

Madness in the Organic Order of Space. Kant and the Imagination

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Abstract

In this paper, I first examine the classification of mental derangements contained in Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, in order to highlight the role played by imagination in their pathogenesis. Later, on the basis of this examination, I reflect on the origins of critical philosophy, which can be seen as an attempt to construct a control device for the imagination structured as a systematic, organic space.

Key words

Critical Philosophy; Imagination; Kant; Mental Disorders; Mental Illness; Space; System.

«*Courage, gentlemen, land is in sight!*»

I. Kant, *Träume eines Geistersehers*

1. The Role of Imagination in Mental Derangements

In the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 34 years after the *Essay on the Maladies of the Head*, Kant presents a second classification of psychopathologies, considered, in general, as «defects of the cognitive faculty» (*Fehler des*

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Erkenntnißvermögens) (Anth 202; 2006: 96)¹. If compared to that of the *Essay*, the classification of the *Anthropology*, which goes from § 45 to § 53, undergoes substantial changes in the number of the featured entries, in the respective arrangement, and in certain symptomatological descriptions². It is not, however, our aim to engage in a comparison that depicts, case by the case, the differences between the two nosologies. We will rather try to highlight how imagination plays a dominant role within those pathological conditions which Kant gathers under the name of «mental derangements» (*Gemüthsstörungen*)³.

Since its pragmatic point of view removes the *Anthropology* from the knowledge of the natural causes of human phenomena, it would be useless to search through its pages for a proven aetiology of psychopathologies. In the rare instances where Kant suggests a cause, he ostensibly does so to subordinate its non-apodictic knowledge to pragmatic purposes. Thus, when he describes mental derangements as «an arbitrary course in the patient's thoughts which has its own (subjective) rule, but which runs contrary to the (objective) rule that is in agreement with laws of experience» (Anth 202; 2006: 96), he does so to provide the general sign of identification—*sensus privatus* taking over *sensus communis*⁴—which, once detected in a person, allows their reclusion in the *Narrenhospital*: «[...] a place where human beings, despite the maturity and strength of their ages, must still, with regard to the smallest matters of life, be kept orderly through someone else's reason» (Anth 202; 2006: 97). Likewise, when he claims that madness is generally a hereditary disease which «develops together with the germ of reproduction» (Anth 216; 2006: 111), once again he does so in view of the praxis to which such knowledge is subordinated, that is avoiding to «marry into families where even a single such individual [i.e. the lunatic] has been met with» (ivi). The statements on the causes of madness, just like the *Anthropology* as a whole, are simple observations, appearing in scattered annotations and comments on circumstantial πράγματα⁵. Nevertheless, although Kant's description of individual mental derangements leaves us in the dark insofar as the remote causes of their onset are concerned, it allows us, at least, to retrace a portion of their pathogenesis and to recognize in a certain behaviour of the imagination the way the disease emerges within the psyche.

¹ When not otherwise indicated, translations are mine.

² On the classification of psychopathologies in the *Essay on the Maladies of the Head* cf. Costantini 2018.

³ «Mental derangements», together with «hypocondria», belong to the group of «mental illnesses» (*Gemüthskrankheiten*), which Kant distinguishes from «mental deficiencies» (*Gemüthsschwächen*) (Anth 202; 2006: 96).

⁴ «The only universal characteristic of madness is the loss of *common sense* (*sensus communis*) and its replacement with *logical private sense* (*sensus privatus*); for example, a human being in broad daylight sees a light burning on his table which, however, another person standing nearby does not see, or hears a voice that no one else hears. For it is a subjectively necessary touchstone of the correctness of our judgments generally, and consequently also of the soundness of our understanding, that we also restrain our understanding by the *understanding of others*, instead of *isolating* ourselves with our own understanding and judging *publicly* with our private representations, so to speak» (Anth 219; 2006: 113).

⁵ Avoiding marrying a person who had cases of madness in their family, or interning anyone who proves to have lost common sense, can be considered, from a Kantian point of view, «pragmatic imperatives» aimed at happiness and general welfare (GMS 415-417; 2002a: 32-33).

When Kant, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, deals with error, that is illusion, he declares a principle which could be applied also to madness: «No force of nature can of itself depart from its own laws» (KrV B 350, A 294; 1998: 384). With this he meant that at the origin of error there is an «influence» of sensibility, or imagination, on the understanding, «through which it happens that the subjective grounds of judgment join with the objective ones, and make the latter deviate [*abweichen*] from their destination» (KrV B 350-351, A 294-295; 1998: 385). A «deviation» (*Abweichung*) can be equally found in mental derangements (Anth 216; 2006: 110), yet it is provoked by more than imagination exercising an influence. In such cases, indeed, imagination assimilates the force with which it blends and exerts it with exceptional intensity. In the madness typical of derangements, it is the same error that is repeated each time, the error of exceeding in the use of such and such cognitive faculty, of augmenting its range by placing it under the deforming lens of imagination.

We will thus analyse the four types of *Gemüthsstörung* described in § 52 of the *Anthropology*, nonsenseness (*Unsinnigkeit*), deception (*Wahnsinn*), fabulation (*Wahnwitz*), and extravagance (*Aberwitz*), in order to highlight the role of imagination in their pathogenesis and, at the same time, to identify, where needed, the faculty that has been deviated, since Kant makes that explicit only in the cases of fabulation and extravagance: judgement and reason, respectively.

