

Fear, Imagination, and Judgment in Hans Jonas and Aristotle
Magnus Ferguson, Ph.D.
The University of Chicago

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Abstract: In *The Imperative of Responsibility* Hans Jonas argues that 20th- and 21st-century citizens have a duty to fear for the existence and condition of far-future generations, but he does not provide a robust theory of emotion and judgment by which to further refine that claim. This paper supplements Jonas' strong normative claim with an Aristotelian account of fear and *phantasia* in order to reinterpret Jonas' so-called 'heuristics of fear' as a hermeneutical theory of political imagination. Aristotle's comments on the interplay between emotion, imagination, and judgment in the *Rhetoric* and *Nicomachean Ethics* allow us to interpret Jonas' duty to fear as a duty to undertake judgment in anticipation of future persons – that is, with the proper *phantasmatos* (objects of the imagination) in place. To fear for the condition of future generations is to admit them into one's moral imagination, thereby shifting the grounds of moral and political judgment. Understood in this way, Jonas' heuristics of fear is a largely untapped resource for debates over emotion and imagination in philosophical hermeneutics and moral psychology.

Keywords: fear; imagination; judgment; Hans Jonas; Aristotle; emotion

I. Introduction

Outside of Germany Hans Jonas is less of a 'household name' than the company that he kept, an impressive 'who's who' of friends, fellow students, and intellectuals from Freiburg and Marburg including Hannah Arendt, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Leo Strauss, and Karl Löwith. It is hard to imagine a more striking pedigree than studying directly under Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, and Rudolph Bultmann, nor a darker milieu in the background of one's studies than the upswell of anti-Semitism and fascism in the interwar period. In 1934 – the year after Hitler's appointment as Chancellor of Germany, as well as Heidegger's public embrace of the Nazi party – Jonas relocated to Palestine, famously vowing that he would not return to Germany except as a member of a conquering army. Almost unbelievably, he went on to do precisely that in 1945 as a soldier in the British Army's Jewish Brigade. After the war Jonas eventually made his way to the New School for Social Research in New York, where he spent the rest of his career and life. Originally a scholar of early Christian Gnosticism, his focus steadily shifted away from antiquity and towards what he saw as pressing issues in ethics, biology, and technology. He came to believe that "ontology necessarily entails a doctrine of obligation," and in his later life he took on the role of a practical philosopher as a founding member of the Hastings Center (among the first bioethics institutes in America) and a public commentator on environmental ethics and medical ethics (Jonas 2008, 201–2).

This practical orientation is nowhere more apparent than in Jonas' most well-known work, *The Imperative of Responsibility*, which will be the focus of my comments today. In 1979, the year that *The Imperative of Responsibility* was published, Hans-Georg Gadamer wrote a letter to Jonas: "Dear Herr Jonas, I am writing to identify myself as a grateful reader of your book. ...

Your work has made it clear to me that these days Aristotle has been becoming increasingly important for us” (2008, 204). Jonas later confessed that this praise puzzled him: “Although Aristotle didn’t play much of a role in my thinking... there was little I could do keep myself from being classified as a neo-Aristotelian. I wouldn’t have classified myself that way, but it’s hard to defend yourself against others’ views. At any rate, I wasn’t in bad company” (2008, 204). Over his objections, several scholars have noted clear indications of Jonas’ “Aristotelian pedigree” in his views on theoretical reason (Dinneen 2014, 16) and the “co-constitution between being and purpose” (Chernilo 2017, 116.n4). My goal in this paper is to identify another notable Aristotelian thread in the theory of political imagination that undergirds *The Imperative of Responsibility*. I will argue that reading Jonas’ ‘heuristics of fear’ through Aristotle’s moral psychology yields a distinctive hermeneutics of emotion at work in *The Imperative of Responsibility*.

