**‚Vergangenheit und Wahrheit‘ – Some Reflections on Jonas‘ Contribution to Debating the Philosophical Proof of God’s Existence.**

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It is widely known that Hans Jonas, in various stages of his intellectual career, contributed to the historical as well as philosophical debate on concepts of the Devine or God. To be mentioned are of course his writings about the Gnosis of his Essay “Der Gottesbegriff nach Auschwitz”. Among his considerations of the Idea of God we also find reflections on the perennial philosophical debate on proving God’s existence. Although his we find traces of these reflections in different writings like his ‘Phenomenon of Life’ or ‘Materie, Geist und Schöpfung’, where not merely concepts of God but also the possibility and reasonability of his existence are discussed. In my presentation I will, however, focus on the perhaps most significant article that Jonas devoted to this topic, namely ‘Vergangenheit und Wahrheit’, first published in 1990, which he himself, however, refused to present a proof in the strict sense.

I will begin with presenting some broader considerations on the philosophical significance of attempts to prove God’s exitance particularly in the field of epistemology and metaphysics and briefly discuss the typology of theses proofs (as ontological, cosmological, teleological etc.). I will then present the line of argument of Jonas’s own ‘proof’, in which he roughly argues as follows: If we maintain the possibility of *the presence of past things/events* as by-gone entities, that is to say as compatible with belonging to the past and being real and without turning the notion of time into a mere illusion, we have to assume their mental (intentional) presence, contained in a real as well as eternal memory which includes all contingent, finite and individual entities of the past. I will then situate this argument on the one hand into the context of his writings and on the other into the typology of proofs for god’s existence. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the reception of Jonas’ argument, particularly the modulations and extensions developed by Robert Speamann and some major objections toward the argument, that have been raised by others. Finally I will reflect upon the value of Jonas contribution to the debate with regard to some contemporary systematic discussions on ontology and realism.