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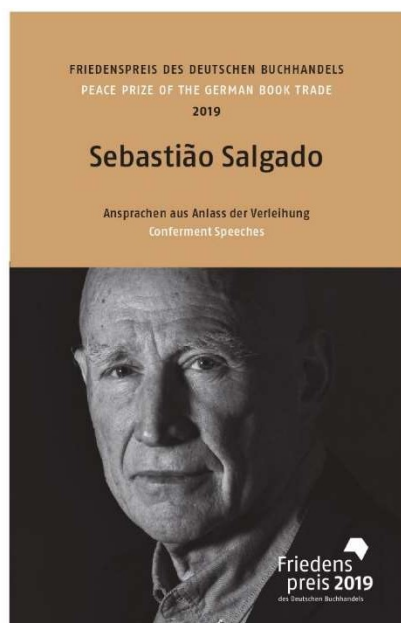
Sebastião Salgado

Manuskripte der Ansprachen
aus Anlass der Verleihung

Sonntag, 20. Oktober 2019,
in der Paulskirche zu Frankfurt am Main

Speeches in English

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Sebastião Salgado
Ansprachen aus Anlass der Verleihung

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Statement of the Jury

The German Publishers and Booksellers Association awards the 2019 Peace Prize of the German Book Trade to the Brazilian photographer

Sebastião Salgado.

In doing so, the association and its members have chosen to honour an exceptional visual artist who has continually campaigned on behalf of peace and social justice and whose entire photographic oeuvre lends a sense of urgency to the global debate surrounding nature conservation and environmental protection. With his ongoing work at the Instituto Terra, he also continues to make a direct contribution to the restoration and revitalisation of biodiversity and ecosystems.

The photographs of Sebastião Salgado have been showcased in innumerable exhibitions and books, many of which show communities strongly rooted in their traditional natural environments, while others portray individuals violently uprooted by war and climate catastrophe. As a consequence of his considerable body of work, Sebastião Salgado has succeeded in raising worldwide awareness for the fate of labourers and migrants as well as for the living conditions of indigenous peoples.

By describing his often breathtaking and characteristically black-and-white photographs as an »homage to the grandeur of nature« and by capturing in equal measure both the fragile beauty and environmental destruction of our earth, Sebastião Salgado offers us the opportunity to recognise our planet as a habitat for living creatures, that is, as a home that does not belong to us alone, and one that we must take every effort to preserve.

Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels

Der Vorsteher

Frankfurt am Main in der Paulskirche
am 14. Oktober 2018

Heinrich Riethmüller

President of the German Publishers and Booksellers Association

Welcome Greeting

*Only when the trees have been counted and the foliage
leaf by leaf brought to the ministries
will we know what the earth was worth.*

*Diving into rivers full of water
and picking cherries on a morning in June
will be a privilege, for the very few.*

*We will happily recall the used-up world,
back when time mingled
with monsters and angels, when the sky
was an open exhaust for the smoke
and birds flew over the highway in swarms
(we stood in the garden, and our conversations
held back time, the dying of the trees
fleeting legends of nettle weeds).
Shut up. Another earth, another house.
(A hawk's wing in the cupboard. A leaf. A water.)*

This poem by Christoph Meckel from 1974 was what came to mind when I first saw the work of Sebastião Salgado. His breathtaking black-and-white photographs tell the story of the destruction of the Earth, the subjugation of the planet by humankind, the pollution of the environment, the plight of migrants, the exodus from rural areas, the massive expulsion and displacement of peoples. The brutal impact of this destruction affects those who are already among the most disadvantaged but also those who had lived undiscovered and undisturbed by the rest of the world until then.

Both the poet Meckel and the photographer Salgado portray the fragility of the world in their own way. Indeed, poetry and black-and-white photography have much in common, and no one has mastered the latter as much as Sebastião Salgado. While poetry

condenses language and reduces it to the essential, in black-and-white photography, the play of light and shadow is everything, the abstraction. Both of these art forms are able to suspend time, which is the very reason why they touch us so deeply.

*

For the first time ever, the Börsenverein has decided to honour a photographer with the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade – a photographer whose subjective perspective is comparable more to that of a man of letters than to a reporter. Sebastião Salgado never sought out a scandal or cast a casual glance at the world. His reportages are always long-term projects. He has been a witness to horrific crimes and destruction. He documented the genocide in Rwanda and the oil fires in Kuwait. He portrayed human beings fleeing hunger and war, exploitation and natural disasters. His collections of photographs tell of a human race that has arrived in the modern era and is now feeling the full force of the consequences of globalisation – a humanity that is on the brink of depriving itself of the very basis of its own existence.