I will pursue this argument in two steps. First, I will reconstruct Jonas’ central claims about the moral and political significance of fear that underpin his theory of responsibility; and second, I will develop a hermeneutical reading of Jonas by way of Aristotle’s comments on *phantasia* and *phobos*, focusing especially on the interplay between emotion, imagination, and judgment in Aristotle’s moral psychology. The *Rhetoric*, in particular, helps make better sense of Jonas’ most provocative assertion that we all share a moral duty to feel a “spiritual sort of fear” for the well-being of future generations (Jonas 1985, 28). This controversial duty to fear can be read as a hermeneutical duty to undertake judgment in anticipation of future persons. On this interpretation, fear enables us to see ourselves as sharing a world with future beings, thereby shifting the grounds of our moral and political judgments.

II. A Brief Note on the Many Normativities of Emotion

Before turning to Jonas’ account, it is worth mapping some of the discrete kinds of normative claims that are often made regarding the emotions. Consider, for example, the assertion, “You should/should not feel fear.” By this, one might mean several things: (1) that insofar as emotions arise out of and alongside evaluations and beliefs that can be true or false, your fear does/does not ‘match’ its object in kind, shape, size, and/or intensity; (2) that insofar as emotions are goal-oriented, your fear does/does not bring you closer to your practical ends; or (3) that insofar as emotions express something of one’s habits, dispositions, and values, your fear is/is not symptomatic of a virtuous or vicious character. This is far from an exhaustive list, but it conveys something of the different kinds of considerations underlying claims about whether one ‘ought’ to feel a particular emotion.

But now consider another possible meaning: simply (4) that one ought/ought not to undergo fear. On the face of it, this is a strange kind of claim to make. What does it mean to say that one ‘ought’ to undergo an emotion, as if by willful effort? The objection naturally arises that emotions are not typically thought to be straightforwardly under our control, and ‘ought’ is typically held to imply ‘can.’ Surely, one might say, (4) is too strong, and we should revert formulations like (4) into formulations like (3), clarifying that one ought to cultivate a *disposition* towards feeling certain emotions.

Now, which of these registers of normativity does Jonas have in mind when he states (boldly) that “we are obliged to lay ourselves open to the appropriate fear” for the condition of future generations, and this fear ought to be cultivated through a “deliberate attitude” (1985, 28)? A case can be made for each. Jonas will claim that fear is a *fitting* response to the slow-moving

apocalypse of modernity; that fear is an *appropriate* response in our historical epoch; that we should make room for fear in our moral *dispositions*; and also that we ought to *feel* – that is, undergo the experience of – a particular form of fear. Motivating this latter claim will involve following Gadamer’s intuition by looking to Aristotle.

III. The Heuristics of Fear

Let us now reconstruct some of the key features of Jonas’ argument, before again returning to the question of how to read the normativity of his claim that we ‘ought’ to feel fear.

The Imperative of Responsibility argues that the exponential growth of human power has rendered key premises of classical ethics obsolete. Neither Aristotle nor Kant, Jonas suggests, could have predicted that we would one day have the power to destroy all life on earth. Nor were they faced with the material conditions and harsh lessons of the 20th-century, and especially the insight that cumulative evil is often disproportionate to the individual vices and wrongdoings that precipitate it. In times past we could get by with ethical principles that focus on a relatively short-term context: “The short arm of human power did not call for a long arm of predictive knowledge. ... [But] all this has decisively changed. Modern technology has introduced actions of such novel scale, objects, and consequences that the framework of former ethics can no longer contain them” (1985, 6). For Jonas, our power to act has outstripped our ability and inclination to foresee and judge, and 20th-century technological and structural developments have rendered local considerations insufficient for grounding informed judgment. Accordingly, Jonas attempts to lay the groundwork for a new ethics of “long-range responsibility, coextensive with the range of [20th-century human] power” (1985, 22). Central to this project is the challenge of confronting entrenched habits of disregard for the far future ramifications of our actions and lifestyles. We not only need to construct an ethics that takes the far future into account, but also undergo an affective transformation of self by which the scope of our concern can vie with the scope of our power.

