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ONTOLOGY OF POVERTY**

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# Eigenzeit and the Ontology of Poverty

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## Abstract

The present volume brings together two contributions that pursue a common foundational question: under what conditions can world become binding at all, and what follows when this condition is structurally destroyed. The point of departure is the diagnosis that many contemporary crises of modern societies—political incapacity to act, the reproducibility crisis in science, the simulation of responsibility in administration and technology, and the expansion of structural poverty—share a common but rarely articulated cause: an inadequate ontology of time.

The first contribution develops the concept of **Eigenzeit** as a categorical alternative to dominant models of time, particularly to the widespread assumption of a block-like continuum of world-time. Eigenzeit does not denote subjective duration or a physical measure, but an ontological operation: the non-delegable instantiation of world-time in human action. Time appears here not as a neutral container of events but as the effect of irreversible closures in structurally open worlds. Decisions do not merely produce changes within an already given temporal framework; they bind world irreversibly. From this perspective, far-reaching consequences emerge for science, politics, and human rights. Reproducibility proves to be a property of closed world-conditions; politics reveals itself as structurally incapable of deciding Eigenzeit collectively; and rights appear insufficient insofar as they implicitly address the human being without protected Eigenzeit as an administrable object.

The second contribution examines the social consequences of this ontological structure. Building on the concept of Eigenzeit, poverty is interpreted not as a socio-economic condition of scarcity but as the ontological consequence of systematically withdrawn world-binding. Modern systems of work, markets, and social security increasingly organize action in procedural time while structurally preventing irreversible world-binding. Poverty thus appears as a permanent impossibility of living Eigenzeit. This condition is conceptualized as **existential prohibition (Existenzverbot)**: a structural constellation in which life remains formally permitted, yet the possibility of performing actions that bind and carry world is effectively withdrawn.

Taken together, the contributions show that central societal conflicts arise not primarily from moral or organizational deficits but from a temporal-ontological blindness toward irreversible world-formation. The volume therefore does not propose Eigenzeit as another model of time, but as a necessary categorical complement wherever reality is not presupposed but brought into being through responsible decision. From this perspective, poverty, political paralysis, and the simulation of responsibility appear as symptoms of an order that administers time while failing to protect the conditions under which time—and thus world—can come into existence.

**Keywords:** Eigenzeit, ontology of time, philosophy of time, block universe critique, ontology of decision, irreversible world-formation, world-binding, non-delegable responsibility, irreversibility and freedom, openness and closure ontology, time and responsibility, decision theory ontology, simulation and responsibility, limits of simulation, critique of probabilistic freedom models, critique of many-worlds ontology, trace of lost possibility, ontology of action, ontology of reality formation, temporal ontology of responsibility, reproducibility crisis in science, ontology of scientific knowledge, traceability vs reproducibility, epistemic conditions of knowledge production, open time vs closed time, philosophy of science and time, ontology of knowledge production, Eigenzeit and science, politics and time ontology, limits of political decision, structural limits of collective decision-making, responsibility and political ontology, symbolic politics and simulation, human rights and temporal conditions, affordances and world-binding, pre-legal conditions of agency, ontology of human rights, temporal conditions of subjectivity, poverty ontology, ontology of poverty, poverty as loss of world-binding, poverty as loss of Eigenzeit, existential prohibition, Existenzverbot, structural violence and time, administrative stabilization of poverty, wage labour ontology, critique of wage labour, market time vs Eigenzeit, procedural time and administration, market and state time loop, substitute binding, addiction and world-loss, neurodivergence and world-binding, autistic epistemology and work, self-determined work, work as world-binding practice, work before value, operatoric research, operatoric ontology, world-formation theory, temporal crisis of modern societies, responsibility and irreversibility, limits of institutional simulation, structural impossibility of agency, ontology of societal crises, time and social theory, Eigenzeit and structural poverty, temporal foundations of social order

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# Introduction

The contemporary crises of modern societies are usually described as political, economic, or technological problems. Political systems appear increasingly incapable of decisive action, scientific knowledge loses its binding force, administration and digital technologies simulate responsibility, while social inequality and structural poverty continue to expand. These phenomena are typically interpreted as the result of inadequate policies, coordination failures, or deficits in moral orientation. The present volume approaches the issue from a different angle. It proceeds from the assumption that many of these crises share a deeper common cause: an inadequate ontology of time.