With his most recent project, *Genesis*, Salgado set out in search of the last untouched regions on planet Earth. He succeeds in bringing the beauty of the planet closer to us. His images of the Galapagos Islands, with their rare animals and indigenous plants, his studies on indigenous peoples who continue to live unscathed by our civilisation, his breathtaking photographs of Papua-New Guinea and Africa, his images of South Sudan and the Sahara, his journeys through the “Old Testament”, as Salgado calls his expedition through Ethiopia, his travels to the Arctic, Siberia and Latin America – all of these document a largely untouched natural world, and the inhabitants of the areas acquire a force that we viewers cannot resist. We all know that these miracles will be doomed for destruction if humanity does not wake

up, if we continue to see ourselves as the rulers of the world rather than as part of a fragile whole that must be preserved.

*

Alexander von Humboldt was born 250 years ago, and he himself was also a world explorer and cosmopolitan, an observer and analyst, examining the earth like very few before or after him. Even back then, Humboldt realised that everything in nature is connected to and dependent upon one another. Sebastião Salgado stands in Humboldt's humanistic tradition when he warns us of the dangers associated with human intervention in the processes of nature: "More than ever before, I am convinced that human beings are one. [...] They flee from wars to avoid death, they emigrate in search of a better fate, they rebuild their lives in foreign countries, they adapt to the toughest conditions. Everywhere they go, their primal instinct to survive prevails. Only as a species do we seem to be pursuing our own self-destruction undeterred."

Sebastião Salgado shows us the whole world, that is, the world damaged by civilisation but also the world that is as yet untouched by civilisation. His photographs also show us that we have a mission to work for the preservation of the planet, to wake up and radically change our ways of life. Only if we make these changes will there be a chance that we can bequeath a liveable planet to the next generations.

There are viable ways to avoid the situation Christoph Meckel warned us of in his haunting poem

ANOTHER EARTH – this is yet another thing we learn from Sebastião Salgado. The reforestation and rejuvenation of a large area of land originally belonging to his parents in Brazil – a successful project he and his wife Lélia launched twenty years ago – appears to us as a kind of miracle, especially given the destruction of large parts of the Amazon forest to this day.

Wim Wenders, who will be giving the speech in honour of our prize-winner in a few moments, showed us in his film *The Salt of the Earth* (2014) how a thriving forest could emerge from out of an arid landscape, how dried-up springs could provide water again, how animals could return and how nature could become nature again. But this was no miracle. It was Lélia and Sebastião Salgado, who joined forces with their many helpers to plant almost three million trees. Projects such as the Instituto Terra founded by these two partners give us hope and prove that while sacrifices are important, we must also take tangible action to undo what we have done to the planet.

The booksellers and publishers that make up the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels see themselves as messengers of Sebastião Salgado and his wife Lélia, and we extend our warmest congratulations to both of them on receiving the 2019 Peace Prize of the German Book Trade.

Translated into English by The Hagedorn Group.

Wim Wenders

Can taking a photograph be an act of peace?

Laudation on Sebastião Salgado

Can taking a photograph be an act of peace?

Can photography foster peace?

These questions are not as rhetorical as you might think.

After all, the act of taking a photograph is associated with 'shooting'.

The expression 'to shoot pictures' steers you in this direction, as well as the somewhat more old-fashioned notion of the 'snapshot', which involves not only a shot, but also a trap that snaps.

Those early Native Americans come to mind who sensed instinctively that the white man was looking to 'steal their soul' with his camera.

Today we leave these hostile aspects of photography far behind us.

Sebastião Salgado does not shoot, he does not steal, he does not trap, on the contrary: his images disarm, they create connection, closeness and empathy.

You have acknowledged this, dear ladies and gentlemen

on the Board of Trustees of the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade.

And honouring Sebastião Salgado with this award not only lifts him, but also his profession, his craft, his life's work

into a different light, that is, as the work of peace and as peace at work.

PEACE is indeed under scrutiny here today at this award ceremony.

And we shouldn't deceive ourselves:

peace has become an extremely fragile commodity in our age.

'Peace' once had a wholly different significance, here at this very site, too, socially, culturally, philosophically and in terms of civic spirit ...

Millions of people used to take to the streets for peace, they no longer do so, even though the number of wars across the globe increases from year to year.

Today other things are more urgent to us and are now the order of the day.

Let's face it! Peace is no longer an existential focal point in our lives like it was back then, after World War II,

when the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade first came into being.

I went back and read speeches from that era,

and the very notion of the word 'peace' alone had such an impact then that I physically felt:

this was the most important, the most longed-for thing of all.

