding this, in *Vita activa*, Arendt establishes a distinction more rigorously than in *The Human. condition*. If, at the beginning of Chapter V of the English edition, Arendt distinguishes alterity/otherness from plurality, in the German version Arendt specifies: alterity/otherness [*Anderseit*] corresponds to the "particularity" [*Besonderheit*] of each being, to its being other, something that the human being shares with all other beings; difference [*Verschiedenheit*] refers to a distinction that living beings are already capable of express; finally, the human being would actively actualize this difference through action and discourse with others, transforming the distinction into uniqueness [*Einzigartigkeit*].

[4] In the German version: "nicht ein Mensch, sondern viele Menschen auf der Erde leben und die Welt bevölkern" (Arendt, 2023, p. 24).

[5]This is certainly not a theological discussion, but Arendt's position also reveals a kind of political stance on how one way of presenting creation is emphasized over another. The difference would also appear in the positions of Jesus and Paul on the role of women, namely: if, for Paul, woman comes from man's rib, this would mean her subservience to him; whereas, Jesus, in Matthew's book, emphasize that God created them together, which seems to imply, for Arendt, a certain equality.

> Difference and particularity are not the same thing. Particularity or otherness – this remarkable quality of 'alteritas' that belongs to every being as such and which, therefore, was counted by medieval philosophy among the universals – in fact characterizes plurality in general and is the reason why we can only define by distinguishing, so that every determination also enunciates a negation, a 'different-from'. But this most universal particularity, which indicates that we only experience beings in the plural, is already differentiated in the multiplicity of organic life, whose most primitive forms present variations and differences that go beyond mere being-other. Among these, in turn, it is peculiar to the human being to actively express this difference, to distinguish himself from others and eventually to stand out before them, thus communicating to the world not only something – hunger and thirst, affection or aversion, or fear – but, in all this, always himself simultaneously. In human beings, particularity, which they share with every entity, and difference, which they share with every living being, are transformed into uniqueness, and human plurality is a multiplicity that has the paradoxical property of each of its members being unique in its kind (Arendt, 2023, p. 240).

What needs to be emphasized, however, is that it is only within plurality that, both in a general and specific sense, otherness, particularity, and uniqueness are possible. Furthermore, as we will see in the following sections, this plurality is only possible in relation to a world of things and a political world, a space in which one can take shelter and another in which one can see and be seen, hear and be heard. The dimension of objectivity of the world encompasses, in this sense, an existential dimension, as it presents itself as a condition for human life not reducible solely to the dimension of *animal laborans*, and also a phenomenological one, since it is where phenomena are experienced together with other individuals. In this sense, it reveals itself as political, since it cannot dispense with care for the world as a space in which we can be authentically. The being of the world reveals, therefore, a belonging and an origin to a space that precedes us and to which we try to continue as an integral part.

BEING AND HAVING A PLACE IN THE WORLD: THE WORLDLINESS OF HUMAN EXISTENCE

Belonging to earth does not guarantee an understanding of our relationship with reality, but it exposes one of its facets and helps us to highlight the sense of being an appearance among appearances, as well as emphasizing existence as always part of a plurality. Being of the world therefore means both that our form of being always occurs in a time-space shared with others, and that this being that we are is always a becoming from another being that conditions us, i.e., the world. This world intentionally gives itself to us and conditions our forms of being.

The conditionality that marks human existence, that is, the fact that what we come into contact with becomes, to some extent, a condition for our existence, can be understood both from the perspective of being on earth, linked to the biological characteristics with which life was bequeathed to us, and from the worldliness stemming from our work, as we produce things that come to condition us. This conditionality can also be better understood from the intentionality of appearances discussed earlier; in fact, the intentional movement by which *homo faber* constructs useful objects in the world, for example,

creates the way in which each of us relates to the world of things, since the instruments intentionally give themselves to us as a new sign of access to the world and condition our forms of life.

Therefore, although we are biological beings with natural roots, our existence is not reduced solely to the naturalness of its being. In its transformation of nature, the human being, like other animals, interacts with its surroundings with the aim of maintaining "individual" life and the species. This mode of activity is called labor by Arendt and is conditioned by life itself, that is, given my natural origin as an organic being, I am conditioned by my life to find in nature the entities capable of keeping me alive. The activity of labor, therefore, necessarily posits consumption as its counterpart.