We will proceed in order, beginning from nonsenseness. Kant describes it as «the inability to bring one's representations into even the coherence necessary for the possibility of experience», adding that «in lunatic asylum it is women who, owing to their talkativeness, are most subject to this disease: that is, their lively power of imagination inserts so much into what they are relating that no one grasps what they actually wanted to say» (Anth 215; 2006: 109). Kant does not specify here which faculty is the one affected by the disorder, but the reference to the «coherence necessary for the possibility of experience» has led some interpreters (*cf.* Meo 1982: 78-83; Butts 1986: 301; Brandt 1999: 311, 313; Frierson 2009: 274-275, 288) to claim it is the understanding, and that the distinctive feature of nonsenseness is the inability to provide sensible representations with the synthetic unity necessary to make an experience in general possible. The subject affected by nonsenseness would dwell in a world that is rhapsodic, fragmented, devoid of the «qualitative unity» of the concept that is like «the unity of the theme in a play, a speech, or a fable» (KrV B 114; 1998: 217). There are, however, two reasons to doubt this interpretation. The first is a textual evidence: although Kant, in § 52, does not mention where nonsenseness strikes, in § 45 he claims that such disorder concerns «sense representations» (*Sinnenvorstellung*) (Anth 202; 2006: 96). The second reason consists in the emphasis given, in the symptomatology, to the vivacity of imagination, which renders the failed connection of the manifold of intuition as a secondary symptom, ascribable not so much to a *deficit* in intellectual ability, but rather to a *surplus* in imaginative ability. The concept, in itself, wouldn't have any gaps, if only imagination, due to an excess of representative material, were not that resistant to its grasp, and didn't behave in a way that strongly resembles that of aesthetic ideas when they are animated by an excess of spirit.

The *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, indeed, tells us more on nonsenseness than the *Anthropology*, insofar as it recognizes in it the danger looming over the artistic production of genius. The imagination of a genius whose judgement, i.e. taste, does not shape his own spirit, that is to say an imagination that does not adapt, even formally, to the understanding, is an imagination whose «richness [...] produces, in its lawless freedom, nothing but nonsense [*Unsinn*]» (KU 319; 2000: 197). We could thus conclude from this passage that nonsenseness should not be considered a pathology of the understanding, since it implies, on the contrary, that imagination escapes from it in order, apparently, to merge entirely with sensibility, generating such a «richness» of content that the understanding skips from unity to unity in the attempt to synthesize it. It is significant, in that sense, that Kant would call this first type of disorder «tumultuous» (Anth 215; 2006: 109), a further indication that it is not characterized by a failed convergence of representations, but by their positive divergence; not by the absence of a theme, but by the constant passage from one theme to another.

Thus, the faculty affected by nonsenseness is sensibility, and not the understanding, which, for its part, is at risk of being the victim of another kind of disorder: deception. In truth, even in regard to the latter, § 52 does not state explicitly which specific faculty is affected and, by claiming it is the understanding, we would be disrespectful towards the text which, in § 45, includes deception, together with nonsenseness, among the *Sinnenvorstellung* disorders. We do believe, however, that it would not be possible to depict the nosology of mental disorders following the same systematic approach that Kant almost unwillingly adopts⁶, if not by admitting a point-by-point correspondence between the order of his entries and the hierarchical order of the cognitive faculties established by transcendental philosophy. Since the last two nosological entries, fabulation and extravagance, concern respectively judgment and reason, it is appropriate to believe that they are preceded by a disorder of the understanding. Thus, the three higher cognitive faculties would be arranged in their proper order, preceded, to complete the picture, by the lower cognitive faculty, sensibility. In any event, in order to support such theory we will present evidences retrieved from the text itself.

Psychiatrists and historians of psychiatry identify what Kant calls *Wahnsinn* (deception) with what we refer to today as paranoid personality disorder (*cf.* Kisker 1957: 23; Leibbrand, Wettley 1961: 366; Rauer 2007: 138). The identification is legitimate, since Kant claims that those who suffer from deception «believe that they are surrounded by enemies everywhere, who consider all glances, words, and otherwise indifferent actions of others as aimed against them personally and as traps set for them» (Anth 215; 2006: 109). However, the lines immediately preceding this description are the most interesting for us:

⁶ «It is difficult to bring a systematic division into what is essential and incurable disorder. It is also of little use to occupy oneself with it, because all methods of cure in this respect must turn out to be fruitless, since the powers of the subject do not cooperate (as is the case with bodily diseases), and yet the goal can only be attained his own use of understanding. Although anthropology here can only be indirectly pragmatic, namely only command omissions, nevertheless it still requires at least an attempt at a general outline of this most profound degradation of humanity, which still is attributable to nature» (Anth 214; 2006: 108-109).