Jonas undergirds his future-oriented ethics with a distinctive theory of moral emotion. For Jonas, ethics has two faces: on the one side there is what he calls the “objective” question of “the rational ground of obligation” and the “validating principle behind the claim to a binding ‘ought’”; and on the other side there is the “subjective” or “psychological” question of how it is that the ‘ought’ actually moves the will, or how an agent “let[s] it determine [her] course of action” (1985, 85). Both faces are “mutually complementary” and “integral to ethics itself,” since “without our being, at least by disposition, responsive to the call of duty in terms of feelings, the most cogent demonstration of its right... would be powerless to make it a motivating force” (1985, 85). Affective receptivity, then, mediates between the moral law and the will. As Jonas puts it, “the gap between abstract validation and concrete motivation must be bridged by the arc of sentiment, which alone can sway the will” (1985, 86). The force of an ‘ought’ hinges upon the successful activation of moral feeling by which the will takes responsibility upon itself. On this picture, action requires *feeling* the weight of ethical claims that we can otherwise only abstractly and syllogistically approximate. Such feelings arise not in contemplation, or as Kantian bell chimes of reverence when reason adheres to universalizable maxims, but only in concrete encounters with objects and persons.

This means that we have a problem. We need to take responsibility for far-reaching human actions or else risk extinction; but our moral feelings (which, for Jonas, are a key piece in motivating ethical action) are not sensitive to future persons with whom we do not share the

earth, and who can only hold rights speculatively. Alongside the ‘objective’ question of our duties to these persons, we must confront the ‘subjective’ question of becoming affectively receptive to those duties by undergoing what Jonas calls a ‘sentimental education.’

But why does Jonas choose *fear* as the centerpiece of his theory of political responsibility? One answer is to be found in the notable epistemic and conative effects of fear. “[T]he perception of the *malum*,” Jonas writes, “is infinitely easier to us than the perception of the *bonum*; it is more direct, more compelling, less given to differences of opinion or taste, and, most of all, obtruding itself without our looking for it” (1985, 27). Fear draws our attention viscerally to the object that occasions it, and makes action urgent and unavoidable. Evoking a parent’s fear for their child’s safety, Jonas argues that pleasurable objects (and here we might also include utopian projections) make less of an immediate claim upon our will than do objects of visceral fear. This is not to say that we should only listen to our fears, but rather that the will is especially attuned to fear. In Jonas’ words: “[W]hat is most feared is not necessarily what most deserves to be feared, and still less so is its opposite the thing most deserving our desire.... [T]he heuristics of fear is surely not the last word in the search for goodness, [but] it is at least an extremely useful first word and should be used to the full of its helpfulness” (1985, 27).

It is worth pausing for a moment on this phrase, the ‘heuristics of fear.’ One meaning of the word ‘heuristic’ is a shortcut for decision-making that sacrifices accuracy for speed. Such a device would be most useful when we need to make decisions quickly, such that we give ourselves over to “the revulsion of feeling which acts ahead of knowledge” (1985, 27). But we might also consider the ancestor of ‘heuristic,’ the Greek *heuriskein*, which refers to the act of discovery. It is in this sense that the Greeks often traced specific arts and techniques back to their *protos heuretês*, or ‘first discoverer,’ as in the attribution of the art of rhetoric to Hermes or Homer. (Pernot 2005, 10–12) A heuristics of fear is, in at least one reading of the genitive, a discovery by way of fear, or a kind of revelatory affect. When Jonas claims that “moral philosophy must consult our fears prior to our wishes to learn what we really cherish,” he appears to have this disclosive power in mind (1985, 27).

