

Responsibility for Future Plurality Acceptance of ‘Natality’ in Hans Jonas

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The purpose of this paper is to clarify the dimension of plurality of Hans Jonas’s intergenerational ethics. While it is well known that Jonas points the responsibility to the future generation in his main work *The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age*, there has been little discussion about that the responsibility has a perspective of the future plurality. This paper focusses a key concept ‘natality’ for investigation of such dimension. Jonas quotes the concept from Hannah Arendt who is a Jewish German philosopher of political theory. In *vita activa*, her main work, she categorizes human activity into ‘action’, ‘work’ and ‘labor’ and relates them with ‘natality’ and ‘mortality’. In her theory, natality means a human nature that all people are born as a new comer and therefore can make a new action for the politics and the public affairs. Jonas defends this idea and applies it to his theory of the intergenerational ethics. Jonas argues that the responsibility for future must be formulated as not only the physical survive of the mankind but also continuing to open the possibility for new actions. According him, such responsibility should be fulfilled by protecting the natality. In order to analyze this demonstration, this paper explores the relation between Jonas and Arendt and his interpretation of the concept of natality. As a conclusion, this paper clarifies the public dimension of Jonas’s theory and thereby indicates a clue for discussion about the responsibility to the future.