In the dominant models of modern science, politics, and administration, time appears as a neutral background within which events take place. Decisions are understood as selections within an already given temporal continuum; responsibility is attributed retrospectively; and social processes are organized as distributable and coordinable sequences. This conception has historically proven extraordinarily successful. It enables planning, standardization, reproducibility, and institutional coordination of complex systems. At the same time, however, it produces a systematic blindness toward a fundamental aspect of reality: the fact that in many situations the world cannot simply be presupposed but emerges only through irreversible decisions.

The first contribution of this volume develops the concept of **Eigenzeit** to address this issue. Eigenzeit does not denote subjective duration, psychological time perception, or a physical measure. Rather, it refers to an ontological operation: the non-delegable instantiation of world-time in human action. Where decisions occur that irreversibly eliminate real possibilities, world becomes binding. Time appears here not as a pre-existing dimension but as the trace of lost possibility. Under these conditions, decisions are not merely selective acts within a given temporal framework; they are moments of irreversible world-formation.

This perspective shifts the discussion across several central domains. In science, it becomes visible that the demand for full reproducibility presupposes conditions in which the world is already stabilized. Where knowledge intervenes in open and irreversible processes, reproducibility can no longer serve as the sole criterion of objectivity. In politics, it becomes clear that collective procedures can organize decisions but remain structurally incapable of performing the form of irreversible world-binding in which Eigenzeit arises. And within the domain of human rights, it becomes evident that rights often intervene only after the conditions necessary for eigenzeit-based decision have already been destroyed.

The second contribution of this volume examines the social consequences of this temporal-ontological shift. Starting from the concept of Eigenzeit, poverty is interpreted not merely as a lack of resources but as a condition of structurally blocked world-binding. Modern systems of work, markets, and social security increasingly organize action within procedural time. Activities become measurable, comparable, and administrable, while irreversible responsibility and individual world-binding are systematically externalized or neutralized. In such a constellation, poverty does not arise only where income is lacking, but where actions no longer find a place in which they can bind world.

The concept of **existential prohibition (Existenzverbot)** describes this condition as a structural limit of social orders. What is meant is not a formal prohibition on living, but a situation in which life is administratively maintained while the possibility of carrying world through one's own action disappears. Market and administration do not operate here as opposites but as complementary mechanisms. Markets replace world-binding with the valorization of time, while administrative systems stabilize the consequences of this loss through procedural forms of social security.

The contributions assembled in this volume do not propose reform programs or normative prescriptions. Their aim is to mark a categorical boundary. They show that many contemporary social conflicts do not arise solely from institutional failures but from a fundamental confusion: time is treated as something already given, although in decisive situations it emerges only through acts of irreversible world-binding.

Eigenzeit therefore does not represent another theory of time. It marks a necessary ontological category wherever reality cannot be presupposed but must be brought into being. It designates the point at which simulation ends and responsibility begins. From this perspective, the focus of societal self-understanding shifts accordingly. The central question is no longer which programs or institutions are required, but under what conditions world can emerge at all.

**Eigenzeit.**  
**On the Limits of Block Time and the**  
**Ontological Costs of Decision, Responsibility,**  
**and Simulation**  
*Implications for Science, Politics, and*  
*Societal Reality Formation*

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**Abstract**

The current crises of modern societies—ranging from political incapacity to act, through the reproducibility crisis in science, to the simulation of responsibility in administration and AI—cannot be adequately understood as mere problems of programs, morality, or governance. They point to a deeper deficit: an inadequate ontology of time.

