

TRIBALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM

KARL JASPERS: CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

Nobody can be a citizen of the world as he is the citizen of his country. Jaspers, in his Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte (1949), discusses extensively the ^{possibilities} of a world-state and a world-empire. No matter ^{in what form} a world-government with centralized power over the whole globe would assume, the very notion of one sovereign force ruling the whole ~~earth~~ and holding in its hands the monopoly of all means of violence, unchecked and uncontrolled by other sovereign powers is not only a forbidding nightmare of tyranny, but would abolish ^{the end of} all political ^{life} as we know it. Political concepts are based on plurality, diversity and mutual limitations. A citizen is by definition a citizen among citizens of a country among countries. His rights and duties must be defined and limited, not only by those of his fellow-citizens, but also by the ^{boundaries of his country} boundaries of his country. Philosophy may conceive of the earth as the homeland of mankind and of one unwritten law, eternal and valid for all. Politics deals with men, nationals of many countries and heirs to many pasts; its laws are the positively established ~~boundaries~~ fences which hedge in, protect and limit the space in which freedom is not a concept, but a living, political reality. The establishment of one sovereign world-state, far from being the prerequisite ^{for} of world-citizenship, would be the end of all citizenship. It would not be the climax of world politics, but quite literally its end.

^{To say,} This however, the ^{conceived} undesirability of a world-state ^{conceived} modelled in the image of states, as we know them, or of a world-empire ^{conceived} conceived in the image of the Roman Empire ^{is a dangerous} (and the dominion of the Roman Empire over the civilized ~~world~~ and barbarian parts of the world was bearable only because it stood against a dark and frightening background of the unknown parts of the earth), is no solution ^{to our} of the present political problem. Mankind, which for all preceding generations was no more than a concept or an ideal, has become something of an urgent reality. Europe, as Kant foresaw, has prescribed its laws to all other continents; but the result,

**HANNAH ARENDT'S ANNOTATED MANUSCRIPT PAGE
FOR HER ESSAY "KARL JASPERS: CITIZEN OF THE WORLD"**

Hannah Arendt Papers: Speeches and Writings File, 1923-1975; Essays and lectures;

"Karl Jaspers: Citizen of the World," undated. Manuscript/Mixed Material.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/mss1105601240/>.



Vol. 13/2025

The Yearbook of the Hannah Arendt Center
for Politics and Humanities

TRIBALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM

How Can We Imagine a Pluralist Politics?

Editor: Roger Berkowitz

Managing Editor: Jana Mader

A Collaboration of Lapham's Quarterly
and the Hannah Arendt Center
for Politics and Humanities at Bard College

DE GRUYTER

HA: The Yearbook of the Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities at Bard College is a continuation of the *HA Journal* and publishes collections of essays inspired by the annual conferences of the Hannah Arendt Center. Dedicated to urgent political issues of our times, each volume features insightful essays by prominent thinkers alongside an anthology of classical texts related to the actual topic of each volume. Present scholarship and canonical texts are put into conversation to provide an extended sourcebook of ideas for the interested reader.

LAPHAM'S QUARTERLY
AMERICAN AGORA FOUNDATION



ISBN 978-3-11-167468-1
e-ISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-167498-8
e-ISBN (EPUB) 978-3-11-167536-7
ISSN 2168-6572

Library of Congress Control Number: 2025942683

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

© 2025 Walter de Gruyter GmbH, Berlin/Boston, Genthiner Straße 13, 10785 Berlin
Copyediting: Nicholas Dunn
Research assistants: Aleksandar Vitanov, Francis Karagodins, Julia Kiernan
Layout: Claudia Collasch
Cover image: © Fred Stein Archive
Printing and binding: CPI books GmbH, Leck

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