UDK: 305-055.3
DOI https://doi.org/10.2298/FID2603421Q
Original Scientific Article
Received 29.12.2025. Accepted 25.8.2026.

PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIETY
VOL. 37, NO. 3, 405–700

To cite text:
Quell, Philipp. 2026. "Critical Possibilization: An Essay Towards the Grounding of Not-Yet Determined Futures." *Philosophy and Society* 37 (3): 421–446.

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CRITICAL POSSIBILIZATION: AN ESSAY TOWARDS THE GROUNDING OF NOT-YET DETERMINED FUTURES

ABSTRACT
This paper intervenes in a central tension within queer theory between antisocial refusals of futurity (Edelman) and utopian, relational horizons of the "not yet" (Muñoz, Ahmed). It proposes an inbetween position grounded in a phenomenologically rereading of the *Critique of Pure Reason*: queer futurity becomes neither a negation of future nor a guaranteed utopia, but a practice of "critical possibilization." First, building on Muñoz's concept of trace and Ahmed's concept of orientation, I argue that traces and orientations must be "met halfway": neither idealist projections nor merely given, they demand reflective, embodied modification. Second, I reconstruct the *Critique's* framework as beginning from the duality of sensibility and understanding and resolving their mediation through imagination's preconscious, synthesizing activity already operative in perception. Recasting the *Critique's* theoretical tools as amounting to an "originary acquisition" of both the evidential force and the actual taking shape of the a priori shows how the a priori exhibits, in practice, a realization of notyet possibilities – what I term the transhistorical, quasitranscendental character of the a priori based on a plastic structure of experience. Third, I diagnose a "straightening" tendency in the *Critique*, even as historical and conceptual factors queer this trajectory, revealing a third, indispensable yet not fully thematizable place of imagination, judgment and reflective feelings. Fourth, I reframe experience as a possibilizing structure animated by a drive "hunting for meaningful units" (Zhok 2016), Finally, through Kant's deployment of the "focus imaginarius", I show how critical metaphysics institutes an imaginary point within the real, freeing experience from strict (physical) determination and cause as well as opening a space of "determinable indeterminacy" within experience. "Critical possibilization" names this disciplined, felt, and embodied mode of realizing notyet possibilities: concepts are quasia priori invitations to engagement that can become futures without being fixed by them. This modest middle path aims to enable theoretical work at the edge of emergent possibilities while remaining faithful to contextual as well as historical conditions and the productive character of individual acts.

KEYWORDS
possibilization; quasi-transcendentality; queer futurity; Kant; productive imagination

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§ 1: Introduction

Within queer theory, two prominent orientations toward the possibilities of queerness have emerged, each implying a different understanding of "queer." On one side, the antisocial (or antirelational) thesis advances arguments that refuse the obligation of queer politics to sustain futurity, repair, or the smooth functioning of existing social and experiential orders. It affirms negativity and structural rupture as constitutively queer (Bersani 1996; Edelman 2004). On the other side, the utopian (or relational) thesis emphasizes that queer phenomena are conditioned by – and work through – extant social structures;[1] consequently, queerness must also be conceived as opening utopian horizons for "another world" rather than refusing futurist narratives. Muñoz frames this horizon as a "not yet" of possibilities immanent to the present that require a different, queer orientation to become sensible and actionable (Muñoz 2009). As Halberstam and Freeman suggest, such an account entails a reworking of time: linear, progressive, reproductive chronologies must be supplemented – and sometimes interrupted – by non-linear recursions and temporal drags that can explain how possibilities come to appear through returns, delays, and rebindings of past and present (Freeman 2010; Halberstram 2005).

Here, representation does not name mere reproduction of what has been, but, in line with phenomenological "presentification," a modification of the given. Remembering and looking back are conceived as acts that realize what was only "vaguely" prescribed within the given present (Brudzińska 2019; Micali 2008). Drawing on this, Sara Ahmed describes how experiential "lines" can be ruptured by altering how we inhabit and re-present the past and the given (Ahmed 2006).

Thus, the utopian thesis conceives queerness as "another institution" of the world. From an antisocial perspective, however, any institution and any project of re-presentation risks being unfaithful to its queerness: the generalization of a particular experience into a law or value for another future misrecognizes the "obliquity of relation" and the "vicissitudes" of individual experience that straight orders aim to negate (Edelman 2004: 5f.).

Edelman's perspective stems from a psychoanalytic – more precisely, Lacanian – account of subjectivity and experience. Here, the individual is primordially situated within a pre-subjective and unruly imaginary grounded in instinctual structures. Through the symbolic – a sedimented structure not only of language but also of institutions, social codes, etc. – the individual is subjectivized, and imaginary experience becomes structured by the symbolic as the Other of the individual. As the Other inaugurates the subject of experience, the "laws" of experience do not stem from the pre-subjective individual but from the (symbolic) Other. Thus, subjectivation is characterized by the

1 Phenomenologically speaking, queer phenomena are "phenomena of negativity," that is, as Michael Staudigl explains, we are confronted with experiences in which the constitution of sense is ruptured (Staudigl 2015).

experience of an original lack and, conversely, this pre-subjective, instinctual, i.e., affective life becomes the other within the ordered world of subjective experience. Lacan names this "jouissance" – translated as "enjoyment" (Lacan 1998) – which amounts, as Edelman argues, to a ceaseless "surplus" of desire with regard to the symbolic order of the social, since affective life is by definition the other of the symbolic order, a retroactively emerging other of the Other. "Queerness, therefore, is never a matter of being or becoming but, rather, of embodying the remainder of the Real internal to the Symbolic order" (Edelman 2004: 25). For this reason, no symbolically instituted future is able to give rise to this "other jouissance" (Lacan 1977, 1992).

In what follows, I develop an inbetween position between antisocial refusal and utopian futurity. It recognizes a futural impulse immanent to queer expression, even as it insists on the risk of co-optation by the existing symbolic order's rules and categories. For this, I offer a phenomenological rereading of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and claim that:

(i) the basis of the *Critique* can be characterized as a straight space of thought queered by the theoretical encounter with Hume's empiricism.

(ii) the *Critique*'s conceptual framework acknowledges this queerness by introducing a novel conception of imagination, yet ultimately attempts to straighten this space.

(iii) the a priori forms, categories, and regulative ideas articulated in the *Critique's* Analytic and Dialectic – though presented as objective conditions of possible experience (the transcendental) – can be read as transhistorical and quasi all along.

§ 2: Preliminary remark: From queer frames to a queer framework

Before elaborating my argument, I offer a preliminary remark to consolidate my framework. First, my re-reading is based on the relational thesis elaborated by Muñoz, supplemented by ideas of Sara Ahmed. Second, it is consolidated through a critique of the account of time and queered futurity entailed in Muñoz's conceptualization.