The way in which human beings interact with nature, however, is not limited solely to the immediate maintenance of life. Worldliness – described by Arendt as the condition of the activity of work – reveals the unnaturalness [*Widernatürliche*] that our existence carries with it. If, with the so-called Neolithic revolution, *Homo sapiens* abandoned their form of life derived from hunting and gathering to assume an existence based on the management of the environment, what stands out is how much the capacity to create something durable evolves from mere tools to the creation of a world of its own. The world of things [*Dingwelt*] creates a space for human life that is proper to it, without thereby denying its naturalness. The development of the activity of work is conditioned by the worldliness of human existence, by the search for a home in the world, as Arendt tells us (2023, pp. 23-24):

> In this world of things, human life is at home, even though by nature it is homeless in nature; and the world offers humans a home to the extent that it outlasts human life, resists it, and confronts it as an objective and independent reality. The fundamental condition under which the activity of work stands is worldliness, namely the dependence of human existence on objecthood [*Gegenständlichkeit*] and objectivity [*Objektivität*].

The designation of the human being as "homeless in nature" can be read from the perspective of the search for a specific space for human life, because, as Arendt argues, our being cannot be reduced to the sign of nature. This is why any definitions of a "human nature", which would operate as an essence capable of indicating the ultimate and first truth about our being, are avoided. The rejection of a human nature has the methodological function of not reducing the human being to an entity explainable by causal means; that is, no matter how much there is a nature in the biological sense, it is not consistent to judge all human activities through a natural lens, since each of us is capable of acting beyond expectations, even though the majority may behave similarly. This, however, relates more to a form of life developed over the last centuries, to the conditionality of human existence, than to an immutable nature.

The creation of a world of things capable of sheltering us demonstrates that *Homo sapiens* has become more than a hunter-gatherer, or an *animal laborans*. By settling in one place, it creates a space of stability, where the cycle of nature is not entirely interrupted, but where it can better determine its existence as something also self-conditioning. The worldliness of human existence therefore means being of a world more stable than the natural one, also belonging to an artificial reality in which things appear

to us as if they were natural, that is, we connect to this world "as if" it was natural to us, because our emergence and becoming has always occurred within a world.

By designating this worldliness as the "dependence of human existence on objecthood and objectivity", Arendt highlights the human conditionality in relation to a reality other than the natural one, a reality that is not self-centered but oriented towards the world. For objecthood and objectivity name the being that is before me and that is not reducible to my being, although it conditions it to a certain extent; and stability describes the mode of being that transcends the natural cycle, that breaks the logic of labor-consumption and that builds a space capable of enduring over time. Worldliness, translated also in the sense of objectivity, is one of the conditions of human existence not only because it helps us understand its relationship with the artificial world created, but because this world offers a certain security and gives the human being a space that becomes home.

This world, a product of the work, encompasses both private and public space. In this sense, a dual understanding of what constitutes a home emerges: from the point of view of privacy, a home would be the place where we take refuge, where we interact with our family and protect ourselves from the public eye; from the point of view of publicity, we feel the world as our home insofar as we recognize ourselves as members of that community, we feel that we share a common world that translates into language, culture, rights, and politics. Being of the world, in this sense, involves a relationship with private and public spaces. It is in this sense that we can, for example, see Arendt's description of mass society as one that "not only destroys the public realm but the private as well, deprives men not only of their place in the world but of their private home" (Arendt, 1998, p. 59), which is explained by the experience of loneliness [*Verlassenheit*] and the loss of the sense of reality, sense that comes from sharing a world with others.

Although Arendt's thought is often praised for its advocacy of the Greek public sphere, one should not lose sight of her praise for the Roman people, who, unlike the Greeks, had an "extraordinary political sense" and "never sacrificed the private to the public realm, but on the contrary understood that these two realms could exist only in the form of coexistence" (Arendt, 1998, p. 59; 2023, 87). Indeed, the very distinction between wealth and property (although they may be confused nowadays, being able to acquire goods is not the same as having a place in the world) shows, to a certain extent, the modern world alienation: possessing some kind of wealth does not guarantee a place in the world, even though one can try to buy it; property, Arendt tells us, has been seen since antiquity as something sacred, because it meant "to have one's location in a particular part of the world and therefore to belong to the body politic" (Arendt, 1998, p. 61; 2023, p. 90). Curiously, if we look at the ancient world, we can see how both slaves and foreigners could have some kind of wealth, but not property. Having a place in the world, a property where one could take refuge, was seen as a condition for citizenship, for participating in public affairs.