Today, peace is still high on our list of New Year's wishes,

but in everyday life and in politics, it has mostly degenerated into a hollow sentiment.

Other conflicts and problems have pushed their way to the front,

such as the climate catastrophe that casts a shadow on any possible future on the planet,

such as the mass migrations and refugee movements that have challenged our foundations here in Europe, such as injustice, poverty, hunger and unemployment, all of which are unravelling our social fabric.

Still, all of these current issues could also be seen as the very requirements for peace, or better yet, as the conditions that would need to be changed so that a great peace could reign. But we never get around to actually acknowledging and honouring peace, because we're too busy dealing with the barriers standing in its way. Too many obstacles are piling up...

Which finally brings me to our laureate.

A man who actually took the time to carry out precisely that foundational research that would precede any sustainable peace.

Sebastião Salgado has taken an incredible number of photographs across the planet, and it is impossible to do justice to the full extent of his oeuvre.

Still, I would like to highlight three particular works, which foreshadowed the issues mentioned above in a prophetic manner and pushed them to the limelight.

Salgado didn't do so 'en passant', but rather - and this, for me, is of utmost importance - by taking his time, that most precious of time, his life-time.

First, there is an almost ten-year mission in more than 30 countries the result of which Salgado called "an archaeology of the industrial age". "ARBEITER" is the German title of this large collection of photographs, "LA MAIN DE L'HOMME" the French one, and it explores, in fact, manual labour: what human hands are able to do. This volume is a large-scale anthology of physical labour, and it portrays with a prophetic eye the end of a period in human history that started with the Industrial Revolution and only coming to an end now, in the 21st century.

It documents this era and shows us its final stage, but with it also the end of an appreciation for manual work and for its dignity, announcing how labour and the right to work are being devalued and disavowed, and how the loss of work inevitably leads to inequality and thus to discord.

Another decade of his life Salgado devotes to the issue of migration, long before it becomes an acute, tangible and politically relevant matter to us. He takes photographs of people all over the world, people who are forced by hunger, war or oppression, to leave their homeland and embark on a journey into the unknown. In this period, he photographs the first victims of global warming, the Tuareg, at a moment when their lakes and rivers in the Sahel are running dry,

their trees and plants disappearing, their animals dying of thirst,
and thus their livelihoods and the means to feed themselves vanishing.

Here, too, Salgado is a visionary whose camera prophetically
draws our focus to the loss of even more foundations of peace:
the right to a livelihood and a roof over one's head, on the one hand,
and the right to a homeland and the freedom to choose it, on the other.
EXODUS is the title of Salgado's second seminal work,
one that drives our photographer and witness of the world to the brink of madness,
when he finds himself caught between the two fronts of the Rwandan genocide
and is believed to have gone missing for a long time.
He looks so deeply into the heart of darkness
that he loses faith in humanity.
It nearly breaks him entirely.
But he allows himself to be healed, with the help of the very same camera
that has witnessed the deepest of sufferings and the worst of horrors.

This healing process leads Salgado to the third huge theme
to which he devotes yet another decade of his life, our planet.
Yet he does not turn his attention to the destruction of nature,
but instead searches for its intactness,
in those places where the Earth is still the way it was upon creation, so to speak,
hence the biblical title, GENESIS.
Salgado finds places, and people, too, that have never been photographed before.
And you can't just simply travel to these remote locations,
you have to walk for weeks through the wilderness
and go by boats or canoes.
He finds paradise, or at least he shows us that it still exists,
here on our blue planet,
including one location where a matriarchy is firmly in place
and functioning beautifully, for both women and men,
who appear satisfied in equal measure, which makes us realize
that we might have gotten a few things wrong.

With these three monumental monolithic works alone,
this man has shown us the fundamental conditions necessary for peace:
there can be no peace without social justice, without work,
there can be no peace without the acknowledgment of human dignity,
without ending the unnecessary states of poverty and hunger,
and there can be no peace
without respect for the beauty and sanctity of our Earth.
The first victims of any malicious and profit-driven destruction
are always the poorest of the poor.
That, too, Salgado demonstrates clearly,
and how, along with the planet, its water, animals, trees and vegetation,

human lives are also perishing.

“Subdue the Earth” is unfortunately still the conventional translation of the bible, evidence of a conceit that turned into arrogance and ultimately into recklessness. A better translation of the Book of Genesis should have been, from the very beginning: “I entrust you with the care of the Earth, you are responsible for it”.

I was fortunate enough to see the images that would eventually comprise Salgado’s monumental epic of the same name beforehand, while he was still working on the prints, and determining with his wife Lélia the selection and the sequence of photographs. These photographs from GENESIS have since made their way around the world, were shown in countless exhibitions, sold as books, posters and postcards, and some of them, including the iceberg that resembles a medieval castle, and the penguins hurtling themselves delightfully into the ocean, to name just two, have long since become visual icons of our era.