To conclude this brief reconstruction of Jonas’ position, let us tie these threads – a diagnosis of modernity, a theory of moral motivation, a notion of fear as a heuristic – together into the jarring claim that we have a duty to feel fear. Recall that for Jonas the evil that faces us today is the prospect of human extinction, and with it the death of the very possibility of the ethical. He argues that the prevailing Baconian paradigm of power over nature threatens economic and biological catastrophes through resource scarcity. It is not the looming Cold War specter of atomic destruction that poses the greatest threat to the survival of humanity, he thinks, but rather “the nature of the unintended dynamics of technical civilization as such, inherent in its structure, whereto it drifts willy-nilly and with exponential acceleration: the apocalypse of the ‘too much,’ with exhaustion, pollution, desolation of the planet” (1985, 202). Averting this “slow incremental” apocalypse will require “a revocation of the whole life-style, even of the very principle of the advanced industrial societies,” and “thus will be much more difficult than the prevention of nuclear destruction” (1985, 202).

Jonas demands that we confront the fact that most of us in our day-to-day lives do *not* fear the slow-moving apocalypse. One can reach for any number of explanations for this absence of fear: alienation, structural obfuscation, a tradition of ethical nearsightedness, interest, the death drive, and so on. But whatever the cause, it emerges that in the face of the greatest possible threat, the “first word” of fear does not arise on its own (1985, 27). It is for this reason, that “it becomes our duty to seek [fear] out by an effort of reason and imagination, so that it can instill in

us the fear whose guidance we need” (1985, 27). In the place of the near, contemporary *malum*, we must summon “the creatively imagined *malum*” that is “intentionally induced” (1985, 27). This summoning of fear and its object through the imagination is, for Jonas, “the first... introductory duty” of ethics in our time. It consists of a “sensitizing of our feeling to this kind of stimulus” (1985, 28). In so doing we grant far-future generations a kind of nearness and contemporaneity in the imagination, or a “fictive contemporaneity” (1985, 42) by which the precarity of their existence and conditions of life incites moral feelings that bind our will to our duties. By training ourselves to anticipate the plight of future generations, we admit future persons into the present as potential objects of our moral emotions and, subsequently, our moral duties.

IV. Emotion, Imagination, and Judgment in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*

In what sense ‘ought’ we to feel this fear? For reasons of time, I will simply state without additional argument that Jonas’ endorses both the (1) fittingness and (2) appropriateness of fear: the facts of the matter warrant a “trembling concern for [human] vulnerability” (1985, 201); and beyond questions of evaluation, Jonas also advocates for the expedience of fear, especially in comparison to what he sees as the hollow allure of utopian hope.

As for the (3) aretaic and (4) bluntly normative kinds of ‘ought,’ Jonas does indeed affirm that that we have a duty to cultivate a sensitivity to fear and that we have a duty to undergo that fear, though he does not himself provide a robust theory of virtue, emotion, or judgment by which we might further refine these claims. But, taking a cue from Gadamer’s interpretive instinct, we can better motivate Jonas’ assertion with an Aristotelian theory of emotion and judgment. To be clear, this turn to Aristotle is not an exercise in uncovering Jonas’ explicit inspiration (which he openly denies), but rather an attempt to render his aretaic and bluntly normative claims about fear more plausible in the light of Aristotle’s moral psychology.

Aristotle offers his most substantive treatment of the emotions (*pathē*) in the *Rhetoric*, in which two distinct lines of inquiry about the emotions are discernible. Book I reconstructs how *pathē* are commonly said to precipitate wrongdoing in the context of crafting juridical speech, including a lengthy discussion of passionate desire (*epithumia*) that hews closely to a Platonic account. Separately, Book II takes up the question of how an orator might elicit emotions in order to sway an audience’s judgment (“[f]or things do not appear the same [*ou gar tauta phainetai*] to those who love and those who hate, nor to those who are angry and those who are mild-mannered” (Rh.II.1.1377b30), and thus opens larger questions about how emotions modulate judgment.¹

It is primarily in this latter context that Aristotle steps beyond his teacher’s apparent view that emotions are mixtures of pleasure and pain by introducing two additional features to their definition: first, that emotions are generally “those things due to which people, by undergoing a change, differ in their judgment” (Rh.II.1.1378a21); and second, that (at least the majority of) the emotions consist of or are elicited by *phantasia*, the faculty of imagination. For Aristotle,