«[...] everything that the insane person relates is to be sure in conformity with the formal laws of thought that make an experience possible; but, owing to the falsely inventive power of imagination, self-made representations are regarded as perceptions» (ivi). If we were to interpret this passage literally, deception should be regarded as a disorder of imagination⁷, or even of sensibility⁸. It would thus be a hallucinatory phenomenon: representations produced in complete autonomy from imagination would substitute those coming from the outer sense, whereas the understanding, for its part, would comprehend the hallucinated objects as if they were sensible, in accordance to the formal laws of thought. Nevertheless, Kant describes self-deceivers as those who «consider [*betrachten*] all glances, words, and otherwise indifferent actions of others as aimed against them personally and as traps set for them» (ivi), that is as individuals who *have* representations of reality, but interpret them incorrectly, transforming them into something they are not. The effects of deception do not appear, then, immediately in the falsity of intuitive data, but in the transformation that the data undergoes right *after* it was interpreted. *Wahnsinn* is not hallucination but misrepresentation. Moreover, conformity to the formal laws of thought, that is to logic, is not necessarily a sign of a healthy understanding. We have seen how, in the case of nonsenseness, madness materializes in a hyperfunction, rather than in a dysfunction, of the sensible faculty (a restless synopsis) and, in principle, we could suppose the same happens in all the other kinds of disorder. There are no objections to Jalley-Crampe's claim that «Kant has never confused the irrational with the ineffectual» (1979: 10). Imagination intensifies the faculty with which it merges; it becomes, so to speak, its accelerator. For Kant the madness that is most dangerous, and thus most worthy of attention, is the one that bears the sign of enormity, exaggeration, overkill⁹. In the case of deception, such signs are easily recognizable in the propensity to understand the particular manifoldness of experience—«glances, words, and otherwise indifferent actions»—under the sole universal of conspiracy. Self-deceivers, Kant writes, «in their unhappy delusion are often so acute [*scharfsinnig*] in interpreting that which others do naturally as aimed against them that, if only the data were true, we would have to pay due honour to their understanding» (Anth 215; 2006: 109, translation modified). In this passage as well, apparently Kant seems to claim that the understanding performs its function as per norm but its results are invalidated by the falsity of the starting data. However, according to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, truth and falsity of a sensible representation are not the result of an error of the senses, but of an error of the understanding (*cf.* KrV B 349-351, A 293-295; 1998: 384-385)¹⁰. It is thus possible to interpret deception as an excess of «acumen» (*Scharfsinnigkeit*), a quality that belongs to the subject of knowledge in which

⁷ This is how Frierson (2009: 276) and Sánchez Madrid (2018: 154) consider it.—What we are trying to demonstrate in this first part of our work is that imagination should always be regarded if not as the remote cause, at least as the proximate cause of mental derangement, which implies that it always suffers, *in primis*, from a pathology, but also that, as a faculty, it never does so in a specific way. It never happens that the imagination *alone* becomes ill and that the rest of the system of the faculties remains intact.

⁸ As suggested by Butts (1986: 301) and by Makkreel 2014: 388.

⁹ Makkreel states that mental illness involves «overstimulation», but adds that «its ultimate effect is to leave the mind even more passive than before» (2014: 388).

¹⁰ *Cf.* also Anth 146; 2006: 37.

Kant recognizes, after all, a noxious potential: the «subtleties» that don't expand knowledge should be considered as a «useless employment of understanding» (Anth 201; 2006: 95). In this perspective, what appear as «self-made representations» would consist of the effects that a sick understanding elicits on sensibility, the exact opposite of what happens in the case of nonsenseness, where it is a sick sensibility that elicits effects on the understanding (constantly pushing it beyond itself in search of a correct unity of synthesis of the manifold of intuition)¹¹. On the whole, it is true that deception refers to *Sinnenvorstellung*, yet it does so indirectly. Meo rightly observes how the subject of deception does not reach false conclusions from data, but shapes them on the basis of a «general definition of “conspiracy” which pre-exists perception» (1982: 84-85). Even before it is received by sensibility, the sensible in general is destined to be misinterpreted by the light of imagination under which the understanding lucubrates.

Kant defines fabulation, the third of the disorders discussed in the *Anthropology*, as a disorder of judgment (*cf.* Anth 202; 2006: 96). By judgment, intended as the faculty that has a priori principles, we mean reflective judgment, employed in the research of the universal (*genus* and *species*) to organize the manifoldness of the particulars of the experience. The Kantian *Logic* teaches that to search for the universal means to conceive it, to elaborate it, and in order to do so it is necessary to compare different sensible representations to discern similarities and dissimilarities and abstract identity from the many differences (*cf.* Log 93-95; 1992a: 591-593). Now, the elaboration of the universal, in general, does indeed depend on judgment, but this latter can perform its task only insofar as it possesses the natural talent of «wit» (*Witz*). The *Anthropology* emphasizes this in § 44 and later again in § 54 where the power to «pair» or «assimilate» «heterogeneous representations» is attributed to the «*ingenium comparans*» (Anth 220; 2006: 115). Thus, fabulation (*Wahnwitz*) alters judgment since it is a faculty that possesses «wit» (*Witz*). In fabulation,

the mind is held in suspense by means of analogies that are confused with concepts of similar things, and thus the power of imagination, in a play resembling understanding [*scil.* judgment], conjures up the connection of disparate things as universal, under which the representations of the universal are contained. Mental patients of this kind are for the most part very cheerful; they write insipid poetry and take pleasure in the richness of what, in their opinion, is such an extensive alliance of concepts all agreeing with each other (Anth 215; 2006: 109-110).

¹¹ Our interpretation differs slightly, but significantly, from Brandt's. Brandt, in his *Kommentar zu Kants Anthropologie*, recognizes in deception a disorder of the understanding, but he locates it, specifically, in the failed discernment of the irreality of the objects constituted by it, rather than in the way those objects have been constituted: «Der Verstand versagt [...] im Fall des Wahnsinns bei der Frage des Realität des nunmehr einheitlichen Objekts» (Brandt 1999: 313). After all, such an interpretation still calls upon the falsity of intuitive data, from which the understanding would draw exact conclusions under a formal-logical profile: «Im Wahnsinn (von 1798) werden Phantasieobjekte als Gegebenheiten der Erfahrung genommen; diese falsche Prämisse dient dann als Grundlage formal richtiger Schlüsse» (*ibid.*: 315).