Or look at the paw of the iguana that resembles the hand of a medieval knight in a metal glove! It has most likely become the best-known image of a hand in the world. I remember standing alone in front of this photo, after Sebastião had told me the story of how the shot of this animal-human-hand had come about. And I remember the thought that crossed my mind at the time, because it was new to me, and it had emerged under the impressions and the weight of all these glorious images of our glorious planet. I had thought: It was only possible for one person to take all of these photos, or, better said, to find them, or, even better said, to receive them as a gift and pass them on to us, because this person had earned the right to do so, but maybe that’s also not the right way to say it, maybe this was simply an act of grace. Indeed, these photos are nothing less than a most generous gesture from our Earth, a lifting of its veil and a ‘revealing’ of itself. And this was a ‘courtesy’ not just granted to anyone! Letting us participate this way in the beauty and sublimity of the Earth, was a privilege reserved for someone who has stared into its abyss first, who has passed through hell and purgatory, and who has seen firsthand the horrors of which humankind is capable.

Only someone who has suffered a lot with others, someone who has gone to where it hurts, to the powerless, the oppressed, the starving and the fleeing,

someone who has accompanied them, given them his time,
listened to them and thereby given them a voice, as their ambassador,
who has at times exalted them, but not so that their pain “looked more beautiful”,
- which is the absurd and nonsensical reproach one sometimes hears -
but instead as a way of paying respect to them
and granting them dignity and uniqueness, precisely in their suffering...
only such a person can open our eyes, too, and say:
“Look at everything that is still here,
that is still the way it was in the beginning.
Look at everything you can and must save
and all that is not yet lost forever”.
We can trust the eye of such a person,
because he has received the things he has seen as a form of healing,
eye-to-eye with people who have never seen a camera,
eye-to-eye with animals, trees, primeval forests, clouds and light,
eye-to-eye with creation.

Taking photographs is never merely an act of looking for Sebastião Salgado,
it is also an act of sharing and passing on,
always driven by the desire to listen, to accompany, to bear witness and be involved.
And we should never take this for granted!

Allow me to return once more to the nature of photography itself.
When photographers photograph something
- a lovely old German verb for that is ‘aufnehmen’, which means to ‘take up’ -
they ‘take up a position’, whether they like it or not,
with regard to what is being photographed.
They thereby reveal what they are doing with the thing they are ‘taking up’.
Are they placing it in a good light so we can see it better,
to make it more accessible to others?
Are they showing appreciation and admiration for it, or rather disapproval, even disdain?
Do they drop it or put it aside carelessly?
All of this is decided in the very moment of ‘taking up’, or taking the shot.

This may not seem so important,
when you’re taking family photos, or travel pictures, or snapshots.
But when a photographer has dying men, women and children in front of the camera,
or starving people, or people fleeing for their lives,
when something fundamentally existential is taking place in front of your lens,
what happens in this moment of the shot, of ‘taking up’?
What responsibilities lie with the photographer with regard to ‘the other’,
and how exactly is this ‘other’ being ‘taken up’ or received?

Anyone who has ever been in this situation knows:
here, each time, a decision is made in a fraction of a second,
as to whether this will be an act of empathy or an act of distancing.
These are the two options, there are no others.
Is the photographer on the side of the 'other', the person suffering, starving, dying,
do you let that person 'get to you',
or do you 'keep out'?

This is something we can discern in each and every photograph,
something that emerges like a watermark pressed into the image.
Photography has indeed become a complex language,
but its messages are easy to read, and pretty unambiguous,
if you take the time to decipher them.

You can distinguish this essential feature with your naked eye alone
and determine whether an image 'has an impact'
because it wants to make a good impression for itself,
wants to win your favour, sell itself, is intoxicated, so to speak, by itself,
or whether it impresses us by elevating 'the other',
paying respect to that other, honouring it, inviting it, him or her, to speak for itself?

Today, this distinction has become more important than ever before.
We see this phenomenon in all areas of our lives,
and in politics in particular:
Who today is still concerned with the well-being of others,
who represents the idea of a common good in a way that is believable?
Where is the person who is not primarily concerned with him- or herself,
with their own image, their infallibility, their glory?
This is indeed a hubris we see in many of our current leaders
who raise this narcissism to a hideously distorted level.
The saddest figure of all humankind is Narcissus.
He is not capable of doing anything for anyone else,
least of all creating a valid image of another person.
Only someone capable of loving and cherishing others,
someone who lets the beauty of others, but also their pain and suffering, get to him, or her,
someone who gets involved, who listens, who spends time,
only that person can be said to be peace-loving,
capable of fostering peace.