Muñoz refers to phenomenological time when he develops the implications of possibilities *in potentia*.[2] Besides the ordinary idea of the past as elapsed

2 I adopt this notion of possibilities *in potentia* from Marc Richir. He insistently recalls Husserl's *Ideas I* claim that "fiction is the vital element of phenomenology" (Husserl 1982: §70). On Richir's reading, the "infinite variations of phantasy" are possibilizing insofar as, in an instant, they seize upon the "infinite progression of phantasy variations": the variation "more or less knows what it must comply with, namely which congruence is adequate",=. Thus, indeterminacy in the given is conceived as an intertwining of the implicit and the explicit. In free phantasy's variation, representation engages virtuality – i.e., the *in potentia* givenness of vague horizonal prescriptions – as "zones of indeterminacy" within the given. These zones ground a manifold of possible events of sense (*Sinnereignisse*, in Richir's terms) (Richir 2011: 68ff.). In this context,

time, he describes a second past, a "no-longer-conscious" that subsists in the present through "traces." These traces can be revisited and help to open a horizon that deviates from the "ordinary" or "straight" course of time. Drawing on Heidegger, Muñoz calls this opening of an altered future "ecstatic." In this way, the ordinary here and now – since it entails traces of the past – bears a "surplus" of "queer futurity." Muñoz concludes: "Opening oneself up to such a perception of queerness as manifestation in and of ecstatic time offers queers much more than the meager offerings of pragmatic gay and lesbian politics" (Muñoz 2009: 32).

By this, Muñoz connects two strands: debates about efficacious queer practice and recent phenomenological discussions of time. Regarding the latter, it has been shown that there are two different versions of the past in phenomenology: the ordinary past and a past that has never been present (Brudzińska 2019). Phenomenology understands remembering and imagination as acts that re-present, but this re-presenting is itself a moment within the flow of time. Hence the problem: how can re-presentation presentify what is not present? The problem deepens with "free phantasy," in which something ideal – or at least something never actually perceived – is varied in a free play of imagining. As Stefano Micali explains: "On the one hand, it has the same internal structure as remembering, intentionally implying [a past experience]. On the other hand, this [experience] is only a pure possibility rather than a past experience that occurred in the common world" (Micali 2020).

In other words, traces and their re-presentability support the hypothesis that something queer or non-ordinary complements the ordinary course of things, even if unrecognized in everyday life. Queerness for Muñoz not only addresses different forms of (sexual) directedness but also recognizes the foreign in the familiar.

Sara Ahmed deepens Muñoz's idea. For her, orientation designates the primordial basis of individual experience and is rooted in the bodily inhabitation of a historically sedimented world. The intuitive awareness of differences within one's orientation does not result from an epistemological process but from the bodies inhabiting space. These sedimentations are expressed in certain lines of experience. Orientation consolidates by intuitively following these lines: "The body [and also thought] orients itself by lining itself up with the direction of the space it inhabits [...]" (Ahmed 2006: 13). All this results in a "lack of neutrality"; space is always oriented in a historically contingent way. According to Ahmed, lines in Western spaces (of thought) have the character of "straight lines" (ibid.:16).

"Queer moments" occur when an individual body cannot follow straight lines. The result is disorientation. When such a queer body subsequently wants

"virtuality" designates the dimension of vaguely prescribed possibilities of *possibilities in potentia* (virtual possibilities): not a separate ontological realm but the phenomenological field of determinable indeterminacy (*Vermöglichung*) that phantasy articulates and thereby modifies subjectivity as such (cf. Amalric 2025).

to set a direction for itself, it must bend the "straight lines," thereby modifying space and its lines. Attempts to prohibit or regulate these bent lines of queer bodies correspond to an effort "to straighten the line" (ibid.: 23).

Consequently, queer futurity not only results from the engagement with traces; it is already at work at the affective level, in bodies' resistance to adopting straight lines. This pinpoints a risk in Muñoz's conception. He grounds his realization of not-yet possibilities through traces in the principle of hope and identifies it as a form of "idealism." Although this idealism includes an "affective surplus," aligning with Ahmed one can say it underestimates the affective or bodily dimension; conversely, Ahmed's account can seem to overemphasize the bodily dimension, as if the queer body alone could foster a queer futurity.

A reflective supplementation thus seems necessary to transpose a trace into "queer futurity." Traces are not mere substrates for the reflective grasp of a queer idealism, nor are they simply ready to be used; they must be met halfway.[3]

Ad hoc, Edelman's radical rejection of futurity might seem a solution because it includes the affective and the symbolic. However, this leads to a different problem. The risk of the Other's influence can indeed be inhibited – but only at the price of degrading an individual being to a negative existence. Such a dwelling in negativity does not fulfill the needs of affective life. This is already evident in later Lacan. When he tries to develop trajectories that foreground a possible life of "other jouissance," he struggles to find a language that does not reestablish the symbolic (Lacan 1998). More importantly, he maintains that every isolation of this "other jouissance" leads to the total collapse of an individual psyche (Lacan 2018). Recently, a promising attempt to provide "other jouissance" with a livable existence is Barbara Cassin's conception of the sophist: "[I]t is a matter with him and for him of a discourse that acts more than it expresses, and not through persuasion but through performance: a logos-pharmakon with an effect on the other and a world-effect [...]". (Cassin 2020: 125) Here too, pure negativity must be integrated into social life and thus merges with the symbolic. In short, a negativity that discursively refuses any future at least implicitly solicits a discursive future for its utterance to be possible at all. It is ecstatic although it prefers not to be.

3 I adopt the phrase "meeting halfway" from Karen Barad. In her widely received *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, she argues that critique, reflective praxis, and discourse must acknowledge their own materiality and their transformative effects. She links this to a critique of the dominant understanding of the relation between language and materiality: "Language has been granted too much power. The linguistic turn, the semiotic turn, the interpretative turn, the cultural turn: it seems that at every turn lately every 'thing' – even materiality – is turned into a matter of language or some other form of cultural representation. The ubiquitous puns on 'matter' do not, alas, mark a rethinking of the key concepts (materiality and signification) and the relationship between them. Rather, they seem to be symptomatic of the extent to which matters of 'fact' (so to speak) have been replaced with matters of signification (no scare quotes here). Language matters. Discourse matters. Culture matters. There is an important sense in which the only thing that doesn't seem to matter anymore is matter" (Barad 2007: 132).

Based on this, my alternative is phenomenological. For phenomenology, every perception is not the apprehension of an isolated object; every perceived is adumbrated before a horizon. This horizon, as Husserl already claimed, is a "determinable indeterminacy," i.e., it bears possible determinations of the perceived (Husserl 1982: § 42). These possible determinations are not distinctly given; since they are only vaguely prescribed in the horizon, they appear as a certain "style." To transpose this "style" into actual possibilities requires complex operations, and recent research shows that these operations are not only realizations of subjective possibilities but also modifications of the subject itself.[4]

Consequently, the subject engaging its horizon does not remain unaffected. In this context, László Tengelyi redefined "experience": while "straight" experience (*Erlebnis*) perceives the world along its lines, "queering" experiences (*Erfahrung*) change the lines of experience and thereby, in principle, change the subject of experience (Tengelyi 2004, 2007). Thus, the engagement with "traces" must be conceived as "queering experiences" rather than "perceptions of queerness." The following reference to Kant applies this idea in the context of transcendental philosophy and aims to sketch a conceptual tablature. To recognize the conceptions of queerness provided here, I will use a minimal definition of "straight," "queer," and "straightening."