Here even more clearly than in other cases, it can be noted how imagination takes possession of a psychic function that does not belong to it and uses it improperly, with an atypical exuberance: imagination is confused with judgment and substitutes the painstaking task of comparing representations with the endless game of analogies, resulting in a pseudo-concept, very close to contrivance and poetry, that replaces the true, intellectual, concept. Imagination is, once again, at the origin of a «richness» of content that the Kantian taste for sobriety barely tolerates. In § 44 of the *Anthropology*, such an imaginative wit, harbinger of intellectual «riches», is judged to be of extremely poor quality and accuracy, and is associated with «game» and «luxury» (Anth 201; 2006: 96).

Finally, let us turn to the last kind of mental disorder, extravagance, the deranged reason. Kant notes the following symptoms:

The mental patient flies over the entire guidance of experience and chases after principles that can be completely exempted from its touchstone, imagining that he conceives the inconceivable. – The invention of the squaring of the circle, of perpetual motion, the unveiling of the supersensible forces of nature, and the comprehension of the mystery of the Trinity are in his power. He is the calmest of all hospital patients and, because of his self-enclosed speculation, the furthest removed from raving; for, with complete self-sufficiency, he shuts his eyes to all the difficulties of inquiry (Anth 215-216; 2006: 110).

It is hard to deny that the symptoms of extravagance can be found in the dogmatic philosopher, whose speculations on the nature of the soul, the beginning of the world, and the existence of God are well above the domain of sensible experience (cf. Brandt 1999: 317). The term «Aberwitz» does not appear in any of the three *Critiques*, and its occurrences in the Kantian *corpus* are, indeed, so rare that the *Kant-Lexikon* does not include it among its entries. Nonetheless, extravagance can be considered the most strictly theoretical element of *Schwärmerei*, of religious fanaticism, which is, even more than superstition, the great threat of Kantian Enlightenment (cf. Allouche-Pourcel 2010). Actually, besides the most specific meaning of religious fanaticism, the concept of *Schwärmerei* in Kant's critical thought has a technical meaning: «*Schwärmerei*, in the most general meaning is an overstepping of the bounds [*Grenzen*] of human reason undertaken according to principles» (KpV 85; 2002a: 110), and the faculty that is most inclined to go beyond the limits of reason is undoubtedly reason itself, driven by a «dogmatisch schwärmende Wißbegierde» (KrV A 10) whose oneiric, imaginative substrate Kant had already noticed in the *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*. The *Reflexion 1505* included in the *Collegentwürfe* shows how extravagance is part of the concept of *Schwärmerei*, that is how dogmatic metaphysics, with its intuitive knowledge of the supersensible, constitutes the theoretical premise of practical fanaticism: «In der Phantasterey ist Wahnsinn, im Aberglauben Wahnwitz, in der Schwärmerey Aberwitz. [...] Schwärmer scheuen

Definition und Experiment wie als Feuer. Metaphysik macht Schwärmer, weil sie ihren eignen Qvell und Grenzen nicht zeigen kan» (HN 810)¹².

2. The Non-Place of Imagination

Each of the four types of mental derangement implies the demolition of a specific boundary, since the contact with imagination presses one or the other cognitive faculty to an abnormal functional activity. Jalley-Crampe has observed how, for Kant, it is not «the sleep of reason that produces monsters; but, on the contrary, a hyperactivity that reason unfolds when it dreams whilst being awake or, which is the same thing, when it's devoted to metaphysics» (1979: 12). Nevertheless, if we look more closely and consider the monomaniacal aspect of deception and, in particular, of extravagance, that is the impoverishment of psychic contents that characterizes these two disorders, we should be talking of amplification rather than «hyperactivity» or hyperfunctioning. The psychic conduct of those affected by a disorder could be compared not so much to that of one who does many things, or more things than necessary, but rather to that of one who goes over the top. Although in the *Anthropology* Kant suggests on several occasions that a «richness» of representations is a particular attribute of imagination (cf. Anth 180, 181, 201; 2006: 73, 75, 96), the disorders produced by it, once madness takes place, seem to interest the intensity of the form instead of the abundance of contents. Mental derangements have a qualitative rather than a quantitative nature. Even the symptoms of nonsense and fabulation could be reinterpreted from this perspective. In the first case, we would have a greater space-time capacity of the *comprehensio aesthetica*; in the second, the extension of a same analogical relation (whatever that may be) to the totality of the representations of the universe. After all, the classification of psychopathologies in the 1764 *Essay* was undertaken by observing the qualities that madness manifests once it has reached a certain degree of intensity (cf. VKK 260; 2007: 66). But, eventually, the critical Kant has preferred the «Grenze», the limit of space, to the «Limitation», the limit of reality, and to him madness, especially that of reason, takes on the appearance of the overcoming of a line drawn before one's eye, since it is perceived within a precise geometry of the psychic space. Such geometry has all the appearance of being designed for the purpose of limiting imagination on multiple sides, thereby preventing it from any form of excess—creating, *de facto*, the conditions for an excess, in general, to occur¹³. In *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, Kant wrote that «the frontiers [*Grenzen*] between folly and understanding are so poorly marked that one can scarcely proceed for long in the one region without occasionally making a little sally into the other» (TG 356; 1992b: 343), and the aim of the first *Critique* was precisely that of sharpening the gaze on our cognitive faculty to better define these «so poorly marked» limits and block the areas of the understanding, sensibility, judgment, and reason to prevent imagination from enveloping them in its nebulous and exciting

¹² For an account of *Schwärmerei* that reverses the order of the terms, and treats *practical* fanaticism as «the most potent source of *theoretical* fanaticism», cf. Zuckert 2010.