Sebastião Salgado is such a man, and although he is, by his own admission, not a believer,
I'm not sure whether I can accept this assertion completely,
as he named two of his most important works
after the first and second books of the Bible.
These two books take us on a direct path to Martin Buber,

that great German-Jewish theologian, philosopher and humanist
who received this Peace Prize in 1953, here, at this very site
and who found words about peace
that I have not heard expressed more beautifully better since.

“The great peace is something essentially different from the absence of war.
In an early mural in the town hall of Siena,
the civic virtues are assembled.
Worthy, and conscious of their worth, the women sit there,
except one in their midst towers above the rest.
This woman is marked not by dignity but rather by composed majesty.
Three letters announce her name: PAX.
She represents the great peace I have in mind. [...]
The Sienese painter had glimpsed the majesty of PAX in his dream alone.
He did not acquire the vision from historical reality,
for it has never appeared there.
What in history has been called peace has never, in fact,
been aught other than an anxious or an illusory blissful pause between wars.
But the womanly genius of the painter’s dream
is no mistress of interruptions but the queen of new and greater deeds.”¹

Sebastião Salgado is a contemporary ‘Sienese painter’ in the sense invoked by Buber.
He paints and draws with light,
and from out of ‘photòs’ (light) and ‘graphein’ (drawing) emerge paintings of light
which, in the monumental collection of images known as GENESIS,
call our attention to the great peace our planet longs for.
In his previous ‘narrative picture epics’, he uncovered for us the conditions
that would make this great global peace possible:
a renewed commitment to the dignity of all human beings,
to their right to work, to a homeland, to a roof over their heads,
and to a fair share of the wealth of the world,
enough, at least, to feed their families and lift them out of poverty.

Throughout his entire oeuvre, in which Lélia Wanick Salgado played no small part,
the commitment of this photographer has helped us gain a sense
of what is the great enemy of peace in our time:
the brutal demise of compassion, of shared responsibility, of community spirit,
of a fundamental will to forge the equality of the human race.

Martin Buber named his key work ‘I AND THOU’.
Only through our encounters with each other do we become ‘I’,
only through differentiation from one another do identity and respect emerge.
In our other fundamental relationship, according to Buber, in the ‘I AND IT’,

¹ Translation taken from *Inventing Peace: A Dialogue on Perception* by Wim Wenders & Mary Zournazi, 2013

this 'I' defines itself in relation to its environment, that is, to the 'IT', which also becomes a counterpart that wants to be seen and respected.

Salgado's photography is a tangible visual rendering of these very ideas. His work constantly challenges us, encourages us, inspires us to seek, to recognise and to acknowledge the 'THOU' - in the other who looks out at us - and to encounter the 'IT' in our glorious yet exploited and ailing Mother Earth.

The incredible thing, Sebastião, is that you would still be a hero of peace even if you had never taken a single photograph. Indeed, the nearly three million trees that you and Lélia planted would speak for you, as would the empirical research carried out at your TERRA Institute, which proved that even the worst injuries to nature can be reversed, that even the tropical rainforest can be restored, so that springs and waterfalls rush forth again and birds and insects return.

This chapter of your life could also be titled GENESIS, a different genesis in which WE ALL take responsibility.

Sebastião, we thank you for both.

Translated into English by The Hagedorn Group.

Sebastião Salgado

The language I speak is light

Acceptance Speech

Dear friends, I feel immensely honored to receive the prestigious Peace Prize of the German Book Trade. In choosing me this year, you are recognizing my work, my photographs, my engagements and my commitment to advancing pacifist ideas. I thank you... with emotion and with pride. Yes, I am proud that this peace prize should be given to me, a photographer who has carried out lengthy investigative projects over many decades; a photographer who has spent much of his life bearing witness to the suffering of our planet and of so many of its inhabitants who live in cruel and inhuman conditions; a photographer who has placed these same people at the heart of the broader photographic essay that he began fifty years ago and continues to write today.

These men, women and children are among humanity's most needy. They comprise a vast army of migrants and exiles, of exploited workers and casualties of war and genocide. They include those who have fallen prey to famines, droughts, climate change and deforestation; those who are driven off their land by the avarice of powerful and greedy men, who are victims of mechanized farming, of the concentration of land ownership, of unplanned urbanisation, of a violent economic system controlled by the richest nations on earth.

I would like to share this prize with them. I don't accept it for myself; I wish it *for* them; I wish it *with* them.