Being of the world, in this sense, involved possessing a private space and taking part alongside others in a shared public space.

Today these distinctions are more complex and involve other terms. What matters here is to understand that belonging to a world involves being part of it, even if this can come through property. What exposes part of the contradictions of this relationship is that it may have been experienced so often by denying other individuals participation in the world, that the enslavement of other human beings has been established as a condition of possibility for a public life, since it would be necessary to be free from the need to labor – and to escape as much as possible from the cycle of nature by putting others to labor in one's place – in order to enter the public domain. In fact, more than that, as Arendt herself attests when speaking of antiquity, not possessing a private space and not participating in the public space "meant to be no longer human" (Arendt, 1998, p. 64), or, in *Vita Activa*, to have a inhuman life (Arendt, 2023, p. 92).[6]

Regarding having a place in the world, finally, in 1972, at a congress organized in Toronto on "The Work of Hannah Arendt", the author participated in the discussions and, at a certain point, engaging in dialogue with Mary McCarthy, Richard Bernstein, C.B. Macpherson, and Albrecht Wellmer about the distinction between the social and the political, Arendt says:

> Let's take the housing problem. The social problem is adequate housing. But the question of whether this adequate housing means integration or not is *certainly* a political question. With every one of these questions there is a double face. And one of these faces should not be subject to debate. There shouldn't be any debate about the question that everybody should have decent housing (Arendt, 2018b, p. 444. Italics in the original).

Although the discussion in this context revolves around the distinction between the social and the political, and Arendt speaks more specifically about housing, she sheds light on the need for a space in the world where each person can find shelter, as well as questioning its role in integration, that is, in the sense developed throughout this text, of belonging to a world.

Insofar as we are conditionable beings, having a space in the world becomes a condition for belonging to it; otherwise, one remains hostage to a life reduced only to its naturalness, that is, "Property does not strengthen but rather mitigates the unrelatedness to the world of the laboring process, because of its own worldly security" (Arendt, 1998, p. 115; 2023, p. 254). Thus, possessing a space in the world is to add to existence, to guarantee existence its worldliness without denying its being of the earth. Instead of remaining in the worldlessness [*Weltlosigkeit*] of the *animal laborans*, the human being constructs a world that, with each generation, comes to precede and succeeds human existence itself. This is what enables

[6] Although I do not intend to draw parallels between worlds as distinct as the ancient and the contemporary, it is striking that the designation of certain human groups as inferior continues to be part of a rhetoric that renders them invisible and denies them a dignified existence. Even when we observe some of its defenders, it is not uncommon to see, as justification for sheltering immigrants and refugees, for example, their capacity for work, their importance to the economy, rather than any human dignity.

their distinct temporal mode of being, in which the past transforms into memory and the future is launched as a project.

The reality of the world of things [*Dingwelt*], therefore, comes to be felt as a conditioning force, so that its intentional givenness conditions the mode of being of the human being as an inhabitant of an artificial world, beyond the earth itself. The reality of this world calls into question existence and can only be interpreted through its objectivity and the space from which the world itself is experienced. This objectivity, in turn, is only objective as a conditioning thing for an existence that grasps it as something meaningful and interprets it into a reality. Therefore, Arendt understands that there is no world without an existence that signifies it as such. Without human existence, there is no world, "things would be a heap of unrelated objects, a non-world" (Arendt, 2023, p. 26); without the objectivity of reality, there is no existence, because it always exists in a world.

There is, in fact, a parallelism in Arendt's construction: in *Vita activa*, Arendt begins a sentence with "Die Wirklichkeit der Welt..." and the next with "Die Objektivität der Welt..." (Arendt, 2023, p. 26). In both cases, by highlighting the reality of the world and its objectivity, it is emphasized that the conditional character the world exerts on human existence stems from its being other than me and that it appears in the world, which simultaneously implies appearing to someone who grasps this appearance, thereby exerting a conditioning effect on the one who grasps the appearing. The reality of the world appears and conditions human existence and, in the same movement, this world configures itself as an objective existence from the being that perceives and is impacted by its appearance. Here is human existence under the sign of worldliness, of being of the world.

