


Chapter 19

From formal ethics to an ethics of life: the expansion of the categorical imperative in Jonas

  <https://doi.org/10.56238/devopinterscie-019>

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ABSTRACT

The life of the contemporary subject changes due to the presence of technology. There is no way to go back to the point where there was no interference, since, starting in the industrial revolution, the ability to formulate technological solutions started to guide human behavior.

Faced with this scenario that intensifies, humanity finds itself in an intertwined relationship with technology. In this wake, Jonas will propose an ethics that aims to understand these transformations, stressing the importance of humanity not losing sight of what is most essential in it: life.

In this sense, Jonas will demonstrate that current ethics is based on that theorized by Kant, which has as its guideline the categorical imperative: "Act in such a way that your action can be universalized."

Even though Jonas does not disregard the Kantian proposal, the criticism is directed towards its aspect, which does not have the power to produce the necessary behavior for the preservation of life, because it cannot generate in the individual an effective action in the real plane, overcoming pure rationality.

1 INTRODUCTION

Technological changes perceived in an increasingly accelerated way by contemporary society, as well as advances in various fields of science and knowledge, in addition to the constant intrusion of technology in our daily lives, have caused evident changes in the lives of each individual and community. If, on the one hand, we inherited from modernity the idea of progress at all costs, on the other hand, we

Thus, it is important that an ethic can influence the subjects, moving their intellectual and affective capacities to an action that unquestionably preserves life.

At this point, life receives a differentiated treatment in Jonas's ethics, because, in wanting to expand the categorical imperative, it is based on an ontological bias, since the moral law that dictates behavior is no longer sufficient to face technological changes. A step further is needed. In the proposal of Jonas's imperative, this advance is directed towards the preservation of life: "Act in such a way that the effects of your action are not destructive for the future possibility of such a life".

In this way, Jonasian ethics examines the foundations of Kantian ethics, listing points of its insufficiency to embrace new social relations. Jonas intends to develop an ethics that holds the uncontrollable power of technology, which generates negative impacts on society and the environment.

This work pretends to identify the points criticized by Jonas in Kant's ethical formulation and what prevents it from dealing with contemporary technological changes.

Finally, the research will demonstrate how the formulation of the idea of the "Heuristic of fear" is an essential tool in Jonas's ethics, providing his ethical system with the ability to propose to humanity the protection of the natural world and life of modern ethics have to be review in favor of life.

Keywords: Categorical Imperative, Kant, Jonas.

witness the degradation of life in different aspects: moral, social, and environmental, partly as a result of technological evolution and the distance between human beings and nature.

Everything indicates that humanity, through the development of technology, produced within itself a potential whose dimension of consequences remained unknown until then: that of exposing the human species to the risk of its existence; this is because, with the continuous destruction of the environment, the production of nuclear weapons with a high lethal capacity, the creation of synthetic products that cause damage to health and other unnatural creations, the perpetuity of life and existence are in danger, if the moral behavior of the subjects does not change. In this case, the importance of the work of Hans Jonas is highlighted for drawing our attention to specific problems experienced in the 21st century:

Hans Jonas drew attention to one of the most serious problems posed to ethics in the 21st century: the problem of the threat to the future of humanity, the violation of the integrity of human beings and nature, or in other words, the self-destruction of life on the planet; increasingly evident threat, caused by the unconditional in the modern ideal of progress, as the exploitation of nature through technology. (SANTOS, 2011, p. 131)

In this sense, it is possible to note that the scenario experienced in modernity has undergone profound changes when compared to contemporary times. Today the problems that surround humanity are different and are imposed with a real degree of urgency. Therefore, Hans Jonas will try to formulate a new ethics capable of facing the challenges and dangers brought by technology and its unbridled advance, lacking greater reflection and responsibility on the part of its agents.