*

I was born on a farm in the state of Minas Gerais in Brazil. When I was just five, my family moved to the small town of Aimorés. In my teens, I was sent to continue my studies in a nearby city, Vitória. And it was there that I met Lélia, my wife. From that moment, *my* life became *our* lives. From Vitória, we moved to the vast metropolis of São Paulo. Then, like so many

of the migrants I would later meet, in 1969 Lélia and I became exiles from our country.

So perhaps this journey explains why I reach out to populations who have been displaced or threatened by wars, poverty or by savage modernisation. True, there is also an aesthetic dimension to my photography. That is a given. The language I speak is light. But it is also the mission of shining light on injustice that has most guided my work as a social photographer.

In the early Seventies, I did a series of reportages on migrants in France. The Portuguese were escaping colonial wars and the Salazar dictatorship. They worked hard to build a future not only for themselves, but also for France because they contributed significantly to the country's industrial and urban growth.

There were also North Africans. In northern France, I lived among miners, for the most part Moroccans, who were beginning to replace the Poles in the coal mines. They received me warmly and I still have strong memories of their friendship. It is with these Portuguese builders and these Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian immigrant workers, it is with them that I would like to share this prize.

Around this same time, in 1973 and 1974, I photographed victims of a severe drought affecting a broad stretch of sub-Saharan Africa, from Niger to Ethiopia. What we didn't understand at the time was that the famine was a consequence of global warming: farm land turned arid, lakes dried up, and the great River Niger, which for millennia had watered a vast region, with a drastically reduced flow. Then, as the countryside turned yellow, Touareg and Peul families abandoned their land for camps on the outside of the cities. It was terrible to see these proud nomads and farmers turned into refugees.

I believe that my images and those of other photographers helped to draw the world's attention to this tragedy. Today, I'd like to pay homage to all these men, women and children who were forced by climate change to abandon their aged-old way of life to join the urban poor. It is with them that I would like to share this prize.

A few years later, still in the mid-Seventies, I traveled through the war zones of Africa - across Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Rhodesia. Centuries of European colonialism were ending and, unavoidably, this was often accompanied by violence. It affected the Portuguese settlers in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau as well as the British in Rhodesia, later Zimbabwe. I vividly recall the sadness of the Portuguese who were forced to leave the place that for generations they had called home. I photographed them when they returned to their so-called mother country and found that their savings in colonial money were worthless.

At this same time, as new independent countries emerged in Africa, the Cold War spilled over into the continent. Through the involvement of the apartheid rulers of South Africa, East-West rivalry for influence and power brought violence and misery to neighboring countries, none more than Angola and Namibia. Black populations were displaced *en masse*, fleeing from the war-torn countryside to city slums. I think back to all those who, no matter their race or nationality, suffered from the wars of decolonization and independence. It is with them that I'd like to share this prize.

During our years in exile, I yearned to return to Latin America. Brazil was still off bounds for me because I risked prison and torture for my association with the dictatorship's opponents. I also had no wish to settle again in Latin America. We were happy in France, we had one son, Juliano, and a second, Rodrigo, would soon follow. But I was eager to photograph other countries in Latin America, like Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Guatemala. And there I could record how peasants were flooding from the mountains and

forests to cities. It was this social and cultural transformation that most interested me.

A white man photographing the continent's original Amerindian inhabitants is naturally viewed with distrust. But by spending long stretches of quiet time with them, I ended up being accepted. These separate journeys often took three to four months, not only because I lacked the funds to make quick trips home, but also because it took time to win the confidence of those whose lives I was sharing. Theirs became my home. We talked incessantly. They wanted me to tell them stories, to explain my own life. And their gift to me was the images they offered of themselves.

It was not an easy time for me because, for months on end over six long years, I was separated from those I most loved - my beautiful wife Lélia, and our new son. But I felt the work was so important that I was willing to pay this price.

The people I photographed in the Andean countries and the Mexican sierras are no longer there. Their communities have become phantom villages, but these ancient peoples who received a young photographer warmly gave me the images for my first book, *Other Americas*. It is with them that I would like to share this prize.

In the late Eighties, I embarked on a long-term project focusing on manual workers across the world. I noticed that a new economic order was bringing radical changes to methods of production and the social consequences of this were serious. For instance, a ton of iron ore bought from a poor country at a low price multiplies in value when it is transformed into steel in a wealthier country. Or take a peasant coffee-grower in Rwanda. He works his land from dawn to dusk under an unforgiving sun, he and his family live in a straw hut, no one can afford shoes, his children don't go to school... and yet the value of his modest crop of coffee or tea is fixed in London, Paris or Chicago. This veritable looting of the raw materials of poor countries has allowed the West to accumulate enormous wealth and build powerful modern industries.