To conceptually consolidate this definition, I draw on Husserl's account of evidence, which distinguishes two dimensions: (i) degrees of intuitive fulfillment (adequate vs. inadequate) and (ii) the doxic modality of certainty (apodictic vs. nonapodictic). Adequacy names the limit case in which what is intended is given originarily and fully (paradigmatically in immanent experiences such as a heard tone). Inadequacy covers graded fulfillments: the experience of a thing remains necessarily inadequate because, at best, it is apprehended multisidedly but never allsidedly (Husserl 1982; III, §§8–10). By contrast, apodictic evidence is modal indubitability – an appearing "that could not be otherwise" (Ströker 1978). It is achieved, if at all, when what is experienced becomes the theme of a reflective, eidetic intuition. Not every reflection satisfies this condition: ordinary introspection in the natural attitude remains bound to historically sedimented horizons. Only the *epoché*, which opens the sphere of "absolute consciousness," secures the possibility of apodictic insight; here the phenomena are bracketed and can be subjected to free variation so that their essences are intuited, and – if successful – this intuition is accompanied by a feeling of indubitable certainty.

Without entering debates on eidetic intuition (*Wesensschau*),[5] this distinction illuminates the working senses of "queer" and "straight". Beyond its epistemic

4 Bernhard Rang further elaborated this in his *Kausalität und Motivation* (Rang 1973). Recently works of Michela Summa or Emmanuele Caminada have further investigated theseideas (Caminada 2024; Summa, Spano, and Schmidt 2024).

5 Husserl's idea is strongly connected with his project of transcendental phenomenology and his understanding of how the a priori of experience is elicited. Indeed, one line of argumentation within the recent discussion of the quasi a priori strongly relies on Husserl's idea of *Wesensschau* (cf. Quell 2026).

import, it bears on the relation between singular experience and generally accepted categories. While adequate/inadequate givenness remains tied to concrete objects, only bracketing allows one to refrain from direct reference to any particular object in one's claims. In other words, only the suspension of the object's factical positing makes possible assertions with a validity that surpasses reference to a specific context – whose presence, in any case, is adumbrated. Consequently, the categories articulated within the adequate/inadequate register of the natural attitude remain provisional and revisable as "new sides" show themselves; they are bound to a concrete affair (*Sache*). By contrast, eidetic insights achieved in the apodictic register exhibit an ideal, nonempirical validity: they do not derive from this or that worldly instance yet are meant to hold across possible worldexperiences but only as descriptions "from a distance."[6] This phenomenological clarification underwrites the minimal definitions of "straight," "queer," and "straightening" employed below. In this sense,

- *Queer*: the experience in which a new side of an affair arises that unsettles, revises, or deconstructs existing categories.
- *Straight*: experiences that affirm or reproduce the existing categories.
- *Straightening*: essences – in their phenomenological understanding as descriptions from a distance – are used to stabilize the existing order.

Thus, in the act of straightening, the distance is effectively revoked, and the apodictic register collapses back into the natural attitude. Does this merger of registers automatically negate the essence's apodictic modality? Strictly speaking, apodictic force attaches to eidetic insight within the *epoché*; once the bracket is relaxed and the insight is "applied" in the natural attitude, its modality shifts (Berghofer 2018, 2022). It no longer functions apodictically but as a regulative, at best assertoric, norm guiding worldly articulation. In this transition, the modal force of apodicticity does not survive; what held apodictically under the *epoché* now operates only as a regulative (assertoric) norm within the world.

In what follows, I map, in five steps with reference to Kant, the stakes of this transposition, where theoretical description interlaces with worldly interest. This will happen in five steps:

i. Reconstructing the *Critique's* framework: lays out Kant's duality of sensibility and understanding and the mediating role of imagination.
ii. Reading the a priori as quasia priori: argues that the status of forms, categories, and schemata is processual and historically mediated.
iii. Straightening in the *Critique*: shows how Kant's method assigns "proper places" and privileges to straighten expierence.

6 I adopt the description of *epoché* as a view from a distance that lets a new (philosophical) perspective emerge from Ricœur (Ricœeur 2024).

iv. Motives and pressures within the *Critique*: situates the framework between rationalism and Humean empiricism and elicits the sensual basis of critical orientation. This grounds the hypotheses that experience has to be conceived as "possibilizing structure."

v. Toward critical possibilization: proposes quasia priori concepts as a modest middle path that opens notyet possibilities while remaining faithful to one's conditions.

§ 3: Experience as complicated and heterogeneous process

Nowadays the *Critique of Pure Reason* is canonical, supplying concepts and problems that shaped nineteenth- and twentieth-century philosophical thought. Yet immediately after its publication it faced sustained criticism and did not accord with common sense; the *Prolegomena* (Kant 2004) – published after the allegations and refutations – reads in part as an apologia and clarification, and the *Critique*'s second (B)[7] edition revises essential portions of the text.

Among the systematic reasons for this reception is the *Critique*'s starting point and the mediation problem it generates. Kant begins from affection of the subject (*Gemüt*) and distinguishes two heterogeneous yet conjoint sources of experience: sensibility and understanding. Sensibility receives; it provides the matter of experience (sensation) within the a priori (i.e., independent of experience) forms of space and time (A20/B34; A42/B59). Appearances are thereby "the undetermined object of an empirical intuition" (A20/B34), while the thing in itself "is not and cannot be cognized through them" (B45). The understanding, by contrast, does not intuit anything; it thinks the object given in intuition by synthesizing the received manifold of sensations under concepts, thereby making objects of possible experience present. Kant puts this as follows:

> The understanding is not capable of intuiting anything, and the senses are not capable of thinking anything. Only from their unification can cognition arise. But on this account one must not mix up their roles, rather one has great cause to separate them carefully from each other and distinguish them (B75–76).

At the same time, empirical intuition – whose matter is sensation – is the "material" on which our experience of objects depends; only through synthesis and conceptual determination can an appearance become an object within experience.

The duality of intuition and understanding raises what Paul Ricœur calls a "paradox of mediating between two heterogeneous principles" (Ricœur 2024: 71): how can a non-sensible capacity (the understanding) nevertheless seize and order what is only given sensibly? Kant's framework necessitates a pre-conscious, synthesizing preparation of the sensible "manifold." He states: "this

7 I will cite the Cambridge edition of the *Critique* (Kant 1998) with the abbreviation "AXX/BXX." If the quote was just introduced in the B-version the abbreviation will be "BXX."

manifold must first be gone through, taken up, and combined in a certain way in order for a cognition to be made out of it" (B102). He attributes this pre-synthesis to imagination, "a blind though indispensable function of the soul, without which we would have no cognition at all, but of which we are seldom even conscious" (A78/B103).

In brief, Kant understands experience not as a mere impression of an outside world but as the outcome of inner acts processing impressions. Ricœur therefore rightly notes: "[In Kant,] perception itself appears as a very complicated process within which the imagination is already working" (Ricœur 2024: 62). Along this line, Dieter Lohmar, drawing on Kant and phenomenology, coins "weak imagination": in everyday experience, acts of phantasy complement sensory impressions and thus already participate in the immediate appearance of real objects (Lohmar 2008).

Thus, Kant assigns to imagination a mediating spontaneity that allows experience to arise at all. This integration of imagination into experience – and its founding role for any object of knowledge – also motivates Kant's refusal of an ultimate cognition of reality "as it is in itself": we can know objects only as they appear under our sensible and conceptual conditions.

