



The Hans Jonas Heuristic of Fear in a Pandemic World

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Received Date: January 15, 2021; **Published Date:** January 26, 2021

Editorial

From the point of view, cognitive and psychological, the concept of the word fear means a kind of specific disturbance or not, faced with an idea or not, that is exposed to some type of danger, be it real or imaginary. Fear from a psychophysiological point of view, presents a state of apprehension, of attention, hoping that something bad is going to happen in a certain time space [1].

These cognitive definitions define that, fear is a sensation, and is linked to a state in which the organism is on alert, with or without the exposure of a possible threat [1]. From the point of view of survival, or of the defense mechanisms, whether of conscience or not, fear is extremely important for the maintenance of balance and human survival. A human being who has no fear at all, can expose himself to extremely dangerous situations, risking his own life, without measuring the possible consequences of his actions [1]. The heuristic of fear proposed by Jonas inaugurates a new philosophical category that can rescue the decay of the sacred before the current ethical scenario, his investigation of fear, consists in discussing a corresponding new ethical theory, and it is important to characterize this current ethical state.

At present, ethics seems to have lost its fundamental principles, and the foundations for that point to two tendencies closely linked to technological developments: the immediacy of living for the here and now, and the hypnotic state caused by the magic of the technique by on the other hand, not only inhibit, but also exempt contemporary man from worrying about the distant future.

In this context, much is said about the social and economic changes that triggered a major crisis in ethics. However,

Jonas makes a movement contrary to contemporary ethical trends, because he seeks principles that are capable of presenting the destructive potential of technology, present in the works of technological man. The point of understanding and reflection of the entire Jonasian ethical enterprise is the continuity of life in the future [2].

This is the focal point of your entire investigation. Current ethics has shown that technological developments can threaten the future, and in this way, Jonas argues through philosophy, focused on life, justifications for formulating an ethics that is capable of ensuring a projection for the future, with more balance between beings on Earth [2]. He identified the dual tendency that can guide human actions. The first concerns contemporary science and technology that threatens the survival of humanity and all forms of life that cohabit on earth. The second also represents, the grave danger in threatening the very dignity and autonomy of the human person, through the manipulations of future individuals. Jonas wanted to contribute to a more adequate knowledge to the new questions [2].

These discussions may support, an apology for fear, such an apology, assumes an importance for the construction of a new ethics that, it explains the relationship between knowledge, power and feeling and, later, points to the need to recognize the danger of the technique Modern. In other words, fear as a method would move the feeling towards knowledge, from knowledge to the duty of responsibility and, later, as a mover to find more and more consistent ethical principles. He privileged the heuristic of fear in the initial part of his theory, but he himself warns that this fear should not be taken as the last word in ethics. It is coherent to advance to



the metaphysical conceptions to remove the fundamental principles of the support of the new ethics. In this sense, he says that in the search for an ethics of responsibility, in the long run, whose “presence is not yet detected on the real plane, helps us, above all, the prediction of a deformation of man, which reveals to us what we want to preserve in the concept of man” [2].

Therefore, in view of the real possibility of the destruction of humanity, it is almost impossible not to move the feeling towards preservation by disfiguring the human condition and becoming aware of the authentic condition. For this reason, Jonas stresses that knowledge originates not from contemplation, but from what it must protect against. This is one of the few positions that defend the negative route as a method, through its ethics of responsibility that can be considered, in part, as an ethics of fear. However, it is necessary to understand their position well in order not to jump to conclusions. Jonas emphasizes the predominance of evil to accentuate goodness. He realizes that the human being is more easily aware of what he does not want, but that he already has. For Jonas, the recognition of evil is infinitely easier than that of good; it is more immediate, more urgent, much less exposed to the difference of opinion” [2].

Therefore, only in the face of illness do people realize health, something very current, and only when there is a deprivation of freedom do they become aware of its value, even more, only in the face of death do people really become aware of life and finitude. For Jonas, evil is imposed by simple presence, while good can remain discreetly there and remain unknown, devoid of reflection [2]. What you don't want is easier to know than what you want. Thus, in the case of moral philosophy, Jonas gave priority to consulting fear, even before consulting desire. Although I am aware that the heuristic of fear is not the last word in the search for good, it is a very useful word [2].

We then perceive a dialectical movement between good and evil, health and disease, through the movement between the catastrophic potentials of technology and the future that we want to preserve. Hence, heuristic knowledge arises. With knowledge, man is forced to stop the compulsion and omnipotence of the ideals of progress of modern technique.

Therefore, the evil imagined and experienced through fear should serve as a counterpoint to acting concrete here and now [3].

Discussing this method, Jonas H, et al. [2] highlights some duties. The first duty of the Jonasian future ethics is that of anticipation. In his conception, the evil imagined in future anticipated catastrophes, must be experienced in the present. The procedure for such an event is to intentionally produce catastrophic experiences through future projections. The second obligation punctuated by Jonas H, et al. [2], consists of the obligation to mobilize feelings. It is not enough just to imagine evil hypothetically, it is necessary to make an experiment, only then will it have meaning. Experience, therefore, makes it possible to anticipate what may be worse. Final considerations. Here, fear has a spiritual characteristic that comes from a person's deliberate attitude. Thus he concludes: “the adoption of this attitude, that is, the willingness to be affected by the salvation or by the misfortune (although only imagined) of the coming generations is the second' introductory 'duty to the desired ethics” In this sense [4], fear acquires a pedagogical character, guided by psychological characteristics, and as an analytical methodology, it constitutes an essential part of responsibility and, as a projective capacity, enabling a principle of responsibility. This content, in times of pandemic, from COVID-19, may help future academic works, to understand the behavior of humanity, and its actions, in the face of global catastrophes, such as this, that we are experiencing on the planet [5].

References

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