Indeed, the task is not an easy one, since the legacy left by modern ethics directly impacts and influences our moral behavior to this day. If in that period the subject sought to establish himself as the center of morality and the exclusive power of decision, much as a result of the progress of science and a distancing between man and nature, nowadays it is observed that this distance has produced serious disorders to the vital balance of the planet, demanding from the rational subject the revision of his moral paradigms under penalty of causing his extinction.

As mentioned, the difficulty of the undertaking lies in the need to refute, modify and expand the philosophical tradition regarding ethics, since in it life was never a direct object considered worthy of special protection, even though one can imagine that it would be preserved in an indirect. In reality, life was never taken as something to be protected directly. In this context, it deserved shelter only developments of its continuity such as joy, happiness, pleasure, autonomy, and reason. Therefore, Jonas will seek in his work to demonstrate that we must understand life as a good that needs to be protected in a broad and unlimited way, preserving its existence over time. He thus criticizes the anthropocentric view, centered on the subject and the immediate circle of action inherited from modern ethics. He claims that the new ethics needs to take into account a larger dimension, since life is linked to the natural world and, as we recognize its fragility, its protection is essential.

Therefore, to establish his ethical proposal, Jonas needs to debate directly with the philosophical tradition regarding ethical aspects. At this point, we will focus on Kantian ethics, rooted in our moral behavior. Kant in modernity started an unprecedented movement centralizing man and especially his reason as capable of establishing his moral guidelines. With this author, the subject gained autonomy, as any moral action should not be empirically conditioned, owing respect only to reason itself, which seeks its foundation in the moral law. In turn, such a law is discovered from the rational exercise that identifies the a priori attribute for action, that is universality. Thus, Kant established a rational framework for moral action, producing a precise categorical imperative for modernity and the emancipation of the subject as the center of ethics: "Act in such a way that your action can be universalized."

However, Kantian ethics proves to be limited in contemporary times due to the massive advent of technology and the countless variables that such modifications entail, which often have unexpected consequences, within which the individual no longer has a control from the start of the action. . The good or bad effects of moral action, despite the attempt to establish complete control of the chain of action, are unpredictable in different situations. Thus, formal ethics such as Kant's cannot encompass random elements and results arising from new possibilities and actions belonging to current times.

In this wake, this article will analyze the new ethical horizons intended by Hans Jonas, delimiting his dialogue with the philosophical ethical tradition, focused on Kant. Despite Jonas intending to use the categorical imperative, he wants to reformulate it, to expand its scope, in a way that makes it capable of effectively dealing with the new destructive possibilities brought about by technological evolution, a problem that goes beyond the universe of Kantian practical philosophy.

For this, it will be necessary to know the main characteristics that permeate Kantian ethics, including its foundations, the historical moment in which it is inserted, as well as the objectives it sought.

Next step, we will analyze Jonas's criticism of the anthropocentric character of such ethics; its vision is limited to the present, which, according to the author, disregards the past and prevents any visibility of the future, which would enclose reason in its restricted temporal limit. In addition, it will be noticed, in the light of the Jonasian perspective, that Kant's ethics presents an indifference to the natural world and, therefore, to its potential relevance as an object of ethical thinking, since Kantian ethics would be a theory thought only of subjects, disregarding nature as an essential element to be considered in moral action.

After overcoming the view in which Kant's ethics is inserted, we will address the elements that underlie Jonas's, assumptions, as well as the attempt to establish rational metaphysics to support his proposal. It is necessary to bear in mind that in Jonas, life receives a different treatment, as it concerns an object that cries out for existence. Not by chance, one of the ethical bases he proposes is its ontological character. Life wants to live and must be preserved indefinitely, which demands from individuals and society a conduct that is capable of guaranteeing its prevalence and existence.

As a result of this construction, one of the new elements inserted in Jonas's ethics is found in the heuristic of fear, which allows for a long-term look at the time horizon, enabling individuals to exercise

their capacity for rational forecasting, to establish which actions should or should not be carried out in the present, without jeopardizing the future. Another point to be emphasized in Jonas's ethics, linked to the very foundation of the concept of fear heuristics, is the importance that theoretical knowledge receives in ethical action. If in Kant this knowledge deals with another aspect of reason, in Jonas it constitutes an essential element to guide action.