This becomes even more evident at the beginning of the "Transcendental Dialectic," the second part of the *Critique*. Kant criticizes traditional metaphysics for inscribing ideas (*Vernunftbegriffe*) onto experience. As a result, experienced things appear as if they are grounded in principles situated in the inner core of the subject, but this is a consequence of "transcendental illusion," which shows how products of thought can be taken as if they determined objects themselves. Thus, Kant writes that

> in our reason (considered subjectively as a human faculty of cognition) there lie fundamental rules and maxims for its use, which look entirely like objective principles, and through them it comes about that the subjective necessity of a certain connection of our concepts on behalf of the understanding is taken for an objective necessity, the determination of things in themselves. (B353)

Critique for Kant clearly designates a regulative restriction of cognition's validity: just because certain "fundamental rules" subsist in reason and guide the understanding's use, these "subjective necessities" must not simply "fly beyond" (B352) the immanence of experience to be incorporated as absolute principles of reality.

Instead, the experience of reality emerges through the interaction of sensibility and understanding. The *Critique* sets this as an absolute limit: we have no cognition of reality beyond possible experience. However, within these limits there is already an open process due to the dialogical structure of understanding and sensibility. It remains unforeseeable what sensibility gives to understanding. And, as imagination is the mediator between understanding and sensibility, the situation becomes even more dynamic because not only is the matter of experience unforeseeable, but the processing of imagination remains "hidden". Thus, Ricœur emphasizes: "Nobody before Kant had thought of a

function of imagination related to shaping our world of experience" (Ricœur 2024: 69). From such a perspective, the future of experience is not fully determined but always carries a degree of indeterminacy in its development. In the following, I will argue that this concerns not only the content but also the form of experience.

§ 4: From logic to groundlaying: The quasi-a priori

My hypothesis might seem to contradict the architectonic of the *Critique*, since its structure presents a different picture. It consists of two main parts, the "Analytics" and the "Dialectic." Whereas the "Dialectic" has mainly a regulative purpose – namely, as already indicated with "transcendental illusion," to inhibit reason from trespassing its own limit by providing regulative principles – the "Analytics" is concerned with discovering the actual limits by analyzing sensibility and understanding and deducing sensibility's a priori forms and the understanding's a priori categories.

If the way understanding organizes experience and its categories are supposed to be "a priori," it would seem that, contrary to my hypothesis, it is indeed fully determined, and that the general form of experience cannot change. However, it should be taken into account that the notion of "a priori" undergoes an important shift in the *Critique* due to three aspects:

4.1. Resignification of "deduction"

Since Aristotle, deduction designates logical derivation from established propositions; unlike induction, it applies the general to the particular. Kant's "deduction," however, refers to a legal practice: the justification of a rightful application of a law in an ambiguous case. In this sense, the deduction of the categories does not follow as a logical conclusion but justifies their lawful use, constitutively conditioned by the framework of experience that the *Critique* introduces (Henrich 1969, 1989). In a later text, Kant maintains that the categories are neither "divinely implanted" nor "innate representations", instead, they are acquired through deduction as an "original acquisition" (Kant 2002).

By conceiving experience as generated by two heterogeneous faculties – sensibility and understanding – mediated by the imagination, Kant adopts a stance at a distance from "natural" experience. From within this distanciation, he acquires the categories as the apodictic rules of experience. Yet this apodicticity is conditional in a double sense:

a) It depends on, and is confined to, the very framework that institutes the distance. Absent the positing of experience as arising from two heterogeneous sources and their imaginative mediation, the categories would have, at best, a provisional (assertoric or merely regulative) status. Thus, the sense of the a priori as an objective condition shifts to a framework-bound apodicticity.

b) It is not given, but it has to be acquired. In the context of this acquisition, the deduction takes on the task of the categories' exhibition (*Darstellung*) (B 168). The "*Darstellung*" is not a representation *(Vorstellung*): it is a rulegoverned and spontaneous act that makes the concept's apodictic modality; it does not merely emerge as an apodictic concept.

4.2. Particularity of the "categories"

Kant does not derive the pure concepts (categories) from recollection of representations, but from abstraction "from all content of a judgment" (B95). From this the table of categories "arises" (B105). It has been debated whether the table is complete, and whether completeness is possible by such a procedure; moreover, the logical "forms of judgment" Kant relies on are strongly informed by rationalism (Vorderobermaier 2012; Wolff 1995).

This further radicalizes the frameworkbound apodicticity (a): the a priori not only depends on the previously posited framework; its categorical "material" is itself drawn from a historically sedimented world of thought. Accordingly, the a priori is not simply frameworkdependent but historically conditioned. Regarding (b), the scope of exhibition must be specified: does it merely disclose tacitly operative objective conditions, or does the act of exhibition retroactively furnish the objectivity?

4.3. Realization of the categories as a conditioned possibility

In Kant's further argumentation, the problem of exhibition deepens because, due to the "schematism" introduced after the "Deduction", the acquisitional character of the categories concerns not only their apodicticity but also their very appearance. The argument for the categories and their Deduction is developed within the domain of "pure understanding." The categories are pure concepts, independent of sensibility; to be applicable to experience, they must be rendered sensible. Correspondingly, if the bottomup movement has imagination preforming appearances for understanding (§3), the topdown movement of pure understanding requires that imagination schematize pure concepts into sensible rules. The schema is a product of the imagination – "the representation of a general procedure of the imagination for providing a concept with its image" (A141/B180). In this way, imagination makes concepts generated at a distance from sensibility fit for application to what is given. In the concrete setting of the *Critique*, Kant translates the categories previously "deduced" into timerules (schemata) that underwrite the principles of experience and thereby guide our discrimination of objective experience from mere illusion – that is, from errors of sense or of understanding.

Alberto Rosales revisits this process of acquisition, exhibition and schematization. From the bottomup perspective of natural experience, the categories depend on imagination for their actualization: only through imagination can the understanding apply its categories to sensible impressions. In other words,

only then do the categories function as rules of experience. Accordingly, Rosales maintains that the categories thereby pass "from potentiality to actuality"; only after this actualization do "the functions of [deduction and schematization] appear for the first time, which until now remained potential in the innate basis of understanding" (Rosales 2000, 114–15). In other words, the natural experience has to be set in place to provide an actual basis for distanciation and analysis of the *Critique*. How does this affect the evidential force of the a priori?