¹ Many commentators emphasize that Aristotle’s comments in the *Rhetoric* do not offer a systematic psychological account, and in many sections he merely presents *endoxa* without criticism. But for Nussbaum, for example, “the material on emotion is not similarly circumscribed. For Aristotle’s project in these chapters is to enable the aspiring orator to produce these emotions in an audience (*empoiēin*). For this to succeed, he needs to know what fear and anger really are, not just what people think they are” (Nussbaum 1996, 305). See Cooper (1996) for additional commentary on the framing of the text.

phantasia is “a sort of weak perception” (Rh.I.11.1370a27–35); or, as he puts it in *De Anima*, “a movement that comes about as a result of the activity of perception. And since sight is perception to the highest degree, imagination [*phantasia*] derives its name from light [*phaos*], because without light it is impossible to see” (DA.III.3.429a1–8). Unlike perception [*aisthēsis*], however, *phantasia* can activate in the absence of objects of sensation,² and is at least partially “up to us” in the sense that we can summon it at will (DA.3.427b15–21).³

The connection between *phantasia* and emotion is especially prominent in Aristotle’s treatment of *phobos*, to which he devotes an entire section of Book II. There, fear is defined as “a sort of pain or disturbance coming from the appearance [*phantasias*] of a future destructive or painful evil” (Rh.II.5.1382a20).⁴ More specifically, fear is an anticipatory emotion that involves “a certain expectation [*prosdokias*] of undergoing some destructive suffering” (Rh.II.5.1382b29). Compare this with the *endoxa* in the *Nicomachean Ethics*: “[P]eople also define fear as anticipation [*prosdokian*] of a bad thing” (NE.III.6.1115a9). While both texts affirm that expectation is integral to fear, the *Rhetoric* clarifies that *prosdokias* is a form of imaginative perception: “[S]ome sort of imagination of what he remembers or expects always follows along with the perception in the person expecting or remembering” (Rh.I.11.1370a27–35). What is perceived in a state of fear is the terrible *phantasmata*, or object of the imagination, towards which we are anticipatorily oriented with what Martha Nussbaum describes as a “rich intentional awareness” (Nussbaum 1996, 308).

Importantly, Aristotle notes that fearful expectation confers a kind of contemporaneity and nearness to its object. The experience of fear transforms our perception such that its object “appear[s] not far off but close at hand, and so about to happen. For people do not fear what is very far off” (Rh.II.5.1382a22–5). The fearful object looms over us, seemingly nearer in space and time than it would otherwise appear. Aristotle’s claim here is not only that we tend to fear what is proximate (which, for Aristotle, explains the absence of fear for far-off, temporally distant, or unlikely events), but also that fear *shifts the perception* of its objects so that its *phantasmatos* appear near and urgent.⁵ This takes us beyond a definition of fear as merely an evaluative reaction of pain in response to dreadful perceptions, and towards an account of fear as a modulating force over perception and pre-understanding. The anticipatory, imaginative attitude of fear draws its objects closer to the here and now. It is this function that allows Aristotle to claim in the *Politics* that “those who are concerned about their constitution should excite fears and make faraway dangers seem close at hand, so that the citizens will defend the constitution and, like sentries on night-duty, never relax their guard” (P.V.8.1308a25).

Because fear makes faraway possibilities felt in the present, it also has notable conative effects – namely, for Aristotle, “[f]ear makes people inclined to deliberate” (Rh.II.5.1383a5). Dreadful possibilities rush towards us when we are in fear, motivating urgent and focused practical deliberation. To be sure, this emotional pressure to quickly form judgments and act does not always yield good results. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle warns that heightened

² As Avshalom M. Scharz describes this advantage, “while the senses are always of the present and immediate, *phantasia* can represent remote and absent objects” (Schwartz 2022, 3).