In short, Kant's formal ethics disregarded the role of theoretical knowledge in ethical action, considering it irrelevant to the practical rational rigor to which the subject should submit the intention of his actions. Added to this is the fact that Kant, in any case, intended to remove empirical constraints from moral action, taken as decisive within the scope of theoretical reason. Strictly speaking, in Kant, autonomous reason, acting out of duty, seeks its foundation only in the form that stems from the categorical imperative, while Jonas intends to demonstrate the need to overcome the merely formal aspect of the material, establishing the importance of other elements, in addition to reason, that coherently supports an ethical act, for example, feeling as a motivating element of action, something of little importance for Kant.

In what follows, against the background of Kant's ethical formalism, which is reflected in the elaboration of the formulations of the categorical imperative, we will discuss Jonas's conception of responsibility, taken as an ethical principle capable of offering a convincing response to the challenges imposed by development techno-scientific, which would extrapolate the Kantian horizon.

2 ARGUMENT DEVELOPMENT

Jonas' biography says a lot about his influences in the attempt to constitute a new ethics. Of Jewish origin, Jonas, born in 1903, in the city of Mönchengladbach (Germany), studied with Bertrand Husserl and with the one he would consider his intellectual master for a long time: Martin Heidegger. In 1934, Jonas leaves Germany as a result of Nazi persecution and enlists in the British Army to fight the German regime. He emigrated to Canada in 1949 and later, in 1955, to the United States. In 1966 he published a work entitled *The phenomenon of life: toward philosophical biology*. In 1979, he wrote his main work: *The Principle of Responsibility: Essay on an Ethics for Technological Civilization (Das Prinzip Verantwortung: Versuch einer Ethic für die technologische Zivilisation)*, a book centered on the elaboration of ethics capable of reflecting on the advances of technological civilization, died in 1993 in New York.

The author personally witnessed the negative impacts exerted by technology on reality. Combatant in World War II, Jonas realizes, on the battlefields, the fragility of life. Furthermore, events such as the atomic bombs dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima exposed Jonas to the immeasurable power available to humanity, the immediate result of techno-scientific advances.

Hans Jonas points to the shock caused by the atomic bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as the starting point of the abuse of man's dominion over nature, causing its destruction. He says textually in an interview published in issue 171 of *Esprit* magazine in May 1991: "She set the thinking in motion towards a new type of questioning, matured by the danger that our power, the power of our own, represents for ourselves. man over nature". (SIQUEIRA, 1999, p.343).

In this sense, it is observed that the philosophy produced by Hans Jonas will have as one of its main objectives the protection of life in the face of all technological evolution that is imposed daily, which has enough power to put it at risk of existence. If, on the one hand, contemporary society experiences the benefits brought by technological evolution, on the other hand, there is no denying the threat that such unbridled development presents, bringing with it the capacity to produce irreversible collateral damage.

It will be in this scenario that Jonas will seek to establish new ethical horizons to face this ever-increasing amount of technological changes inserted in human coexistence. These horizons constitute our object of investigation, because, by intending to question the old ones and establish new foundations, Jonas takes a divergent direction from the entire philosophical tradition. For this, he will provide new parameters and bases for his ethics, establishing a new categorical imperative, inspired by Kant, however broader and with a different foundation from that foreseen by the philosopher of Königsberg.

Indeed, a scathing criticism elaborated by Jonas is the fact affirming that the traditional ethics focused their relations in an anthropocentric scope, disregarding any other element that wasn't the subjects worthy of ethical valorization.

In this critique, the author seeks to show that traditional ethics were limited to questioning and understanding the relationships established exclusively between the subjects participating in a given relationship, which is physically and temporally limited, which means that nature was not part of ethical conduct, a point to which Jonas is in opposition, because in the face of numerous environmental changes, for example, those that pose risks to human existence, it is necessary to go beyond anthropocentrism and understand that human beings are an integral part of nature.