THE POLITICAL MEANING OF BEING OF THE WORLD: ESTRANGEMENT, BELONGING AND ACTION

The three basic activities analyzed in *The Human Condition* / *Vita activa*, also related to natality and mortality – more general conditions of human existence – have "the task to provide and preserve the world for, to foresee and reckon with, the constant influx of newcomers who are born into the world as strangers [*Fremdlinge*]" (Arendt, 1998, p. 9; 2023, p. 25). In this sense, Arendt presents us with a formulation that may initially sound dissonant: that, even after describing human beings as *of the* world, she considers them as strangers to this world in which they are born. A similar conception can also be seen in "Understanding and Politics," when Arendt tells us: "for every single person needs to be reconciled to a world into which he was born a stranger and in which, to the extent of his distinct uniqueness, he always remains a stranger" (ARENDT, 2005b, p. 308). Here, estrangement is not merely something that comes with birth, of a strange being entering a world that is also strange to him, but, says

Arendt, this estrangement will always remain. Thus arises the question: how can one be a stranger to the world and, at the same time, be of the world?

What might suggest a paradox, however, indicates instead a constant tension in the relationship between human beings and the world. Being of the world and being a stranger to the world are not exclusive conditions, but rather relate to the very conditional dimension of human existence. Although we always originate from a world, we are not entirely determined by it, that is, we are not identical with the world itself. The resolution of this tension, in fact, emerges as something to be avoided, as Arendt's critique of totalitarian regimes makes us note: 1) insofar as they are coordinated by a law of motion, totalitarian governments are based not on a positive law to stabilize the world, but on a law of movement [*Bewegungsgesetz*], thus, they produce a world that is incapable of guaranteeing human beings a sense of reality, it no longer has a stabilizing objectivity;[7] 2) Concomitantly, the totalitarian regime, as Arendt describes, seeks to stabilize human existence, i.e., to reduce individuals solely to their conditional dimension, transforming them into specimens of the same species, diminishing their capacity to act in favor of behavior.[8]

It is precisely in the tension between the stability of the world and the novelty that each human being is capable of through action that one can understand the being of the world together with being strange to a world. In fact, it is precisely because there is a dimension of estrangement that reality does not necessarily condition us in the same way; that is, the world intentionally presents itself to a plurality of individuals capable of perceiving it, however, although the world is the same for everyone, the experience that each one has of the same world is not strictly the same. The sameness of the world does not guarantee the sameness of experience. It is precisely because we are of the world without being reduced to the mere facticity of the being-there of things that it is also strange to us and we are strange to it, which also means being strange to others who inhabit it and with whom we may come to coexist. It is in this constant encounter with the world, with human plurality, and with the various ways in which

[7] In *Origins of Totalitarianismo*, Arendt says: "In the interpretation of totalitarianism, all laws have become laws of movement" (Arendt, 1973, p. 463), that is, "the term "law" itself changed its meaning: from expressing the framework of stability within which human actions and motions can take place, it became the expression of the motion itself" (Arendt, 1973, p. 464). As we can read in *Elemente und Ursprung Totaler Herrschaft*: „Im Gegensatz zu dieser Funktion der Stabilisierung, die Gesetze in allen normal funktionierenden Gemeinschaften haben, sind die totalitären Gesetze von vornherein als Bewegungsgesetze, als Gesetze, die einer Bewegung immanent sind, bestimmt" (Arendt, 2017, p. 1137).