³ This last point leads Rorty to wonder: “Is there some connection between the latitude of *phantasia* and the way that we – or at any rate some of us – are responsible for our actions?” (Rorty 1996, 32.f42).

⁴ Most of Aristotle’s analysis of fear implicitly concerns fear for one’s own being, though this does not prevent applying his account to instances in which one fears for others. See also Aristotle’s comments on pity, which he analyzes in terms of fear. (Rh.II.8)

⁵ Like other *pathē*, fear has what Amélie Rorty calls “double-entry bookkeeping” in that it is “identified by a conjunction of physical and psychological changes that themselves generate further changes” (Rorty 1996, 15).

emotions can lead to misperceptions and misguided actions, likening the excessively spirited to “swift servants who run off before they hear what is said in its entirety and then err in carrying out the command” and “dogs [who] bark if there is merely a knock at the door, before examining whether it is a friend” (NE.VII.6.1149a26–30). In such cases, we “hear reason in some way, but [also] mishear it” (NE.VII.6.1149a27); or, as Leighton parses it, the servant “hears the object *per se*, the sound, but through his or her emotion he or she is expecting something, and does not hear (does not put together) the object *per accidens*, the order issued” (Leighton 1996, 215). An ‘overactive imagination,’ in other words, can yield poor perception, deliberation, and action.

Elsewhere, however, Aristotle argues that emotions can also correct one’s perception and practical deliberation, and, in Rorty’s words, that “*phantasiai* can indicate properties that objects really have” (Rorty 1996, 19). After all, the wise orator evokes those emotions and *phantasmatos* that will prime their audience to form right judgments, just as the sophistical orator manipulates emotions for private ends. A key premise of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is that emotional perception is not inherently distortive, since cultivating a disposition towards certain emotions is a necessary step for forming proper ethical judgments. As Gisela Striker puts it: “Since emotion will have an influence on how we see and judge people and their actions, the right kind of emotional disposition may be what enables us to see things in the right moral perspective” (Striker 1996, 298).

More to the point, Aristotle openly endorses the idea that we can (and ought to) habituate ourselves towards feeling or not feeling fear, and that doing so brings us closer to truth. This is perhaps most apparent in his discussion of the recklessness of the person “who generally fears nothing” (NE.II.2.1104a20). In the *Rhetoric* Aristotle notes that vicious fearlessness is typically found in those who “are, or seem to themselves to be, in the midst of great prosperity; that is why they are wantonly aggressive, contemptuous, and rash (and what makes them such is wealth, strength, many friends, and [great] capacity)” (Rh.II.5.1383a1). Such persons ‘ought’ to fear – that is, *experience* fear – more than they do. In this way, fear can find its place alongside those other “appropriate responses [that] are intrinsically valuable parts of good character and can, like good intellectual responses, help to constitute the refined ‘perception’ which is the best sort of human judgment” (Nussbaum 2001, 390).

We now have the basic contours of how an Aristotelian might expand upon the (3) aretaic claim that one ought to, in Jonas’ words, cultivate an “emotional readiness” towards fear “by purposely making room for it in our disposition” (1985, 28). Emotional readiness to fear for far-future generations, we might say, evinces that virtuous character by which the scope of one’s moral concerns matches the scope of one’s actions.

Furthermore, Aristotle’s account of fear as anticipatory *phantasia* renders a (4) bluntly normative reading of Jonas’ claim more plausible. Aristotle, as we have seen, understands fear to be a movement of anticipatory, imaginative perception that alters judgment. To say that we ‘ought’ to fear, by this account, is to say that we ought to equip our judgment with the right *phantasmatos*, and that the absence of those *phantasmatos* undermines moral deliberation. To fear for the condition of future generations is to admit them into one’s moral perspective, which is (according to Jonas) falsely constricted in our time. Like Aristotle’s reckless man who is less fearful than he ought to be, our perception is crowded by apparent prosperity and power over nature, such that the far-future inheritors of our way of life do not often appear to us. To fear is to affectively enact an imaginative, anticipatory counter-ideology by which our inheritors make an appearance. In short, to claim that we ‘ought’ to feel fear – what originally sounds like an outlandish sort of normative claim – is to claim that moral deliberation over political