On the other hand, based on such findings, Jonas also aims to highlight the eminently anthropocentric character of traditional ethics. For him, ethics remained, throughout the tradition, centered on man and, primarily, reduced to the scope of the polis. In this case, the reference is, albeit implicit, addressed to Aristotle. Jonas emphasizes that, because of this, efforts in the field of moral philosophy have always ignored the issue of the relationship man-nature (SANTOS, 2011, p. 132).

From the anthropocentric character of traditional ethics stems the problem of its restriction to the subjectivism of each agent in the relationship. That is, subjectivity tends to distance the subject from his natural space, taking refuge in his rationality, which receives too much credit for the effectiveness of ethical conduct. The reason that acts in isolation, seeking a foundation in itself only, for Jonas, is not capable of facing the new technological times.

Another criticism present in Jonas's perspective is the issue involving the temporal consequences of ethical actions. With this, the author intends to demonstrate that human practices produce long-term effects that need to be considered in decision-making and traditional ethics did not care about this, since the scope of action was immediate, that is, short-term. In a society where technology did not represent the capacity to impact as it does today, the limited temporal scope was not a problem, since, as Jonas states (2011, p.35),

"the effective scope of the action was small, and the period for prediction, and the definition of purpose and accountability was short, and limited control over the circumstances". Now, ethics should no longer be restricted to temporal issues, under the penalty of allowing behaviors that confront human existence in the future.

Added to the anthropocentric limit of traditional ethics is another characteristic pointed out by Jonas, which refers to being within reach of its action in time and space. The good or the harm resulting from the action remained limited to a calculable and short-term scope. Aspects such as the global condition of human life, the life of future generations, and other species on the planet, as well as the future far away, have not historically constituted the background of reflections and ethical propositions. (SANTOS, 2011, p. 133).

In this sense, it is noted that one of the central objectives of the author is to expand the human time horizon, which requires rationally considering different possible variables and consequences of action, predicting possible serious threats, and preventing them from occurring.

Technological evolution has become an immanent part of human reality. The technique changed its scope, bringing unknown consequences. However, the ethical system seems not to have noticed these alterations and maintains itself as if it were participating in the relationships agreed upon by the modern age.

For Jonas, there is an obvious mismatch between the modes of action made possible and stimulated by technology and the ethics to which one can resort to consider them. Jonas censures traditional ethics mainly because its precepts do not include the global condition of life and the distant future:

Modern technique has introduced actions of such an unprecedented order of magnitude, with such new objectives and consequences, that the framework of ancient ethics is no longer able to frame it. (...) No previous ethic was obliged to consider the global condition of human life and the distant future, including the existence of the species. The fact that they are at stake today requires, in a word, a new conception of rights and duties, for which no ancient ethics and metaphysics can even offer the principles, let alone a finished doctrine. (JONAS, 2011, p. 39-41).

Although Jonas brings up a clash with the philosophical tradition when elaborating on his ethics, we will dwell on the one directed to Kant and his categorical imperative, because it will be from the Kantian imperative that Jonas will seek the reformulation of traditional ethics. This does not mean that Jonas intends to undermine the ethics produced by Kant, on the contrary, using it, he seeks a reformulation and expansion of its content limited to the formal and distant aspects of materiality, given its insufficiency to deal with the current human relations modified by the unbridled advancement of technology, as can be seen in the sections below.

2.1 KANT

The German philosopher, when elaborating his "Critique of Practical Reason", established the main bases for modern ethics. The historical moment in which Kant's thought is situated, the Enlightenment

indicates a new movement of consciousness for the time. It is important to keep in mind that thinking is changing, moving from the religious aspect and the influence of faith towards modern science and its stability, factors that lay new foundations for understanding the world and human relationships.