[8] In *Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt says: "The camps are meant not only to exterminate people and degrade human beings, but also serve the ghastly experiment of eliminating, under scientifically controlled conditions, spontaneity itself as an expression of human behavior and of transforming the human personality into a mere thing, into something that even animals are not; for Pavlov's dog, which, as we know, was trained to eat not when it was hungry but when a bell rang, was a perverted animal." (Arendt, 1973, p. 438) In *Elemente und Ursprung Totaler Herrschaft*: „Die Lager dienen nicht nur der Ausrottung von Menschen und der Erniedrigung von Individuen, sondern auch dem ungeheuerlichen Experiment, unter wissenschaftlich exakten Bedingungen Spontaneität als menschliche Verhaltungsweise abzuschaffen und Menschen in ein Ding zu verwandeln, das unter gleichen Bedingungen sich immer gleich verhalten wird, also etwas, was selbst Tiere nicht sind (Arendt, 2017, p. 1091).

reality appears to other individuals that I can come to understand the distinct experiences it provides, even if I do not experience them myself.

The concept of being-of-the-world, therefore, reaffirms existence in a pluralistically constituted reality, as discussed previously. However, as Loidolt (2018, p. 2. Italics in the original) states, "Plurality is not something that simply *is*, but essentially something we have to take up and *do*. Therefore, it manifests itself only as an *actualization of plurality in a space of appearances*". Being plural only manifests and becomes effective to the extent that there is a space of appearance that, by definition, is always shared and that requires human activity.

Therefore, the mere existence of being together is not enough for the formation of a political sphere; it is also necessary that this being together enables the emergence of those who inhabit this common space. Arendt, in her interpretation of the Greek (especially Aristotelian) *bíos politikós*, describes the citizen's way of life as that "devoted to the matters of the *polis*" (Arendt, 1998, p. 13) and which produces beautiful deeds. This way of life, understood by Aristotle as the authentically human one – in this case because it realizes its substance – calls into question the necessity of living together with others for such an end. However, insofar as Arendt does not advocate the actualization of a substance, her response must be interpreted in light of human conditionality: insofar as we are always in and from plurality, it acts as a condition of possibility for our existence in a space that is not confused with nature and, therefore, for us to be more than just representatives of the animal species *Homo sapiens*, revealing who we are alongside others through action and speech. Plurality as a condition is not an end. Even though Arendt speaks of the "fact of plurality", that is, that many humans live on this planet and inhabit one world, this plurality is not inherently political. In *Vita activa*, we read: "precisely because organization is necessary to human life, a mere being organized was not, for them [the Greeks], yet the same as being political" (Arendt, 2023, p. 31). According to Arendt (2023, p. 280), in this sense,

> It is a prejudice to assume that this properly political space of appearances is always and everywhere present wherever human beings coexist, simply because man is a being capable of action and endowed with language. [...] In human and political terms, reality and appearance are the same thing, and a life that unfolds outside the space in which alone it can appear lacks not the feeling of life, but rather the feeling/sense of reality, which only arises for the human being where the reality of the world is guaranteed by the presence of a shared world, in which one and the same world appears in the most diverse perspectives.

The potency of becoming in the space of appearances, arising from the human capacity for action and speech, cannot be reduced to the potential of a substance that needs to be actualized. The political being is not a given thing that each human being possesses and can come to actualize alone; rather, it is grounded in inter-action, in what is established between people, on the actualization of a potency that arises from being together in a space of appearances. Being in a plurality thus demands acting and speaking, the modes by which Arendt describes the properly human way of appearing to those who co-share the public space, that is, a space of appearances, a common world.

The concept of being of the world thus gains a political dimension. To be of this political world means to be a constituent part of human plurality and to be able to actualize one's own appearance – revealing who one is, one's self-presentation – to others who also enter this same space. Similarly to how Loidolt explains the actualization of plurality in Arendtian thought, I believe that this dimension also signifies an actualization of being of the world, the actualization of this original belonging in the form of political action.

In this sense, actualizing the being of the world means constituting a space in which human plurality can also be actualized; that is, the actualization of plurality, in the same movement, actualizes the relationship that each of us has with the world, making the being of the world effective through its appearance and being a constituent part of it. Another worldliness is revealed here, no longer just that of the objectivity of the world of things [*Dingwelt*], but of a shared world.

The relationship between this common world and action is not, however, reduced to a causal effect. There is a system of bi-implication here; the world appears as a condition for action, but which, in turn, only comes to exist as a common world insofar as human plurality acts upon it. According to Arendt (2023, p. 43), "only action, as activity, cannot occur in any way without the constant presence of a shared world [*Mitwelt*]". This worldliness then emerges as a condition for acting, but, at the same time, can only come into existence because of acting. Although seemingly paradoxical, we can escape this apparent vicious circle if we do not think in terms of cause and effect, but rather from a multifaceted appearing.