Starting from the dominance of block-time models in physics, philosophy of science, and political practice, this paper develops the concept of Eigenzeit as a categorical alternative. Eigenzeit denotes the non-delegable instantiation of world-time in human action, in which decision, responsibility, and irreversible world-binding are inseparably intertwined. Time thus appears not as a given dimension or measurable duration, but as the effect of irreversible closures in structurally incomplete worlds.

In contrast to block time, probabilistic models of freedom, and information-ontological approaches (e.g., simulation, “It from Bit”), decision is not understood as a selective or aggregative act, but as an ontologically binding set-point. This entails fundamental consequences: reproducibility proves to be a criterion of closed world-forms; politics proves structurally incapable of deciding Eigenzeit collectively; and human and fundamental rights prove insufficient insofar as they implicitly address the human being without protected Eigenzeit as an object.

Eigenzeit is thus not proposed as another model of time, but as a necessary ontological category for irreversible, non-simulable world-conditions, and as the foundation of a theory of societal reality formation beyond administration, simulation, and symbolic politics.

## Central Theses on Eigenzeit

- 1. Time is not a neutral dimension, but a condition of world-formation.**  
Time does not arise prior to decisions, but where structural openness is irreversibly closed.
- 2. Block time is not false, but a historically situated ontology.**  
It is adequate for stable, delegation-capable world conditions, but fails where decisions generate real irreversibility.
- 3. Eigenzeit denotes not duration, but an ontological operation.**  
It is the non-delegable instantiation of world-time in human action, in which decision, responsibility, and irreversible world-binding are inseparably intertwined.
- 4. World is structurally incomplete until a decision is made.**  
Decision is not the selection among given options, but the closure of world through the loss of real possibilities.
- 5. Freedom is not an axiom, but a cost relation.**  
Where freedom is real, it consumes Eigenzeit and cannot be simulated, externalized, or aggregated.
- 6. Simulation produces no Eigenzeit.**  
Models, forecasts, scenarios, and AI systems operate prior to closure and can represent responsibility, but cannot bear it.
- 7. Reproducibility is a criterion of closed time, not of universal truth.**  
Where knowledge consumes Eigenzeit, full reproducibility is categorically impossible—not deficient.
- 8. The reproducibility crisis of modern science is a time crisis.**  
It results from the attempt to grasp open, world-forming processes with methods that function only under conditions of closed time.
- 9. Politics cannot decide Eigenzeit collectively.**  
It is structurally dependent on symbolic, procedural, and time-extending operations and therefore incapable of carrying out irreversible world-binding by proxy.
- 10. Demands for personal responsibility without protection of Eigenzeit constitute structural violence.**  
They demand decision under conditions in which affordances are systematically destroyed.
- 11. Human and fundamental rights intervene too late once Eigenzeit has already been lost.**  
Without structural protection of Eigenzeit, rights implicitly address the human being as an object of administrable states.
- 12. Eigenzeit marks a pre-legal, pre-political boundary.**  
Politics cannot generate Eigenzeit, but it can protect or destroy its conditions.

**13. Societal crises are not primarily moral or technological crises, but temporal ones.**

They arise where real closure is required while institutions persist in the mode of simulation.

**14. Reality formation is not governable, but binding-dependent.**

Where decision is no longer possible because *Eigenzeit* has been destroyed, world collapses not spectacularly, but administratively.

**15. An ontology without *Eigenzeit* is necessarily blind to responsibility.**

It systematically recognizes only what demands no irreversible binding.

## **I. The Crisis of Concepts of Time**

The current crises of modern societies cannot be adequately grasped by established explanatory frameworks. Political programs fail despite broad expertise. Scientific knowledge loses its binding force. Technological systems simulate agency without bearing responsibility. These phenomena are usually described as problems of governance, communication deficits, or moral failure. This contribution goes deeper. It addresses the ontology of time that underlies these practices.