In this sense, Kant in his work seeks to understand the practical reason that directs moral action. Considering its historical moment, we have that the subject gradually inserts itself in the center of thought. By assuming this leading role in reflection, the nascent moral action receives extensive investigation by Kant.

In this regard, it is important to recall that in his work "Critique of Pure Reason," Kant will investigate whether metaphysics is a science in the face of those exponents of his time, such as Mathematics and Physics. Kant will answer no because it is impossible to know the object of metaphysics since it intends to understand the "noumenon" instead of the "phenomenon". Being impossible by rational means to know the thing in itself, Kant will not despise the role of metaphysics, he will only move it from the area of knowledge to the moral field.

Practical reason, investigated in moral action, for Kant needs to find a foundation that sustains itself independently of external material objects, under penalty of being empirically conditioned and having a reduced and subjective principle of validity. Kant intended to endow moral action with universality, identifying the principle given "a priori" by our conscience, that is, this would be valid for all individuals without distinction. He identified in this investigation a categorical imperative of a formal nature that would enable the realization of this claim: "Act in such a way that your action can be universalized".

Kant's categorical imperative would be a result of the agent's rational process that identifies the moral law itself, realizing that the universal action is the one that prevents him from acting conditioned by external elements. Therefore, there would be no external influence capable of determining the subject's will, since his actions should correspond only to himself:

The categorical imperative, the formula of this formal principle, orders unconditionally only because the maxim is not subject to any material condition, but only to the formal condition necessary for every determination of the will by pure reason: it's (of the maxim) possible universalization. A material principle would order only conditionally and would appear in the list of hypothetical imperatives. (FILHO, 2019, p. 520)

Indeed, Kant ensures that practical reason orders action only from and through itself. In this way, the philosopher is centering morality on the autonomy of the subject's will, that is, each individual is capable of morally self-determining through his reason, regardless of external material elements. Kant's thought represents a break with the tradition of the time, because, like the Greeks who based their moral action on subjective questions, in the case of Aristotle on happiness, Epicurus on pleasure, or otherwise Christian ethics, which based their actions on faith, the subject, and his reason had never been the center of morality, a situation that Kant altered when establishing his proposal.

In this way, Kant indicates in his thought a belief in ethical progress, because he credits the subject with the exclusive ability to be the owner of his actions through reason itself. From this, he follows that morality would not belong to imprecise metaphysical constructions that are impossible to be universalized, since the subject has an autonomy that allows him to act independently of any conditioning factor alien to reason itself.

... the break made by Kant is together in proposing the autonomy of free will as the basis of morality, freeing ethics from the moral postulates of natural and biological laws and the metaphysical nature of man that commanded his sensitivity and instinct. The new Kantian thought proposes to the sphere of morality and the world of knowledge and existence, a strictly human representation, independent of the cosmic or divine order since for Kant, man is capable of legitimizing all dimensions of life. (SGANZERLA, 2012, p. 111)

It is noted that the foundation of Kantian ethics is in the subject, as he is the possessor of the moral law, supported by reason. The moral law, a condition of the categorical imperative, is responsible for making man act out of duty and not out of other representations. Due to its foundation returning to itself, Kant's ethics is considered formal, since moral action concerns only form and not material criteria.

The formalism established by Kant will be the object of scathing criticism by Jonas, because for him the form does not have the capacity, by itself, to adequately direct the action and therefore it is flawed, since it does not produce in the subject a proper moral reflection, but only logical, a situation that would reduce the duty to a notion of "compatibility" or "incompatibility", not reaching the field of moral approval or disapproval. Thus, the Kantian categorical imperative could be contradictory regarding the preservation of humanity, since its practical application could support an action that would produce effects contrary to the continuity of life of humanity or even one that allows the happiness of one generation to the detriment of others.