Being of the Earth, belonging to the world of appearances and, therefore, to a plurality of beings that appear in the world, as well as being the world of things – all these ways of understanding our relationship with reality are not mere stages, but often occur synchronously. Discovering oneself as part of a plurality is only possible through one's own actualization; that is, I am always part of human plurality because I only realize my own identity as a member of that same plurality. Similarly, it is in acting together with others that the shared world reveals itself to me as a human world [*Menschenwelt*] that is not reduced to nature or artifice. Action needs this world in the same movement in which it realizes it.

The reality of the world is therefore only assured because each of us shares it with other people; otherwise, nothing would guarantee that the objects seen are in fact arranged in the world or that the experience one has conceals rather than reveals. One's very self-understanding depends on a certain trust in reality that arises from the presence of others who share it. Our sense of reality [*Realitätsgefühl*] depends on the existence of appearances and a public space, which, by definition, is the space for the actualization of plurality. It is in this space that I not only confirm the way I experience the world as real, but, by presenting it, I reveal to others the way the world presents itself to me, providing, moreover, their disapproval or approval. It is precisely when engaged in an activity that someone reveals themselves and

enables a face of the world to also appear to others, which implies, at the same time, the self-presentation of uniqueness, the belonging to plurality, and the actualization of being of the world.

It is in the actualization of the being of the world that belonging and estrangement are revealed. I belong to a world that makes the existence of human plurality possible and in which I can come to feel at home. This world, however, can never be reduced to the representation of an individual, because it only reveals itself in a shared context; it is plural by definition. Therefore, everyone who belongs to it is also, to some extent, a stranger to it. This estrangement is never overcome, at the risk of losing its constitutive plurality and everything that comes from intersubjectively mediated experience, that is, the very sensation of reality. Being a stranger to the world and being of the world are the two faces of Janus, conditioning the intersubjectively oriented experience that each of us has of the world, which in turn becomes multifaceted. This worldliness, the actualized being of the world, carries with it the strangeness and conditions the way in which we are.

As Arendt states, the conditions of human existence do not *explain* what or who a human being is, but they help to understand it. Even though humans are of the world, they are not essentially defined, but relate to it from plural perspectives. Human beings are not born as ready-made data, just as they do not reach a stage of plenitude or fullness during their existence; at every moment, they are existentially conditioned without thereby becoming identical to one another or even to the world itself. In this sense, the following passage – "we arrive well equipped to deal with whatever appears to us and to take part in the play of the world" (Arendt, 1978, p. 22) – reinforces the idea that being of the world means precisely, at every moment, immersing ourselves in its events, in the situations that appear to each of its inhabitants, and that we are able of apprehending it, even though human plurality and the inherent contingency of reality remain indispensable.

Arendt's idea that we are strangers to the world, however, is rooted not only in questions about the human condition, but above all in the rupture created by totalitarian governments, in the fact that the world has become uninhabitable for so many individuals, and in the problems of understanding how the rise of this new form of government was possible. It is here that the idea arises that understanding can provide some kind of reconciliation. The rupture further separates human beings from the world, provoking an even more radical estrangement, because it attacks worldliness, the feeling of being at home in the world. Arendt calls this world alienation [*Weltentfremdung*]. Its premise, in this sense, is belonging to the world, since I can only be alienated from it if I previously shared some bond with it.

This world alienation represents, in a way, the end of the tension between belonging and estrangement, in which estrangement becomes the basis through which the world is experienced. One could say that a large part of Arendt's work is an attempt to understand this alienation (Alves Neto, 2009), its origins and its unfolding in the way we exist in the world. In turn, I also think that Arendt's concern

involved trying to give some kind of answer to this, attempting to understand how all this was possible, which, for the author, also represented a way of thinking about how we could reconcile ourselves with the world.

Reconciliation, like alienation, also calls into question the being of the world, for I can only reconcile myself with something or someone with whom I previously shared a bond that, now, is either broken or, at least, detached. Reconciling oneself with the world, in this sense, involves both a spiritual/mental attitude through which one attempts to understand events and reality itself, and, one might say, calls into question the way we live, that is, human activities.