Already in the context of the "Deduction", Kant himself offers a striking description: he calls this process of critical distanciation and analysis an "epigenesis of pure reason" (B167). How should this be understood? Two immediate readings suggest themselves:

a) Subjective Platonism. The categories reside in the understanding as innate principles; when "actualized" in natural experience and afterwards intuited in critical reflection, they are already contaminated by imagination and sensibility. Each exhibition is therefore a historically and sensibly tinted copy of the original.

b) Transcendental Idealism (teleological reading). The dialectic of potentiality and actualization should be removed from a strict dualism of sensibility and understanding. Every actuality bears the potential for a further, more articulated "subject," such that the *Critique* becomes a moment within a teleological becoming of spirit.[8]

Catherine Malabou sketches a "third way" that acknowledges the processual character of epigenesis while remaining faithful to Kant's framework. She argues that the transformative dynamics displayed in the "Deduction" and the "Schematism" amount to an indeterminacy of the subject. Although this indeterminacy is determinable (e.g., via schematization or deduction), it is not a "higher" determination that subsumes prior stages (Malabou 2016). Each determination gathers the potential of a current actuality and reforms it; the resulting actuality again bears the potential for further reformation. Against a "classical" teleological dialectic, this becoming is plastic: the subject, in its becoming, affirms the unforeseeable. However, although reformation is unforeseeable for the subject, it is neither arbitrary nor merely contingent, nor is it the unfolding of an innate potential. Rather, a structural indeterminacy within the subject conditions free acts – such as the deduction or the schematization – that in turn change the subject. Retrospectively, these changes present themselves not as contingent novelties but as the exhibition of necessary conditions of the own experience (Malabou 2004).

8 Without explicating it, I refer to Hegel's conception of the dialectics between potentiality and actuality as well as his integration of Kant into these dynamics (cf. Hegel 2021: 465-506).

4.4. The innate possibility of giving oneself rules

On this basis, the "a priori" Kant attributes to the categories can be read as the realization of not-yet possibilities that transform the very condition of experience. The "transcendental," designating the "conditions of possibility of experience," is a priori in that it makes experience possible by grounding it in categories *in potentia*. Although the actual table of categories stands within a sedimented rationalist line of thought, it is not merely reproduced; through activation and schematization the realization of the categories transforms them.

In this vein, JeanLuc Amalric proposes the notion of a "transhistorical quasitranscendental": Kant's effort runs through the "history [of thought] in a culminative [...] manner" and generates "transhistorical structures," a generativity that provides a horizon of experience and is thus "quasitranscendental" (Amalric 2025). The word "quasi" derives from the Latin "quam si," which literally means "as if" (Ferrarin 2025).

The a priori in the *Critique* is quasi all along. The institution of the transcendental can possibilize an a priori ground of experience only if the categories are taken as if (quasi) they are a priori. This not only binds sensibility and understanding inextricably together at the conceptual level, but also, at the evidential level, binds the transcendental – and its acquisitions of an a priori – to a preset framework. This framework, as I will show in § 7, essentially depends on imaginative acts. Moreover, as I will discuss in §6, this amounts to a plastic structure of experience being inherently able to reform itself through experience.

§ 5: Decomposing queerness in its straight elements

Despite these intersections – imagination and the idea of an "originary acquisiton" implicitly deconstructing the notion of the transcendental as the exhibition of objective conditions – the general trajectory of the *Critique* amounts to an effort at straightening experience. Kant foreshadows this when he calls imagination a "blind though indispensable" function (A78/B103), that is, indispensable for experience, yet not granted authority regarding ordering. And, although he specifies the process of deduction as a system of epigenesis, he grants no room for indeterminacy when he maintains "that the categories contain the grounds of the possibility of all experience in general" (B 167).

To illustrate his straightening effort, Kant borrows a metaphor from physics. When a body moves without external forces, it describes a straight line; when exposed to another force, it deviates into a "curved line." He writes:

> In order to distinguish the proper action of the understanding from sensible force that meddles in, it will thus be necessary to regard the erroneous judgment of the understanding as a diagonal between two forces that determine the judgment in two different directions, enclosing an angle, so to speak, and to resolve the composite effect into the simple effects of the understanding and of sensibility. (A270–271/B326–327)

This "diagonal of forces" analogy rests on a specific premise in that context: the faculties are strictly distinguished like vectors of force in physics, and mixed ("diagonal") effects must be resolved into their elements, to assign them their proper place.

Thus, critical thought as Kant conceives it amounts to decomposing composite effects and assigning each element to its proper place. (In section 6.2., I will further elaborate on that problem of place). In this sense, representations are to be resolved into what belongs to appearance and what to concept, so as to identify where the sensible has influenced judgment and produced a "diagonal" result. It becomes clear that Kant intends, metaphorically and methodologically, to straighten the lines of experience.

In my terms, the straightening of the *Critique* culminates in Kant's introduction of the "transcendental." Kant himself does not understand it as quasia priori; the conditions he delivers and deduces are, as such, the conditions of possible experience (A11–12/B25). He clearly has a strong hierarchy in mind: "thoughts without content are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind" (A51/B75).

Metaphysics should become possible as a science "according to a sure plan" (Kant 2004: 260). Natural science can never reveal the "inside of things, i.e., that which is not appearance but can nonetheless serve as the highest ground of explanation for appearances" (ibid.: 352). Thus, Kant sees himself compelled from the outset to go beyond the field of possible experience to the "concept of a being which is in no way dependent on appearances nor bound up with them as conditions for its determination" (ibid.: 356). In order to be scientific, this transgression must adhere to the previously recognized basic rules of thought; that is,

> that we think the world as if it derives from a supreme reason, as regards its existence and inner determination; whereby we in part cognize the constitution belonging to it (the world) itself, without presuming to want to determine that of its cause in itself [...]. (ibid.: 360)

It is therefore a matter of transcending the world metaphysically in a reasoned asif, without "presuming [anzumaßen] to want to determine" the world's cause itself (ibid., 365). This does not alter the fact that such a propaedeutic systematization depends on imagination as a distinct power – thereby implicitly giving any a priori positing a quasia priori character. Moreover, the "sources" of experience – elements in the original Greek sense of primordial causes – are themselves imagined on a Newtonian model of forces as straight lines. But what justifies treating this presupposition as a priori if the Newtonian picture is itself conditioned by a Euclidean geometrical model (in §7 I will elaborate the scope of this analogy in detail)?

One may reply that without privileging an originally straight and ordered space, stable knowledge and responsible worldshaping would be impossible; the quasi must be domesticated by reason if a common life is to be sustained. Yet to accept reason's supremacy without reserve risks to court dogmatism, since it appears presuppositionless but in reality, depends on earlier models

and knowledge. In what follows, drawing on the *Critique*'s historical and conceptual queerness, I argue that charging Kant with such dogmatism oversimplifies the transcendental framework and overlooks a crucial, implicit idea: the sensing of thought.

§ 6: What really *drives* the Transcendental?

6.1. Historical queerness: Liberation from rationalism

In the historical context of the *Critique*, two philosophical strands are fundamental. On the one hand, as already described in the context of the categories, there is the straight, rationalist influence; on the other, there is the queer encounter with British empiricism that roused Kant from his "dogmatic slumber." (ibid.) Hume's philosophy fundamentally motivated Kant to reject the guiding idea of rationalism that would trace every phenomenon's principle back to a homogeneous logic, and instead to understand experience as the result of a complex process of impression and apprehension.