At the same time, through my photographs, I also wanted to capture the irreversible change being experienced by manual labour in advanced countries. Everything was happening so rapidly. The job market was being disrupted and unemployment was growing. When I photographed men working with blast furnaces, I learned that those without special expertise would soon lose their jobs to machines. I met French railway technicians going through a similar experience. They had long repaired giant locomotives, but the arrival of high speed electric trains now meant they would no longer be needed.

The photographs of these men and women appear in my book *Workers*. Those whose lives have been transformed by radical changes in the workplace, it is with them that I would like to share this prize.

Between 1993 and 2000, I was again on the road, this time following the largest movement of people in the history of humanity. Just taking Brazil, India, China and Africa, more than one billion people migrated to urban areas. Every year, some 100 million people left their homes, villages or communities for cities, often fleeing desperate living conditions. For instance, in Brazil, in less than fifty years, the population has gone from 90 percent rural to 90 percent urban.

For most, immigration is not a choice: it is an absolute necessity. And it is no less true today in regions of Africa, Asia, the Balkans and dramatically so in and around Syria. So long as dictators silence their populations, so long as civil wars rage, so long as rural poverty remains entrenched, the survival instinct will drive populations to seek security and better lives elsewhere. It is their history that I wanted to record – their history which is our history, the story of humanity.

In the forty countries I visited during those seven years, I felt the suffering and despair of so many people who were on the move. Even in those parts of Africa where colonial wars were over, as in northern Mozambique, the population was trapped between the new pro-Soviet regime and rebels known as Renamo, who were backed by South Africa. Males of all ages were drafted by force to join Renamo and in

no time the very youngest had become child-soldiers. Thousands of others sought refuge in neighbouring Malawi.

Finally, in 1992, after the first peace agreements were signed in Paris, many refugees could return home. I remember watching long lines of them beside the Zambezi River. These returnees had spent several years living among shacks, roads and even hospitals. When they came home, many no longer wanted to live in the countryside, so they moved to cities that were ill-prepared to accommodate them.

It is with all the refugees in Mozambique and across the world, with those billion displaced people who are the subject of my book *Exodus*, with those who allowed me to photograph them so that their misfortune would become known to the world, with all these people I would like to share this prize.

April 6, 1994, is a terrible date that the world should never forget. On that day, a missile shot down a plane coming into land in Kigali, Rwanda. On board were the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi and their deaths set off an unimaginable fury of murder in which the majority Hutus declared war on the minority Tutsis. Over the next thirteen weeks, 800,000 Rwandans, most of them Tutsis, were massacred. This genocide, among the worst recorded in all history, could have been stopped if Europe and the United Nations had intervened. The world knew what was happening, the most horrific images were broadcast on television for everyone to see, and yet nothing was done. I was there and I saw what was happening. I spent days and nights among the thousands of people fleeing this barbarity. They spoke to my camera lens as if it were a microphone.

After the massacres of Tutsis by Hutus, a Tutsi army entered Rwanda from Uganda and seized power, prompting an exodus of Hutus into Burundi, Tanzania and, most of all, Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo. A few months later, a mass of some 200,000 refugees were crossing Congo in the hope of reaching the region of Kisangani. It was a long and difficult march of 500 kilometres through thick jungle and only some 35,000 made it to their destination. And

once there, a cholera epidemic took the lives of many more. I accompanied a team from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to one of the camps and, after it left, I stayed on in a little village outside the town of Kisangani.

It was horrifying. Refugees, exhausted, sick, starving; death all around me; the horrible sound of earth movers pushing bodies into common graves. All sense of humanity seemed to vanish. I saw a man carrying a small package in his arms while talking to another man. When he reached the grave, he simply tossed the dead body of his own baby into the hole and carried on talking to his companion. I could not stop taking photographs. I wanted the images to testify to the horrors taking place before my eyes which the international community had chosen to ignore. On the third day, the head of a primary school, with whom I was staying, told me to leave. I was white, he said, and “thugs want to kill you.” I left at three o’clock the next morning. The teacher had saved my life.

Those 35,000 Hutu survivors were forced by a local pro-Tutsi guerrilla to return the way they came. It was hell on earth. All 35,000 Hutus disappeared, murdered in the jungles of Congo. The photographs I took were hard to look at, yet they remain like scars on my brain. It is with those refugees, those dead and those survivors who will never forget what they lived through. With them too I wish to share this prize.