Modern societies operate implicitly with a conception of time that treats time as neutral, delegable, and simulable. Decisions appear as points of selection within an already existing temporal framework. Responsibility is attributed retrospectively. Irreversibility is regarded as a contingent effect. This ontology—referred to in the following as block time—is deeply embedded in physics, philosophy of science, administration, and politics. It enables planning, reproducibility, modeling, and coordination. Above all, however, it relieves us of a demand: the assumption that time itself comes into being only in the enactment of human action.

This relief is not without consequences. In a world increasingly shaped by irreversible ecological, technological, and social processes, block time loses its orienting capacity. Decisions no longer merely exclude options; they destroy real possibilities. Responsibility can no longer be symbolically distributed without producing real damage. Simulation does not replace world-binding. Time itself becomes a bottleneck of societal reality.

The central point of departure of this contribution is therefore simple—and radical: The crisis of modern societies is essentially a crisis of their ontology of time. Not because time has become “scarce,” but because it is systematically conceived as something that precedes decisions and unfolds independently of them.

Against this assumption, the text develops the concept of *Eigenzeit*. *Eigenzeit* denotes neither subjective duration, nor psychological experience, nor a physical measure. It denotes an ontological operation: the non-delegable instantiation of world-time in human action. Where decisions are made, world is irreversibly bound. Time appears here not as a container, but as the trace of lost possibility.

This fundamentally shifts the focus. Decision is not an event in time. It is the site at which time becomes effective. Responsibility is not a retrospective attribution, but the immediate consequence of irreversible closure. World is not fully given. It remains structurally incomplete as long as decision is pending.

The contribution pursues three aims. First, it shows that block-time models do not represent timeless truths, but historically situated ontologies of delegation-capable world conditions. Second, *Eigenzeit* is precisely defined as a categorical alternative and distinguished from existing concepts of time. Third, the consequences of this shift for science, politics, and human rights are elaborated. The issue is not reform proposals or normative appeals, but a boundary determination of what can still be meaningfully thought under conditions of irreversible reality formation.

The thesis is simple. And it is uncomfortable:

**Where *Eigenzeit* is not thought, responsibility is necessarily simulated.  
And where responsibility is simulated, world loses its binding force—not  
spectacularly, but administratively.**

## II. Block Time as a Historically Situated Ontology

Block time is not a naïve conception of time. It is a highly successful ontological abstraction. In its physical formulation—particularly in the spacetime conception of relativity theory—it enables a precise description of motions, correlations, and invariances. In this sense, block time is formally correct and empirically powerful. There is no doubt about this. The present contribution does not question this power. It questions something else: its claim to ontological absoluteness.

In the block-time model, time is one dimension among others. Past, present, and future exist equally. Change is a matter of perspective, not of world-formation. Decisions appear as localizable events within an already complete temporal continuum. Responsibility thus becomes necessarily secondary. It does not describe what binds world, but how actions are evaluated within an already existing world-context.

This ontology is closely linked to the spacetime formulation of Albert Einstein and its mathematical specification by Hermann Minkowski. The decisive point, however, is this: neither relativity theory nor its mathematical formalism compels a block-ontological reading. Block time is an interpretation, not a physical necessity. It emerges where the formal description of time as a coordinate is elevated to a statement about reality itself.

This shift is not innocent. Historically, it coincides non-accidentally with the emergence of modern systems of administration, planning, and control. Block time proves ontologically compatible with industrial production, bureaucratic organization, military logistics, and later with cybernetic modeling. It allows time to be synchronized, processes to be standardized, and responsibility to be distributed across procedures. In this sense, block time is not merely a physical model. It is a foundational ontology of delegation-capable societies.

The decisive point is not that block time would be false. The decisive point is that it is stability-dependent. It presupposes a world in which decisions have predominantly reversible effects, in

which errors remain corrigible, and in which the future can be treated as a calculable space of possibilities. Under these conditions, it is reasonable to think time as a container and to organize responsibility procedurally.

These conditions, however, are not timeless. They mark a specific historical situation. With the increase of irreversible processes—ecological, technological, social—block time begins to lose its orienting function. Decisions no longer merely generate deviations within a stable frame. They close world. Irreversibly. Where this occurs, an ontology that conceives time as already fully given fails.