To use Ahmed's vocabulary, Kant gains the categories by following the lines in the space of thought given by his education, interest, etc.; but as his framework is fundamentally altered due to his queer encounter with Hume, he confronts the challenge of straightening the "curved lines." According to the definition in §2, the *Critique*'s framework queers the prevailing order by introducing a new side to the affair: a heterogeneous basis of experience (sensibility and understanding, mediated by imagination) that displaces a homogeneous rationalist logic. It would be an overstatement to call Kant queer, but the historical context of the *Critique*, the criticism it faced, and its conceptual tensions at least support the hypothesis that there is an atmosphere of "certain uncertainty" (Fanon 2002: 110). Inherited from rationalism, Kant's intellectual basis could be regarded as a "catholicity of the rational," according to which reason is an absolute power of "unconditioned value" (Sartre 1995). Hume's empiricism theoretically queers such a basis by positing impression and habit before any idea (Lohmar 2016). If Hume awakened Kant from his dogmatic slumber, this can be regarded not only as a "queer moment" but as "queering experience," through which the *Critique*'s framework is realized – a becoming of a notyet possibility.

Put this way, the trajectory of the *Critique* is foremost a liberation from the given and its possibilities and a movement toward the notyet possible. However, this liberation is both relief and burden, because as soon as the "catholicity of the rational" no longer serves unconditionally, only experience can suffice as a basis. In the distanciation and absolute immanence of the critical discourse of the subject, there is no possibility of an external reference. Within the horizon of the *Critique*, freedom amounts to a dynamic of transforming experience engendered through the interplay of sensibility, thought and imagination, and this repeats the initial question (§ 2) of how the products of these acts can gain evidential force in the world without its conditioning framework (§ 4).

6.2. Conceptual queerness: Sensing thought

The section "On the Amphiboly of Concepts of Reflection," which transitions from the "Analytics" to the "Dialectic," offers an insightful answer to this. Here, Kant discusses the possibility of orientation within one's experience without external reference points. He calls such orientation "reflective" and its status "subjective." Reflection, he maintains, is concerned not with objects and objective knowledge but with "the state of mind in which we first prepare ourselves to find out the subjective conditions under which we can arrive at concepts" (A260/B316). Every cognition has different "sources," such as understanding, imagination, and sensibility, and reflection elucidates to which place an experience belongs. Generally, judgments once accepted, assumed, or posited are experienced as a singular instance in the form of something appearing as something. Some "immediately certain" judgments may need no further investigation, but with regard to "concepts", reflection on the faculties involved in their genesis is mandatory. All such acts are rooted in the "faculty of judgment."

Since reflection is restricted to the subjective field of experience, it can only investigate different representations and concepts by comparing them with each other. Orientation results from the differences that emerge through relating representations, concepts, judgments, etc., and gives grounds to affiliate them to different "places." Eventually, "transcendental reflection" defines the a priori possible relations and, therefore, prefigures differences and their corresponding places in the subject.

> [I]n pure judgments a priori this must happen through transcendental reflection, through which (as already shown) every representation is assigned its place in the faculty of cognition proper to it, and hence also the influence of the latter is distinguished from it. (A270–271/B326–327)

François Lyotard highlights the peculiarity of transcendental reflection. On the one hand, it aspires to delineate the lines of reflection; on the other, orientation through subjective reflection means "feeling a difference within my own subject." Transposed into thought, the issue is a "subjective distinction" that allows reason to determine its "*Fürwahrhalten*" – how reason can take something as true in the absence of "objective criteria of knowledge." If the delineation of different "realms" within one's experiential field is grounded in felt states, then the judgment of reflection is "tautegorical," because the "identity of form [the different realms] and content [the particular experiences]" rests solely on reflective feeling: it synthesizes the act of thinking that takes place before an object with the affection this act produces. Reflection is an "inner repercussion" or resonance of the act. Pure reflection thus entails the capacity of thought to be immediately informed of its own state by that very act, without any other measure than feeling itself. Consequently, reflection no longer designates an exclusively intellectual effort but the sensing of cognitive acts, since – as Lyotard, with reference to Kant, emphasizes – the expression or

indication (*Anzeige*) of subjective reflection is not a proposition but a feeling of pleasure or displeasure; it is on the basis of this sensed state alone that the subject is oriented in thought (Lyotard 1994: 1–50).

This process of self-affection enables orientation in oneself and grounds the distinction of experiences. The form of reflection Kant introduces in the "Amphiboly" is indeed subjective; it refers to the self as an inner whole of experience but must be situated before the definite constitution of the subject's limits. This produces a problem in the architectonic of the *Critique*. If Kant initially starts his assessment of experience based on the division of sensibility and understanding, on what reflection is this initial division based? Is it a judgment that needs no further investigation as "immediately certain"? If so, how can understanding and sensibility be a priori fundamental while their a priority is founded on a judgment? Thus, it must be asked what the role of judgment with respect to understanding and sensibility is.

As with imagination, Kant's description of judgment remains undecided. He states: "If understanding is the faculty of rules, judgment is the faculty of subsuming under rules, i.e., of determining whether something belongs to a given rule or not" (B171). A physician may be well informed in anatomy or pathology, but this abstract knowledge does not suffice to decide "in concreto" (B174) a patient's condition. Experience may "sharpen" this power of judgment, but the ability itself cannot be taught; it results from "natural wit [*Mutterwitz*]" (B173).

Without judgment as a "natural wit" no rule would be possible in concrete experience; imagination is "blind though indispensable" (A78/B103). Both seem to share a third place of experience not accessible to objective knowledge, although "indispensable" and necessary for experience to be possible. Are judgment and imagination one faculty, or two powers? If they are so crucial to experience and objective knowledge, why are there only introductory statements or remarks between the lines about them? And, last but not least, how are they interrelated with the reflective possibility of sensing cognitive acts?

6.3. Experience as motivated and possibilizing structure

Due to the scope of this paper, I will not be able to further elaborate on these interesting questions. However, they already indicate that, if experience is conditioned by a quasi and transhistorical transcendental and can be changed by free acts, such as the deduction or schematization, it exhibits a general structure that can be affected and can affect itself (cf. § 4). [9] Through complex and

9 I adopt Dieter Lohmar's interpretation of Kant's concept of affect (Gemüt) in the *Critique*. He distinguishes between exogenous and endogenous affections. Exogenous affections comprise all external stimuli that affect sensibility and supply the matter of experience (sensation). Endogenous affections denote internally originating forces that modulate these affective processes—such as the spontaneity of the understanding and the synthesizing activity of imagination—which prestructure what is given to us (Lohmar 2008).

heterogeneous processes, experience emerges, and through immanent acts[10] – what I called self-affection before (§ 3) – the very structure of experience can alter. It is not about possibility versus actuality; yet this straightening does not result from a mere repetition of universals; it issues from originary acquisitions (§4). These acquisitions reform the structure of experience by imaginatively instituting a framework in which that structure is viewed as if it were a physical phenomenon (§5). Andrea Zhok offers a structural account of experience well suited to this reformative process:

> Experience is emergence in both an epistemic and an ontological sense, because it creates the room for possibilities. Such a dynamic possibilizing dimension expresses a constitutive 'drive'. To be a living consciousness hunting for meaningful units is tantamount to being a possibilizing actuality. (Zhok 2016: 233)

Understanding Kant's effort of critical straightening against the background of a "drive [...] hunting for meaningful units" helps to highlight the productivity concealed by calling the first part of the *Critique* an "analytic". If the *Critique* embraces the queer encounter only to incorporate it into a logic of the conditions of experience, it reproduces the status quo in a new situation – namely, a situation queered by the encounter with Hume – and thereby straightens queerness. Yet this straightening does not result from a mere repetition of universals; it issues from originary acquisitions (§ 4) that, in return, can be conceived as being rooted in a productive drive which amounts to the reformation of experience's structure by inventing a framework in which the structure of experience is imagined as if it were a physical phenomenon.[11] Given the experience's roots in a plastic structure, hasn't the whole edifice of the *Critique* been possibilizing all along? Indeed, this idea can be supported and further differentiated by a passage in the "Transcendental Dialectic."