¹³ Conditions that are completely unrelated to the *Essay*, in which the theory of degrees ensures that the so-called 'normality' is nothing but a less intense form of madness.

atmosphere. Isn't what De Quincey recounts curious, that in Königsberg, before 1770, Kant used to hold private conferences for soldiers on the «art of fortification» (1873: 104)?

The phenomenon of mental derangement has elicited in Kant the necessity to render every faculty of the human mind a space with clear outlines, so that each kind of representation has a specific place of belonging, with the tacit assumption that imagination does not possess, in turn, a particular kind of representations, but rather is the phantasmal place of their blending¹⁴. In *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, Kant believed that in order to prevent the illusions of madness it was necessary to «place the concepts in the true position [*wahre Stelle*] which they occupy relatively to the cognitive faculty of human nature» (TG 349; 1992b: 336). And what in that work might have seemed like a passing assertion later became, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the principle of a real «doctrine», the «transcendental topic», which, representing the faculties as «places» (*Örter*) (KrV B 325-325, A 268-269; 1998: 371), requires to examine representations in relation to «their seat [*Sitz*] in the mind» (KrV B 319; 1998: 368), since «it is this place [*Stelle*] in which they belong that concerns how they ought to belong to each other» (KrV B 318; 1998: 367). Such «topic», as it is known, is intended to distinguish, in particular, sensibility from the understanding, since at the origin of every speculative extravagance of reason there is a confusion between appearance and noumenon, caused, precisely, by the failed demarcation of the places dedicated to one or the other kind of representation. It seems that critical philosophy has delivered to the subject the topographical chart of his mind. But what is left of imagination in this drawing?

To *make* of each faculty a place has also meant to *give* each faculty a place: a necessity that emerges from the concept of system that inspires the transcendental doctrine of elements. A system differs from an aggregate because it is based on an idea of reason which, as a purpose, or an idea of the whole, determines a priori «the domain of the manifold as well as the position [*Stelle*] of the parts with respect to each other» (KrV B 860, A 832; 1998: 691). If the unity of the aggregate is a relative unity, made up of a

¹⁴ Kant displays his complex organization of human representations as follows: «The genus is **representation** in general (*representatio*). Under it stands the representation with consciousness (*perceptio*). A **perception** that refers to the subject as a modification of its state is a **sensation** (*sensatio*); an objective perception is a **cognition** (*cognitio*). The latter is either an **intuition** or a **concept** (*intuitus vel conception*). The former is immediately related to the object and is singular; the latter is mediate, by means of a mark, which can be common to several things. A concept is either an **empirical** or a **pure concept**, and the pure concept, insofar as it has its origin solely in the understanding (not in a pure image of sensibility), is called *notio*. A concept made up of notions, which goes beyond the possibility of experience, is an **idea** or a concept of reason» (KrV B 376-377, A 320; 1998: 398). However, Kant's words preceding the abovementioned passage are even more significant: «We are not so lacking in terms properly suited to each species of representations that we have need for one to encroach on the property of another [*in das Eigenthum einer anderen einzugreifen*]» (ivi). Using a juridical lexicon, Kant claims that each representation has a «property», a «landed estate» (*Eigenthum*). Lastly, it should be noted that, with the exception of the reference to «a pure image of sensibility», which, in any case, can only be either the pure form of space or the pure form of time (cf. KrV B 182, A 142), no reference is ever made to the image, intended as a particular kind of representation.

perpetually extendable series of parts that are added extrinsically to one another, the unity of system is, instead, an absolute unity, that allows «no contingent addition or undetermined magnitude of perfection» (ivi), and that can only grow from within, «like an animal body, whose growth does not add a limb but rather makes each limb stronger and fitter for its end without any alteration of proportion» (KrV B 861, A 833; 1998: 691). The order of the system is organic, or, in the Kantian language, «architectonic», since it arranges a space in which everything that appears is localized, meaning it is located exactly where it should be. To systematize does not mean to worry about where such and such a thing should go, but to know what should be in such and such a place. This organic type of order affects the faculties collectively as a macrosystem and each one of them taken individually as a subsystem. For instance, in the opening lines of the *Transcendental Analytic*, Kant writes that it is possible to expose the concept of the pure understanding «only by means of an idea of the whole of the a priori cognition of the understanding, and through the division of concepts that such an idea determines and that constitutes it, thus only through their connection in a system» (KrV B 89, A 64-65; 1998: 201); later on, in § 10 of the *Analytic of Concepts*, Kant claims that «the headings already exist; it is merely necessary to fill them out, and a systematic topic, such as the present one, will make it easy not to miss the place [*Stelle*] where every concept properly belongs and at the same time will make it easy to notice any that is still empty» (KrV B 109, A 83; 1998: 214); lastly, in Chapter III of the *Analytic of Principles*, Kant writes: «We have now not only travelled through the land of pure understanding, and carefully inspected each part of it, but we have also surveyed it, and determined the place [*Stelle*] for each thing in it» (KrV B 294, A 235; 1998: 338-339). And what applies to the understanding also applies to the other faculties, including reason, in its paradoxical way of being part of a system designed by itself.