Thinking about the being of the world implies questioning the ways in which we relate to our reality. From this, I think we can better understand the experiences that distance us from the feeling of belonging to the world in all its conceptions and, following this reflective movement, understand how we can once again feel the world as our home, how to create spaces for action that can strengthen what it means to belong to the earth, to a city, to a community.

CONCLUSION

The West is now concerned, albeit timidly, with the end of the world. However, in Brazil we say that to understand what the end of the world is and how to survive it, we must ask the indigenous peoples of the Americas, for they know well what it means. Since 1500, the indigenous peoples of South America have known the apocalypse. In the last five centuries they were nearly decimated, with few remaining to preserve part of an ancestral memory. Their habitats were invaded, dominated, and destroyed. Their customs were ridiculed. Today we look at them and can see that perhaps we are the ridiculous ones. The world they were from has come to an end, both as earth and as a space for coexistence.

On the other hand, the space dream of colonizing Mars echoes the alienation from the earth mentioned by Arendt in *The Human Condition*. While the being of the earth doesn't explain all of human existence, it marks an existential condition for life itself, which, in turn, is a basic condition for labor and consumption. Viewing the triumph of the *animal laborans* from the perspective of being of the earth reveals how the extrapolation of its mode of life transforms into a risk for the earth itself. This is the contradiction of what has recently come to be called the Anthropocene and what others call the Capitalocene, that is, a new geological age inaugurated not by human existence *per se*, but by a way of being in the world that consumes the earth and produces waste on a scale never before imagined.

The economic growth pursued by all governments and major capitalists no longer has the maintenance of life and the creation of a world of things to shelter us as its premise, but aims at the accumulation of capital through the precarization of labor, the stimulation of extreme consumption, and the continuous exploitation of nature. The domination of nature has bequeathed us a way of life that not

only creates for us a space of our own that we can inhabit, but also exploits it as if we were its masters. The image that unfolds at every moment is not one of creating a worldly place for us, but, each time, of creating a world that is entirely ours. Instead of belonging to it, let it belong to us; instead of being of the earth, let the earth be ours.

This very victory of the *animal laborans* demonstrates our world alienation in a political sense and also reveals our alienation from the world of things. With existence reduced to guaranteeing the material conditions for staying alive, participating in political life is not presented as an option, but as a privilege or, given a certain disillusionment with professional politicians, seen as useless. In even more complex circumstances, one must also question belonging to a world of things, to a city, to a country, when civil wars, foreign occupations, ethnic displacements, and genocides are experienced by so many people around the planet.

To consider the actualization of the being of the world is also to consider how we can act in the face of the various phenomena that deepen the alienation of the earth and the world. Perennial estrangement, in this sense, leads to the recognition of multiple world experiences, of diverse forms of life; to recognize this requires openness to the new, but also the exercise of judgment as an activity in which we can evaluate what we are doing in our contemporary world. In turn, belonging to a world implies not only being a passive part, but actualizing oneself as a part, which implies taking responsibility for the world.

A threefold normativity emerges: 1) being of the earth, in our current context, demands ecological care through political action; 2) being of the artificial world demands a dignified physical space for all individuals; 3) being of the political world demands openness to a life of citizenship and plurality, as, for example, in the case of the right to have rights. This normativity, however, can be described as "weak", since it identifies problems that need to be solved but does not specify the ways in which they should be addressed. The reason why Arendt does not provide a definitive answer is given by her at various points in her work, but in *Vita activa* there is a significant passage:

> This book does not know the answer to all these questions, concerns, and problems. The answers that exist are, in fact, givven every day and everywhere by human beings, and insofar as they should be solutions to problems, they are a matter of practical politics, which depends and must depend on the common agreement of many (Arendt, 2023, p. 19).

Insofar as these are political problems, there is no definitive technical answer that we can simply apply, no strong norm that we can arrive at deductively or inductively; it is up to each of us to take part in the debate and, based on diverse experiences and political and scientific facts, seek solutions to our contemporary problems. Also, in this sense, I have not provided the answers here, but I have tried to point to the problems that are – or, in a weak normative framework, should be – inalienable themes in the public discussion about our relationship with the world and the earth.

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