The Kantian categorical imperative is the basis of one of the important ethical systems produced in the philosophical field. Kant intended to demonstrate that the human being cannot act by empirical influences, that is, by something external. On the contrary, human reason is capable of autonomously conceiving a norm to act in an a priori way, free of any influence. The moral law would be that norm that every human being is capable of achieving since it represents the universalizable character of action, embodied in the categorical imperative: "Act in such a way that your action can be universal."

In this sense, one observes in Kant a belief in the ethical progress of society, attributed exclusively to the subject and his ability to carry out morally correct conduct following the moral law. The acting was confined to a spatially restricted relationship between subjects. This would result in a narrowing of the relationship of knowledge and moral will, which assume delimited poles without necessarily intersecting.

In this sense, Jonas in his work (2011, p.36) highlights that:

(...) in matters of morals, human reason can easily reach a high degree of accuracy and perfection even among the simplest minds. (...) it doesn't take a science or a philosopher to know what should be done, to be honest, good, and even wise and virtuous. (...) The common intelligence can aspire to achieve the good as well as any philosopher intends for himself. To know what (...) I must do for my will to be moral, for that I do not need any far-reaching insight;

Through the citation, it is possible to understand how much Kant, according to Jonas, removed from theoretical knowledge the ability to influence ethical decisions, a situation that restricts action exclusively to the rational decision of the subject and his fellows, putting the natural world at risk. a state of neutrality or indifference on the part of the rational agent.

With his categorical imperative, Kant managed to structure and base a new ethical system in which he intended to position subjects always as "ends" and not as "means", which strengthened the use of reason and the relationship between subjects, valuing the freedom belonging to each individual who acts following the moral law present in him, not being driven by empirically conditioned factors.

2.2 KANT E JONAS

However, Jonas considers this imperative insufficient to deal with the technological advances typical of contemporary civilization, since its foundation, although presented as moral, is, strictly speaking, logical, applying to a restricted set of human interactions, limited, however contradictory it may seem, in time and space, without assessing the long-term effects of effective, historically determined human practices.

In this vein, according to Jonas, the actions practiced by human beings from a Kantian perspective would reduce their understanding by the criterion of "compatibility" and "incompatibility", saying little or nothing about what deserves to be effectively protected: life. Thus, a formally compatible action could cause serious damage to human existence.

As a result, Jonas presents a proposal to reformulate the Kantian imperative: "act in such a way that the effects of your action are compatible with the permanence of an authentic human life on Earth; or in a negative form: "act in such a way that the effects of your action are not destructive for the future possibility of such a life". It can be seen that, at the bottom of his imperative, Jonas wants to preserve life and its conditions of possibility at all costs, because, due to the countless transformations constantly brought about by technology, life must be preserved in the face of any possible danger that may arise. be avoided.

In this wake, in Kant, an Enlightenment philosopher, the main motivation was to strengthen and consolidate man's rational capacity, in Jonas, the existence and permanence of life correspond to the main ethical objective. For the Jonasian imperative to be effective, it is necessary to expand the one proposed by Kant, since technological changes no longer allow us to formally accept "compatible" conduct. On the contrary, material conduct is needed that preserves the existence of human life. At this point, unlike Kant,

in Jonas, the knowledge produced has relevant ethical consequences, assuming the function of a vector for ethical action. The author (2011, p.37) criticizes Kant when he states that: "No other ethical theorist has gone so far in diminishing the cognitive side of moral action."

By establishing his ethics, Jonas intends to indicate the fundamental importance of recognizing that there is something beyond the formal aspects of ethical action. Contrary to Kant's claim, his ethics is based on an ontology, that is, Jonas claims that there is concretely something that must be preserved by all in an uncontested way, even more: this something constantly calls out the desire to remain present. Thus, life assumes the main ontological role, which sustains the ethical foundations defended by the author.

In this sense, Jonas will propose an ethics of responsibility, because, in addition to the preservation of life, which deserves protection in the face of changes and technological advances, there is a decisive, rational, and decisive human action to allow the achievement of this claim. This human action that precedes the act itself is the object of Jonas's concern and, for this reason, such an act must be duly covered with responsibility. It is pointed out that the responsibility intended here stems from the act before the practical action, involving rational, deliberative action and the agent's ability to predict.