Now, within this topographical organization of the mind, articulated on a large as well as a small scale, it seems that everything has been given a place so that imagination has none. Heidegger, in the *Kant-Buch*, rightly states that «the transcendental imagination is homeless» (1962: 142), since not only the *Critique of Pure Reason* deprives it of a part intended for its dissertation, but, in B Deduction, it also deprives it of the role of third fundamental faculty of knowledge next to the understanding and sensibility. Yet does all of this really depend, as Heidegger claims, on Kant's recoiling from the transcendental imagination as though in front of the «abyss» of an ontological knowledge of man that he feared to face (Heidegger 1962: 166-176)? Or doesn't it rather depend on a strategy aimed at keeping imagination in check and framing it in a hole, an absence delimited by the four faculties from which it was excluded? An exclusion, of course, instrumental to its control, since Kant's Enlightenment reply to the «unbridled» and «ruleless» «inventions» of imagination (Anth 181; 2006: 74), the harbinger of madness, surely does not correspond to a rejection but, rather, to an assimilation into a system that organizes the absence of imagination on a structural level to make better use of its strength on a functional level, in the synthesis of possible and intelligible; a system, that is, designed to transform imagination into *productive* imagination, reducing its «richness» to the simplicity of the

geometric, adimensional point from which each time it will have to restart in order to (re)construct its contents. The banning of the *Schwärmerei* from the sphere of moral actions depends on a theoretically disciplined imagination¹⁵.

We reserve the detailed exposition of the capture of imagination in the system of the faculties for another work. We hope, at least, to have depicted the topographical structure that made it possible¹⁶.

3. Madness in the Organic Order of Space

The existence of such a structure, after all, could explain why Kant adopts as a synonym for «mental derangement» the term «Verrückung», which means literally «displacement». Madness in the organic order of space appears as a displacement¹⁷. The term «Verrückung» is part of Kant's medical lexicon already in 1764, when he writes the *Essay*, but his stance within nosology changes: the «Verrückung» has no more the role of species, as a disorder of sensibility (cf. VKK 270; 2007: 76), but of genus. It guides the arrangement of the entries that compose the nosology itself. Nonsenseness, deception, fabulation, and extravagance are different forms of the «Verrückung überhaupt» (Anth 214). In each of them there is a displacement of a faculty from the place assigned to it by the system, a shift, a dislocation that relocates it in the non-place of imagination. There are as many types of disorder as there are types of displacement. But only three of them have a negative connotation, as causes of «disorder» and «deviation», since when reason is delirious its displacement has a positive connotation: it does not concern something that was organized within a certain order anymore, but the order itself in which things are organized. For nonsenseness, deception, and fabulation the displacement is relative, while for extravagance it is absolute: the whole mind is displaced, and with it all the faculties that belong to it:

[...] in this last kind of mental derangement there is not merely disorder and deviation from the rule of the use of reason, but also *positive unreason* [*positive Unvernunft*], that is,

¹⁵ «*Schwärmerei* leads the exalted person to extremes [*Äußersten*], *Muhammad* to the prince's throne and *John of Leyden* to the scaffold» (VKK 267; 2007: 73). But the fate of the exalted person depends on nothing but a total abandonment of the imagination to itself. Kant writes in the *Anthropology*: «[...] the power of imagination is naturally inclined to heighten the extremes [*Äußersten*]» (Anth 173; 2006: 66). This inclination, of which Kant senses all the danger, is what the critical system of the faculties has the task of correcting, by channeling the imaginative flow in the sole direction of a figuration produced under the rules of the understanding. In this regard, we quote an illuminating passage from the *Prolegomena*: «The imagination can perhaps be excused if it fantasizes [*schwärmt*] every now and then, that is, if it does not cautiously hold itself inside the limits [*Schranken*] of experience; for it will at least be enlivened and strengthened through than to remedy its languor. That the understanding, however, which is supposed to *think*, should, instead of that, *fantasize* [*schwärmen*] – for this it can never be forgiven; for all assistance in setting bounds [*Grenzen*], where needed, to the *Schwärmerei* of the imagination depends on it alone» (Prol 317; 2004: 68-69, mod. trans.). Imagination is allowed to surpass the *Schranken* of experience as long as it remains confined within the *Grenzen* imposed by critical philosophy, that is, as long as it remains subsumed under the understanding. Beyond the *Grenzen* are the «extremes», the fanaticism of the *Schwärmer*.

¹⁶ In this article we have deliberately avoided addressing the issue of the role of imagination in the Kantian theory of knowledge, since our aim was to create the framework within which this issue should be addressed.

¹⁷ Cf. the draft in Latin of the 1786 *Rektoratsrede* (HN 939-953), where the expression «mens in sede sua mota» recurs several times.

another rule, a totally different standpoint into which the soul is transferred [*versetzt*], so to speak, and from which it sees all objects differently. And from the *Sensorio communi* that is required for the unity of *life* (of the animal), it finds itself transferred to a faraway place (hence the word *Verrückung*) – just as a mountainous landscape sketched from a bird’s-eyes view prompts a completely different judgment about region than when it is viewed from level ground (Anth 216; 2006: 110).