§ 7: Critical possibilization

As noted earlier, "transcendental illusion" arises when ideas of reason are taken to determine objects constitutively – whether objects of possible experience or nature as a whole. To mark the proper (regulative) use of ideas, Kant invokes an analogy that can be traced back to Newton.

10 I do not confine my account to subjective reflection (cf. 6.2); it also encompasses objective reflection – namely, the analysis of the pure understanding, of sensibility, and of reason's regulative effort.

11 I cannot further pursue the deepseated relation between drive and imagination here. An increasing body of phenomenological work addresses this question (Bernet 2006, 2012; Brudzińska 2019; Micali 2020). In my view, Micali's account – more precisely, his notion of "phantasy," following Marc Richir (Richir 2000, 2004) – as a "dramatization of affective life" is especially apt for marking the difference between acts of reason and acts of imagining.

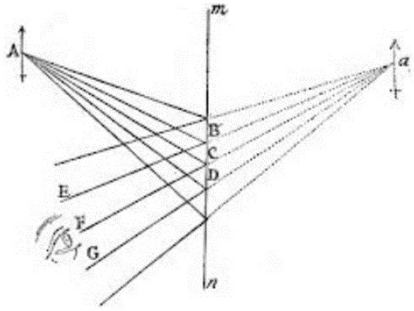


Figure 1

In the *Opticks*, Newton analyzes a mirror phenomenon in which an observer stands before a looking glass (cf. Fig. 1). Owing to reflection, the object appears as if it were "really placed at *a* without the interposition of the looking-glass; and all vision is made according to the place and shape of that picture." Reflection thus doubles the object: by the mirror's transposition, it is not the physical object "A" that is seen, but an imaginary "a" generated on a projection plane. Newton calls this plane imaginary, and thereby designates a *focus imaginarius* (Newton 2010: 18).

By contrast, transcendental analytics treats experience itself as its object; it analyzes experience as real ("A"), not as imaginary ("a"). Within the methodological distance from "natural experience" established by *Critique*, this stance is legitimate. But if results acquired under this stance are carried beyond the bounds of possible experience – so that pure concepts or ideas are taken to determine objects as things in themselves – reason lapses into transcendental illusion. To guard against this, Kant writes:

> I assert: the transcendental ideas are never of constitutive use, so that the concepts of certain objects would thereby be given, and in case one so understands them, they are merely sophistical (dialectical) concepts. On the contrary, however, they have an excellent and indispensably necessary regulative use, namely that of directing the understanding to a certain goal respecting which the lines of direction of all its rules converge at one point, which, although it is only an idea (focus imaginarius) – i.e., a point from which the concepts of the understanding do not really proceed, since it lies entirely outside the bounds of possible experience = nonetheless still serves to obtain for these concepts the greatest unity alongside the greatest extension. (A644/B672)

For Kant, then, critical re-orientation amounts to a regulative gesture. The *focus imaginarius* is not a real item within experience but a point of orientation entirely outside its bounds; it serves to guide understanding toward maximal systematic unity. Crucially, this does not "extend apodictic force" into nature. The regulative employment does not constitute objects; it confers a methodological, heuristic necessity (unity as a rule of inquiry), not a constitutive, object-giving necessity.

Relative to Newton, a double transposition occurs:

a) From *Optics* to *Critique*: Kant recasts the optical model as a transcendental one. In Newton's case, an "imaginary" point locates the apparent image produced by reflection (the place where reflected rays seem to meet). Kant borrows this as a metaphor: the *focus imaginarius* names an ideal point of convergence for the "lines of direction" of understanding's rules. It is not a locus of objects nor a source from which concepts proceed, but a regulative orientation point "entirely outside the bounds of possible experience" (A644/B672).
b) From particular phenomena to experience as such: the "mirror" becomes the reflective stance of critique; the "image" becomes the systematic projection that orients inquiry into experience in general. This can be illustrated with "Figure 2".

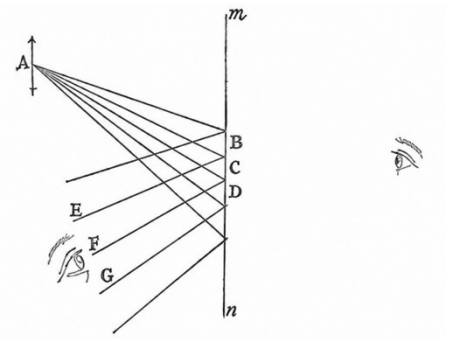


Figure 2[12]

Seen from the imaginary side, the *Critique*'s concepts and analyses can present themselves as if they were simply "real," but they are the products of a transcendental discourse instituted by imaginative transposition. The result is not a suspension or "bending" of physical laws (which, for appearances, remain governed by strict causal determination); rather, a meta-physical field (in the critical sense) is opened in which inquiry is oriented by regulative ideals toward unity and extension. Experience is not merely the passive effect of composed forces and reflected trajectories; through imaginative transposition and subsequent originary acquisitions, new grounds for organizing and extending experience can emerge.

This brings into focus the geometrical metaphors at A644/B672 – the "lines of direction" converging to a point. Why must determination converge on one point? Do these metaphors lean too heavily on a model of classical physics and on an image of the understanding that gathers representations into a point (the concept)? My claim is that Kant presumes that transcendental acquisitions can be carried back as regulative norms into natural experience without a change

12 The modification of the illustration has been executed by ChatGPT v5.5.

of their modal force. He does not register a "loss" (better: a transformation) of evidential force when he steps from the transcendental stance back into the natural attitude. Yet if the a priori is: a) framework-bound and generative (it generates both the apodictic modality and, through spontaneous acts, the categories themselves) (§4); b) conditioned by "queer experience" that introduces a new side, revising extant categories (§5); c) nurtured by a productive drive that possibilizes new configurations (§6); then possibilization has been operative all along. If Kant resists acknowledging this transformation, it signals how deeply seated the drive toward the "catholicity of the rational" is in the subject named "Kant."

Why not, then, simply relinquish Kant? Because, despite these problematic assumptions, the *Critique* – seen from the perspective of possibilization – offers a fruitful trajectory for transforming an acquired a priori, generated at a distance, into a lived orientation. To move beyond Kant with Kant is to recognize the gap between the transcendental stance, in which an a priori is acquired and enjoys frameworkbound apodicticity, and the natural attitude, where its application is at most regulative and assertoric.

Bridging this gap can draw on two resources already in play: "transcendental reflection" (§6.2) and schematization (§4.2). Recapitulating: transcendental reflection orients the subject in its own cognitive acts by a reflective sensing of those acts – pleasure and displeasure signaling the fit of an act within the subject's whole constitution. Schematization, in turn, names the imaginative procedure that gives non-empirical concepts an intuitive rule of application; in the *Critique*, this takes the form of timerules because time has been identified as the general form of succession, and thus as the most far-reaching medium for application (B 67-73).