The occurrence of responsibility occurs in the a priori form of the action and not as a mechanism for investigating conduct after the action, serving as a tool for attributing something that has already happened. Jonas inserts the responsibility in the precedence of the concrete act, in the intellectual framework available to each individual in the past in the execution of the act.

Due to this, the prominent role that responsibility plays is perceived, since the human being is the only being in nature that has the such capacity and therefore must assume it.

It can be seen that, in Jonas's proposal, there is a sentimental appeal capable of generating motivation in the individual to act in a certain way rather than another, and, on the other hand, the rational use of the human intellect to recognize avoidable behaviors by performing an exercise of prediction, which seeks to preserve at all costs the guarantee of the existence of human life.

Metaphysics for Jonas is rational, that is, we can, through our reflection - the investigation of who we are - identify elements provided by nature that are part of our Being, that is, of our essence. Jonas supports a rediscovery of the Being from the rational verification of nature. Through the external world, we would therefore be able to promote the internalization of a lost unity.

Metaphysics (...) has always been a question of reason, and this can be activated under the instigation of challenge. No doubt it is as difficult to create a valid metaphysics out of the Diktat of bitter necessity as it is to create a religion, but the necessity may compel us to seek it, and the secular philosopher, who strives to establish ethics, must, first of all, admit the possibility of a rational metaphysics, despite Kant, provided that the rational element is not determined exclusively according to criteria of positive science. (JONAS, 2011, page 96).

In this union of feeling and reason in moral action, the responsibility intended by the author is realized. It is possible to infer from Jonas's thought that, in the same way, I am responsible for doing

something and for its consequences, I am also responsible "for" something, precisely for life. If human beings were attributed a more complex and evolved natural capacity with other beings, it is because the conditions of existence remained possible: the greater good that permeates all species, life wants to continue living. In this way, the human being assumes the responsibility of life for being the only one capable of exercising it as a result of his rationality and, therefore, he holds great power, given that his actions directly impact the entire natural world.

The subject would achieve freedom by linking himself through feeling to the object, to what he is responsible for caring for:

Only the feeling of responsibility, which attaches this subject to that object, can make us act in its favor. This feeling, more than any other, is capable of producing in us the willingness to support the object's claim to existence through our actions (JONAS, 2011, p.163).

Resorting to feeling, considered as essential as reason, is an aspect that distances Jonas's thought from Kant's proposal for the foundation of ethics. While Kant confines the action to reason - more specifically to the moral law and its bearer, the subject -, Jonas expands it to reach, in the verification of responsibility, the essence of Being:

Like all ethical theories, a theory of responsibility must deal with both aspects: the rational foundation of duty, that is, the legitimizing principle that lies behind the claim of an imperative "ought", and the psychological foundation of the ability to act. to influence the will, that is, to be the cause of something, to allow your action to be determined by it. This means that ethics has an objective and a subjective aspect, the former dealing with reason and the latter with emotion. (JONAS, 2011, p.157)

In any case, for Jonas, the reason is not self-sufficient to achieve his purposes:

(...) In the imperative, however evident the truth may be, it cannot become effective if it does not find a sensitivity for its kind. The factual existence of feeling, presumably a universal human potential, is, therefore, the cardinal element of morality and, as such, already implicit in the "ought" (...). In any case, this gap between abstract sanction and concrete motivation can only be bridged by the arc of feeling, the only one capable of influencing the will (Idem).

Given the urgency of the situation, the feeling of responsibility, although committed to the future, already recognizes possible threats to human existence in the present. In the words of Jonas (2011, p. 70): "... in the search for an ethics of long-term responsibility, whose presence is not yet detected in the real plan, it helps us first of all to predict a deformation of man, that reveals to us what we want to preserve".