In truth, this passage seems to be the legacy of a physiological hypothesis presented by Kant in his winter semester lectures on anthropology in 1781-1782:

The German word *Verrückung* indicates that the soul is moved [*gerückt*] from its appropriate place. The entire system of nerves is connected in the brain, where one may think there is what doctors have only supposed, i.e. the *sensorium commune*, or *corpus callosum*, the callous cerebral matter in the striated part of the brain, where the soul should be. This is the part of the brain from which all nervous centres begin. The *Verrückung* (we do not call here *Verrückung* a *delirium*, i.e. when a man raves during a disease, but when it is a usual madness) is perhaps a malady of the *sensorio communi* (V-Anth/Mensch 1011-1012).

Although the *Anthropology*, in the *Vorrede*, openly distances itself from physiology, which wouldn’t allow but to «speculate» (*vernünfteln*) about «cranial nerves and fibers» (Anth 119; 2006: 3), it is undeniable that in the aforementioned passage Kant gives credit to the theory of the *corpus callosum*, since «in this way we explain, as best we can, the so-called *Verrückung*» (Anth 216; 2006: 110). Yet, it is also undeniable that Kant couldn’t fully believe in this theory, which has as its object not the mind (*Gemüth*) but the soul (*Seele*), unless one wishes to believe that he intended to retract the *Critique*’s chapter on the paralogisms of pure reason¹⁸. Moreover, already in the *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, when dealing with the thorny issue of the seat of the soul in the body, he would take shelter behind a non-localist position as oppose to the localist one of Knutzen and Crusius¹⁹. Thus,

¹⁸ Perhaps it is also worth mentioning Kant’s letter to Soemmering of 10 August 1795: «[...] the concept of a seat of the soul requires *local presence*, which would ascribe to the thing that is only an object of the inner sense, and insofar only determinable according to temporal conditions, a spatial relation, thereby generating a contradiction» (Br 32; 2007: 223).

¹⁹ In *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer* Kant writes: «If one pursued the question further and asked: Where then is *your* place (that of the soul) in this body? Then I should suspect there was a catch in the question. [...] The question presupposes, namely, that my thinking ‘I’ is in a place which is distinct from the places of the other parts of that body which belongs to my self. But no one is immediately conscious of a particular place in his body; one is only immediately conscious of the space which one occupies relatively to the world around. [...] For that reason, I would insist on its strict refutation before I could be persuaded to dismiss as absurd what used to be said in the schools: *My soul is wholly in my whole body, and wholly in each of its parts*» (TG 324-325; 1992b: 312-313). On the issue of the local presence of the soul in XVIII century German philosophy cf. Heßbrüggen-Walter 2014.

in a certain way, the physiological explanation belongs to that kind of provisional, non-apodictic knowledge subordinated to pragmatic purposes²⁰.

Nevertheless, if we wanted to bring the discourse on a more strictly transcendental level, we could say that Kant has translated the *sensorium commune* of metaphysical physiologists in the more purely transcendental concept of *sensus communis* (cf. Manganaro 1983: 185-186), where instead of the nervous fibres of the body, it is the cognitive faculties of the mind that are collected in a system and topographically arranged so as to establish a mutual harmony and agreement. Thus, the fourth type of *Verrückung*, absolute displacement, can surely mean the failure of a topographical arrangement of the faculties²¹. Once all of them are decentralized, they all centralize in a non-place defined by excitement and eccentricity²². The thinker (the deranged) lifts off the ground to look at things «from a bird's-eyes view». This «totally different standpoint» on things brings together the dogmatic philosophies of all times that were not able to territorialize the mind while casting their weak gaze on it. Kant's critical philosophy, soaked in what Hohenegger calls the «terminology of spatiality»²³ was born to solve an issue that was fundamentally logistical: to arrange a space that would function as a structure for the world of representation, ordering it to remove it from the dim light of imagination which confounds all. Such space could take shape only under the powerful gaze of an eye that limits and localizes, tracing dividing lines and putting each thing in its own place. But how much is there of imagination in this gaze, how much of derangement?

4. Postscript. Remarks on Critical Philosophy

From the descriptive, empirical character of Kantian nosology—which is shared, incidentally, by every nosology—it does not follow that it is located «on the edge of transcendental philosophy» (Manganaro 1983: 178). Critical knowledge is implicit in the *Anthropology*, it constitutes its secret texture, and the paragraphs concerning the classification of the faculties are the most evident proof of such implication. And yet the *Anthropology* is not just a simple collection of critical acquisitions:

[It] maintains the division of the “faculties”—*Vermögen*—as in the *Critique*. However, its privileged domain is not that where the faculties and powers show off their positive

²⁰ Knowing how to give a plausible account of madness can have its pragmatic function in certain contexts. Therefore the physiological-metaphysical concept of the seat of the soul has no value in itself, but only for the practical purpose towards which it is directed.

²¹ As Fantasia (2020: 30-41) recently pointed out, with the loss of common sense there is the loss of the possibility of claiming a universal agreement with one's own judgments. For our part, we want to highlight that Kant, in § 40 of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, identifies common sense with taste, that is, with a «proportion» of the «cognitive faculties» (UK 293; 2000: 173). Since this proportion depends on the systematic disposition of the faculties, a damage to this disposition should be detected in the general symptom of the loss of common sense.

²² The *Schwärmer* «is also often called (in milder terms) *over-excited* [*exaltirt*] or even eccentric [*excentrischer Kopf*]» (Anth 202; 2006: 97).