responsibility in this epoch will always be deficient if we undertake it in the absence of the *phantasmatos* of far-future generations. A bluntly normative reading of Jonas' heuristics of fear thus upholds Aristotle's claim in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that "some things one even ought to fear, and it is noble to do so and shameful not to" (NE.III.6.1115a13).

V. Conclusion

For Jonas, our predicament goes beyond the specter of nuclear destruction or environmental degradation. We are in a hermeneutical predicament: we lack the phantasmic presence of future persons by which we can make moral judgments regarding our ways of life. Activating our will requires an act of imaginative hospitality that admits future humans to the present as right-bearing. Aristotle's *Rhetoric* allows us to foreground this hermeneutical dimension of Jonas' project: we ought to feel fear because (under certain ideological and material conditions) thorough political judgment can only be undertaken from a fearful, imaginative, anticipatory forestructure. To cite the *Politics* again, we need to "excite [our] fears and make faraway dangers seem close at hand" (P.V.8.1308a25). Although Jonas did not take himself to be developing an Aristotelian project, Gadamer's suggestion that Jonas' work speaks to the relevance of Aristotle helps uncover a theory of political imagination to complement Jonas' diagnosis of modernity.

Let me conclude by raising a few open questions about Jonas' heuristics of fear, which invites scrutiny from numerous angles that I have not fully addressed here.

First: Does Jonas overestimate the indispensability of the emotions for moral action? Are there other pathways by which we can achieve an enlarged mentality in which future generations appear to us as reason-giving persons? Must we be fearful to admit future persons into our moral calculus?

Second: What are the dangers of a heuristics of fear as a political principle? What of resentment, sectarianism, stubborn denial, and conspiracy-minded dismissals of the slow-moving apocalypse? What is the affective burden of carrying this fear, both individually and collectively, and who should carry it? Perhaps most ominously, might a heuristics of fear ultimately tempt, as Richard Wolin charges, "authoritarian solutions" when we "try to translate this standpoint into a viable political program" (Wolin 2008, 13)?⁶

Third: If we accept that we have a duty to feel this fear and cultivate it in ourselves, do we also have a duty to inculcate it in others? If so, how are we to do so? By argument, or education, or example? Or is it by fiction and art, and storytelling and particularly tragedy, which Martha Nussbaum has argued "contributes to human self-understanding precisely through its exploration of the pitiable and the fearful" (Nussbaum 2001, 390)? If the fear that Jonas calls for can be generated by the art of tragedy, then perhaps Jonas' theory might find its place among other political interpreters of Kant's third critique, such as Adorno and Arendt, who locate the possibility of the ethical in an aesthetic attitude.⁷

⁶ Similarly, Kerry Whiteside claims that "ecoauthoritarianism follows from Jonas's reasoning about the nature of nature" (Whiteside 2006, 98-101). In contrast, Nathan Dinneen argues that by "making a case on behalf of the merits of authoritarianism in times of an ecological crisis, Jonas puts us on guard against enabling an extreme situation where the resort to such a regime becomes necessary" (Dinneen 2014, 17).

⁷ In future work, I hope to argue that Jonas can be interpreted to endorse a distinctively future-oriented form of 'enlarged mentality' (Arendt's translation of Kant's *erweiterte Denkungsart*)⁷ that admits future persons into the present by imaginatively granting them what Jonas calls "fictive contemporaneity" (1985, 42). For a thorough discussion of the idiosyncrasy of Arendt's translation and interpretation of *erweiterte Denkungsart*, see Wester (2018), "Reading Kant against Himself: Arendt and the Appropriation of Enlarged Mentality."

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