For this reason, the reasons that precede actions, actions, and their consequences must be the constant object of material and concrete evaluation by individuals, understood as individuals or as a community. Human beings must be able to mobilize their intellect to establish predictions about possible threats that are approaching with the unbridled development of technological civilization.

In this regard, the exercise of predictability requires individuals to have knowledge about what must be protected, which is why ethics in a way is directly related to knowledge, and moral action must be

conducted in a way that guarantees the maintenance of the existence of life. . Technological advances and the adverse effects experienced by humanity demonstrate precisely the distance between ethics and knowledge. In other words, Jonas intends to resume and demonstrate that human reason alone is insufficient to visualize all possible potentially negative variables.

At this point, Jonas develops the idea of the heuristic of fear as an immediate sustaining factor of long-term responsibility, able to recognize dangers and threats before carrying out an action that violates nature. The heuristic produces in individuals the duty to guide their current actions with a view to a still uncertain future. The author understands that in this way ethics will be able to adequately cover the advances of technological civilization before irreversible impacts are caused. By establishing a fear heuristic, Jonas intends to stimulate in each individual the need to recognize our responsibility for life, which calls for continuous and uninterrupted existence in all stages of existence. When approaching a threat or its possibility, reason must prevent us from continuing with irresponsible conduct.

3 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Our research motto allows us to identify the difficult task that Hans Jonas undertook when trying to establish new bases for contemporary ethics. For this, the author had to position himself in the face of the philosophical tradition, criticizing and reformulating the points he understood to be unsuitable for contemporary times.

In this regard, we stopped the criticisms directed at Kantian ethics, because Jonas intends to depart as a starting point for his ethics of the categorical imperative, which was proposed by Kant when laying the foundations for modern ethics. Kant's categorical imperative, although sufficient for the social transformations of modernity, receives scathing criticism from Jonas in contemporary times, since his guidelines are not enough to face the changes of our time, especially those promoted by technology.

Thus, Jonas begins his ethics through the categorical imperative but expands it to encompass the aspect that he considers most relevant and absent in Kant's proposal, namely: the protection of life. If Kant intended to centralize the subject as the rational center of moral action and through his reason, he would be able to identify the universality of action, on the other hand, such an ethical construction separates the subject from the nature in which he is inserted, as well as makes thinking about it unfeasible. of the consequences of action in a broad time horizon, an anthropocentric and temporally limited ethics was enough in modernity, however, as Jonas indicates, for today such ethical action is restricted and does not guarantee the uncontested preservation of life, the maximum object to be preserved in the new moral action proposed by him.

In this wake, life receives a differentiated treatment, crossing the formal limits of Kantian ethics, this is because, for Jonas, life perennially demands its existence and should not be put at risk under any circumstances. For this, it is essential not to stick only to the logical aspects of ethics, but also to consider

material issues, which are responsible for affecting sentimental aspects of the subject, and responsible for concretely directing the action.

It appears that in Jonas feeling and reason are two aspects of ethical action capable of promoting the protection of life, this denotes an ontological aspect of Jonas's ethics, if human beings are capable of acting responsibly, they must do since it was nature that led him to this level of existence, which is impelled to maintain the preservation and continuation of life.

In this sense, it is observed that Jonas is a philosopher of life, his new categorical imperative represents this need, for this, he seeks to demonstrate the importance of exercising rational prediction with his heuristic of fear, since the human being is aware of the long-term consequences of their conduct and aware of the possible harmful effects that their actions can trigger should be unable to pursue destructive goals that could put their and other species' lives at risk.

Finally, it appears that Jonas intends to centralize the new issues that contemporaneity has brought, the unbridled technological evolution must find a sufficient ethical framework to be questioned and conducted so that the human being is responsible and guarantees the preservation of life. His new horizons of ethics are pretentious, however, necessary due to the pertinence of overcoming anthropocentric actions, fixed in the present and indifferent to nature. The human being is an element of nature, a complex being that must be aware of this to preserve natural life in all its elements and not allow its extinction.

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