If we now detach this procedure from the *Critique*'s strict framework and relax the compartmentalization of faculties, acquisition appears as a creation from a distance that nevertheless takes its bearings from worldly phenomena. Schematization becomes a process in which the original phenomena are resignified by imaginatively treating them as if they were "really" constituted by the foregrounded a priori. No constitutive, object-giving criteria can adjudicate this process, since it remains immanent to the critical stance; nevertheless, it is not arbitrary. Orientation is supplied by reflective sensing, alongside further constraints such as systematic coherence, fecundity in organizing experience, and intersubjective transmissibility of the acquired orientation.

In this sense, it is a "critical possibilization"; it is not an abstraction but a practice: it discursively realizes notyet possibilities under constraints supplied by reflective sensing. The resulting discourse is grounded in lived, bodily individuality that is itself generative and tautegorical (§6.2). Because this exploratory field is neither fully determined nor purely rational, Kant's reliance on "straight lines" (convergence to a point) beyond the bounds of possible experience can be questioned. This opens the possibility of critically possibilizing other figures – curves, parabolas, bent lines – that figure different "reals." Paradoxically, the very idea of queering the possibilities of experience arises from engagement with the *Critique* itself – a text originally aimed at straightening experience.

§ 8: Conclusion

Across Sections 3–7, the *Critique* has been read as beginning from the duality of sensibility and understanding and addressing the resulting mediation problem by assigning imagination a preconscious, synthesizing role that already operates within perception. Recasting key aspects – Kant's redefinition of "deduction," the origin of the categories from logical forms, schematism making the categories sensible via imagination, and the difference between exhibition and presentation – substantiates conceiving the "transcendental" as transhistorical, quasitranscendental within a plastic structure of experience. Yet the *Critique* tends to "straighten" experience: according to the "diagonal of forces" analogy, it decomposes mixed effects to assign what belongs to sensibility or understanding, presupposing the understanding's governance and a hierarchical ordering of the conditions of possible experience. Historical and conceptual queerness within the framework unsettles this straightening, producing an atmosphere of "certain uncertainty," while, according to Kant, reflective orientation without external criteria relies on felt, subjective distinctions of judgment; judgment, together with imagination, thus occupies a third, indispensable yet not fully thematizable place in the subject's architectonic. Consequently, experience itself can be read as a possibilizing structure animated by a drive towards meaningful units so that the plastic structure of experience inherits an essential possibilizing capability. This motivates revisiting Kant's "*focus imaginarius*" and reading the *Critique* as a practice of "critical possibilization."

To come back to the initial discussion between utopia and no-future. With my re-reading of the *Critique* I tried to sketch a position in-between. One that is neither a refusal of any futurist narratives nor a utopian fabulation. I propose a more modest approach of "critical possibilization." As a point of departure, I embraced the peculiar notion of an "originary acquisition" as a hinge to move beyond Kant with Kant. Since the *Critique's* a priori is acquired within a framework shown to be instituted by imagination – one that takes its cue from a Newtonian physicooptical model – the a priori is, in a strict sense, quasitranscendental and trans-historical: its evidential force is conditioned by an imaginative distanciation and given world of thought. Put differently, imagination transposes a physical model into a transcendental field and applies existing concepts in this framework; hence the transcendental is "quasi" not because it is merely empirical, but because it depends on formative acts of imagination and it is transhistorical because it resituates given understandings. On this view, the *Critique* appears as a possibilizing architecture. "Transcendental reflection" connects this formative, cognitive work to its sensibleaffective basis, and through schematization the concepts generated at a distance are attuned to the affective groundlayers that participate in the background of acquisition. The articulated concepts have neither an automated future nor do they reject a future. Instead, they are invitations to an engagement that can become a future, but a future that is not fully determined by the concept.

This suggestion might seem quite abstract, and I admit that a lot of work has to be done to further substantiate the sketch provided here. Nonetheless, I think it can help to empower theoretical work on the edge of not-yet possibilities being faithful to the conditional nature of the individual context as well as the productive character of individual acts and perspectives.

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Filip Kvel

Kritička posibilizacija: Esej o utemeljenju još-neodređenih budućnosti

Apstrakt

Ovaj rad se uključuje u središnju tenziju unutar kvir teorije između antisocijalnih odbijanja budućnosti (Edelman) i utopijskih, relacionih horizonata „još-ne“ (Munjoz, Ahmed). On predlaže međupoziciju utemeljenu na fenomenološkom ponovnom čitanju *Kritike čistog uma*: kvir budućnost tako ne postaje ni negacija budućnosti ni garantovana utopija, već praksa „kritičke posibilizacije“. Najpre, oslanjajući se na Munjozov pojam traga i Ahmedin pojam orijentacije, tvrdim da tragove i orijentacije treba „sresti na pola puta“: oni nisu ni idealističke projekcije ni naprosto nešto dato, već zahtevaju refleksivnu, otelovljenu modifikaciju. Zatim rekonstrušem okvir *Kritike* kao onaj koji polazi od dualiteta čulnosti i razuma i razrešava njihovo posredovanje putem pretkognitivne, sintetičke aktivnosti uobrazilje koja je već operativna u opažanju. Preoblikovanje teorijskih oruđa *Kritike* tako da se ona shvate kao ono što podrazumeva „izvornu akviziciju“ kako evidencijalne snage tako i stvarnog oblikovanja *a priori* pokazuje kako *a priori*, u praksi, ispoljava realizaciju „još-ne” mogućnosti – ono što nazivam transistorijskim, kvazitranscendentalnim karakterom *a priori*, zasnovanim na plastičnoj strukturi iskustva. Treće, dijagnostikujem tendenciju „ispravljanja“ u *Kritici*, čak i dok istorijski i pojmovni faktori „kviruju“ ovu putanju, otkrivajući treće, nezaobilazno, ali ne u potpunosti tematizabilno mesto uobrazilje, suđenja i refleksivnih osećanja. Četvrto, iskustvo preoblikujem kao posibilizujuću strukturu animiranu nagonom koji „lovi smislene jedinice“ (Zhok 2016). Konačno, putem Kantove upotrebe „*focus imaginarius*“, pokazujem kako kritička metafizika uspostavlja imaginarnu tačku unutar realnog, oslobađajući iskustvo od stroge (fizičke) determinacije i uzročnosti, kao i otvarajući prostor „odredivoj neodređenosti“ unutar iskustva. „Kritička posibilizacija“ označava ovaj disciplinovani, osećajni i otelovljeni način realizovanja još-neostvarenih mogućnosti: pojmovi su kvazi *a priori* pozivi na angažovanje koji mogu postati budućnosti, a da pritom nisu njima fiksirani. Ovaj skromni srednji put nastoji da omogući teorijski rad na ivici emergentnih mogućnosti, uz istovremeno ostajanje vernim kontekstualnim i istorijskim uslovima, kao i produktivnom karakteru individualnih činova.

Ključne reči: posibilizacija, kvazitranscendentalnost, kvir budućnost, Kant, produktivna uobrazilja