²³ Hohenegger acknowledges that the organic representation of space is essential for Kant on a meta-theoretical level, since it is «a constructive tool of his philosophy» (Hohenegger 2014: 520; cf. also 2012: 420-428), but does not investigate the reasons behind the choice of this tool.

attributes but where they show their failings—or at least where they face danger, where they risk being obliterated. [...] In anthropological investigation [...] the pursuit of each faculty takes the path of all possible deviation (Foucault 2006: 68-69).

The *Anthropology* is the «negative of the *Critique*» (*ibid.*: 66), hence the negative of a negative, which is the set of limitations that critical philosophy has given to the *Gemüth*. This means that through the empirical description of the misuses and pathological deviations of the cognitive faculty, confined by Kant within the range of what is purely subjective in the subject, the *Anthropology* allows us to grasp the original experience that Kant must have had of the *Gemüth*, away from categories such as those of subjective and objective. The *Gemüth* is the object the Kantian architectonic genius modelled with the territorializing tool of critical philosophy. The fact that mental illness can disrupt the system of the faculties is a sign of its contingency and factitious character, and gives us a clue as to why it was fabricated. The anthropological investigations of the 1760s have disclosed to Kant how the human mind is essentially something insane, fantasizing, even when it reasons, especially when it reasons. The *Inquiry*'s claim that «it is perhaps during sleep that the soul exercises its greatest facility in rational thought» (UD 290; 1992b: 263) will always be noteworthy. An awakening is surely not enough for a reason that also daydreams and that only in sleep has a way to fully rejoin its own essence. But is this what the critical thought really was, an awakening? Didn't reason, to distinguish itself from dream, have to dream *more*, to dream *better*, employing all that «creative poetic capacity» (*schöpferische Dichtungsfähigkeit*) with which, as Kant claims, «the soul of every human being [...] completes some imperfect resemblance in the representation of present things through one or another chimerical trait» (VKK 265; 2007: 70)?

The *Critique of Pure Reason* could not have been a «preventive measure [*Präservativ*] against a malady [*Krankheit*] of reason, which has its germ in our nature» (HN 79-80), without the resources provided to it by a systematic, organic space. Kant was not the first, and will not be the last—just think of Freud—, to take advantage of a spatial representation in order to give a philosophical account of the mind. Indeed, it is well known that Hume's idea of a mental geography played a central role in the development of Kant's critical thought:

It is remarkable concerning the operations of the mind, that, though most intimately present to us, yet, whenever they become the object of reflection, they seem involved in obscurity; nor can the eye readily find those lines and boundaries, which discriminate and distinguish them. The objects are too fine to remain long in the same aspects or situation; and must be apprehended in an instant, by a superior penetration, derived from nature, and improved by habit and reflection. It becomes, therefore, no inconsiderable part of science barely to know the different operations of the mind, to separate them from each other, to class them under their proper heads, and to correct all that seeming disorder, in which they lie involved, when made the object of reflection and enquiry. [...] And if we can go no farther than this mental geography, or delineation of the distinct parts and powers of the mind, it is at least a satisfaction to go so far... (Hume 2000: 10).

One wonders, however, if this «superior penetration», fallible, uncertain, has not been replaced, in Kant, by invention; if a fantasy has not drawn its «chimerical traits» where the eye barely sees; if the ever-changing contours of a geography have not given way to an immutable geometry, established once and for all. Hasn't Kant gone even further than Hume causing a force to turn against itself, pushing imagination to imagine the system within which it could no longer freely imagine²⁴?

Abbreviations for Kant's Works

Anth	<i>Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht</i> , in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. VII, G. Reimer, Berlin 1973.
Br	<i>Briefwechsel</i> , in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. II, Bde. X-XIII, De Gruyter, Berlin 1969.
GSM	<i>Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten</i> , in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. IV, De Gruyter, Berlin 1963.
HN	<i>Handschriftlicher Nachlass</i> , in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. III, Bde. XIV-XXIII, De Gruyter, Berlin 1925-1938.
KpV	<i>Kritik der praktischen Vernunft</i> , in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. V, De Gruyter, Berlin 1963.
KrV	<i>Kritik der reinen Vernunft</i> (2. Auf. 1787), in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. III, De Gruyter, Berlin 1962; <i>Kritik der reinen Vernunft</i> (1. Auf. 1781), in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. IV, De Gruyter, Berlin 1963.
KU	<i>Kritik der Urteilskraft</i> , in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. V, De Gruyter, Berlin 1963.
Prol	<i>Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können</i> , in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. IV, De Gruyter, Berlin 1963.
TG	<i>Träume eines Geistersehers, erläutert durch Träume der Metaphysik</i> in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. II, De Gruyter, Berlin 1969.
UD	<i>Untersuchung über die Deutlichkeit der Grundsätze der natürlichen Theologie und der Moral</i> , in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. II, De Gruyter, Berlin 1969.
VKK	<i>Versuch über die Krankheiten des Kopfes</i> , in <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , Ab. I, Bd. II, De Gruyter, Berlin 1969.
V-Anth/Mensch	<i>Vorlesungen Wintersemester 1781/1782 Menschenkunde</i> , Petersburg,

²⁴ To those who wanted to object that in aesthetic judgments there is, as Kant states, a «free play» of imagination, I reply that the latter, in its so-called freedom, must in any case conform to the rules of the understanding.

in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Ab. IV, Bd. XXV, De Gruyter, Berlin 1997.

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