After the unspeakable atrocities of Rwanda, I felt a powerful need to commune with people enjoying lives of purity – the purity of those who had escaped the reach of so-called civilization, the purity too of the environment, of flora and fauna, of trees and unspoiled lands. This led me to eight years of journeying, from 2004 to 2012, which took me from Antarctica to Arctic, Siberia, New Guinea, Sumatra, Ethiopia and Sudan to the Amazon, which is where I am now concentrating my work.

The Amazon is in the news today thanks to the destructive policies of Brazil’s new government and the fires destroying new stretches of jungle. Yet it is this same Amazon that accounts for a large share of the humidity distributed all over the world, for one-third

of all sweet water and the largest concentration of biodiversity on earth. The rain forest is also home to indigenous peoples, who are the true guardians of its welfare and survival. Today, they live in fear. Large agrobusiness corporations seize more and more land to grow soybeans, which are destined not for the local market since Brazilians do not consume the grain, but for cattle and pigs in Europe, Russia and China. And these powerful companies have bought off many politicians. So deforestation continues.

There is also a form of spiritual and cultural pollution brought by evangelical Christian sects. With the complicity of political forces, they are engaged in trying to “civilize” the Indians in the name of the Lord. The reality is that the survival of the Amazon’s Indians is threatened as never before... by the destruction of the forest, by the illegal seizure of tribal lands, by the brain-washing by religious sects and the invasion of Indian territory by illegal gold-miners. And to make things worse, Brazil’s new government has sharply cut the budgets of the National Indian Foundation and the Environmental Protection Institute.

All these acts of political and real violence have the Indians as their target. At the time of the discovery of Brazil in 1500, they were estimated to number four to five million in today’s Amazon territory. Now, they number 310,000 people spread among 169 tribes, speaking some 130 languages. The decimation of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, from Alaska to Argentina, represents one of the greatest demographic disasters in human history. And yet, according to the Indian Foundation, there are still 103 indigenous groups in the Brazilian Amazon that have never been contacted. They are the survivors from the pre-history of humanity.

During many trips in recent years, I have lived among a dozen different Amazonian tribes. And during these journeys I have enjoyed an extraordinary level of confidence and mutual respect, so, with these friends of the forest too, I would like to share this prize.

Displaced peoples, refugees, deportations, expulsions from ancestral lands, the uprooting of entire societies – these are the dreadful signs of our times. My only

hope is that, as individuals or nations, we can reflect on our present human condition, on the need for a deeper sense of responsibility, of order, of good conscience. Somehow we must find new means of coexistence.

I'd like to end by sharing my experience in 1994 on the border between Bosnia and Serbia where I came across a group of refugees living in railway wagons, adapted by Cap Anamur, a German NGO. In one sense, they were lucky because they had fled before their wives were raped or their husbands assassinated, before they had known the worst of that war. But for that reason, they had not been recognised as refugees. So there they were, trapped in their little camp, watching in despair as trains rolled by carrying fellow Bosniaks to the safety, comfort and human warmth of Germany.

That was when a terrible thought struck me. The violence tearing apart former Yugoslavia was identical to what I had seen in far-off corners of Africa. Yet I realized that even the people of a modern cultured country like former Yugoslavia could suddenly be transformed into executioners. It made me question everything I had read and learned... from Plato and Socrates to the Holy Scriptures. Deep down, could it be that our most natural state is not to "Love one Another"... but to "Kill one Another"?

I wondered, I worried, I doubted and yet this doubt should not prevent us from hoping for something different. We cannot ignore what we are capable of doing to each other, because man is always a wolf to another man. Yet the future of humanity can only be in our hands. To build a different future, we must understand the present. My photographs show this

present and, painful as it may be, we must not shy away from looking at them.

*

Ladies and gentlemen, in honouring me with this prize, you have recognized the fruits of the journey of my life. But there, I must correct myself. The fruits of *our* journeys and *our* lives, those of Lélia and myself. Lélia, my wife, the most beautiful woman any man could dream of meeting, kissing, marrying.

Everything I have just described today, everything I have done, was made possible by Lélia.

It was Lélia who first introduced me to photography.

Together, we lived difficult years of exile.

It is Lélia Deluiz Wanick Salgado who has designed our books, picking the cover, choosing the lay-out, selecting the photographs and the accompanying texts. Even now, she is at work on a new book about Amazonia.

It was Lélia who through her love saved my life when I returned from Rwanda, a broken man, haunted by the blood and death I had witnessed.

Together, as a devoted couple, we have formed a family, with two sons, Juliano and Rodrigo, and now two grandchildren.

We created our photographic agency, Amazonas images, now our studio. And it was through Lélia's energy and determination that we created a wonderful reforestation project in my home town of Aimorés. In every sense, the Instituto Terra, as it is called, is our own Genesis.

Dear Lélia, this prize is as much yours as it is mine.

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