Here the proper limit of block time becomes visible. It knows no becoming, only localization. It can describe motions, but not world-formation. Decision becomes a coordinate value, not an ontological cut. Responsibility remains interpretable, but not compelling. Irreversibility appears as a special case, not as a basic condition.

The present contribution therefore understands block time as a historically adequate ontology of stabilized world-conditions—not as a universal description of time. Its domain of validity is real, but limited. Beyond this domain—where decisions destroy real possibilities and are not delegable—another category becomes necessary. This category is not to be understood as an extension of block time.

It is a rupture.

This rupture is captured in what follows by the concept of *Eigenzeit*.

### **III. *Eigenzeit*: Definition and Categorical Delimitation**

The concept of *Eigenzeit* is used in this contribution neither metaphorically, nor phenomenologically, nor functionally. It does not denote subjective time perception, inner duration, or system-internal dynamics. Nor is *Eigenzeit* a physical measure in the sense of relativity theory. Rather, the term marks an ontological operation that has so far been systematically excluded from dominant models of time.

***Eigenzeit* denotes the non-delegable instantiation of world-time in human action, in which decision, responsibility, and irreversible world-binding are inseparably intertwined.**

This definition is deliberately precise and restrictive. It does not aim at an extension of existing concepts of time, but at a categorical shift. *Eigenzeit* does not denote time as duration, but time as efficacy. It does not arise prior to decisions and does not exist independently of them. It becomes real where decisions are made—and where world is thereby irreversibly bound.

Central here is non-delegability. *Eigenzeit* can neither be outsourced, nor simulated, nor enacted by proxy. Where *Eigenzeit* becomes effective, someone concretely loses possibilities. These losses are not transferable, not compensable, and not reversible. This is precisely what fundamentally distinguishes *Eigenzeit* from institutional time, process time, or model time.

In physics, the term *Eigenzeit* (*proper time*) refers to the duration measured along a system's worldline. This usage is technically precise, but ontologically neutral. It describes how much

time passes, not how time comes into being. The Eigenzeit developed here stands in no conceptual continuum with this usage. The overlap is terminological, not conceptual.

Eigenzeit is equally distinct from phenomenological concepts of time. Subjective time experience, lived time, or duration of consciousness presuppose an already existing subject that experiences time. Eigenzeit, by contrast, denotes the process in which subject and world-binding first enter into an irreversible relation. It is not an experience *in* time. It is the condition under which time becomes effective as world-time at all.

Decisive, therefore, is this: Eigenzeit is not a property of actors or systems. It is a structure of action under irreversibility. Where a decision is made that cannot be delegated, time is not consumed but produced. Time appears here as the trace of lost possibility—not as a neutral medium in which events unfold.

This determination fundamentally shifts the concept of decision. In this model, decision is not a selection among given options. It is an ontological act of closure. Prior to the decision, world is structurally incomplete. After the decision, it is binding. Eigenzeit denotes precisely this transition—not as a moment, but as an irreversible set.

Eigenzeit is therefore inseparably linked to responsibility. Responsibility here is neither a moral attribution nor a social convention. It is the necessary consequence of irreversible world-binding. Where Eigenzeit becomes effective, responsibility can neither be externalized nor relativized.

In conclusion, Eigenzeit can be concisely determined as follows:

It is that form of time in which world is not presupposed, but brought forth.

It marks the boundary at which simulation ends and reality begins.

Eigenzeit is not a phenomenological concept of time,  
nor a modification of physical time models.

It marks a categorical alternative to block-universe ontologies.

While block-time models treat time as a dimension in which events are located, Eigenzeit describes the operation through which world becomes binding at all.

Time is therefore not a container of decisions,  
but the effect of irreversible world-closure.

#### **IV. Openness and Closure: World Is Incomplete Until a Decision Is Made**

The central difference between block-time models and the concept of Eigenzeit cannot be clarified in terms of determinism or freedom. It is decided by the relation between openness and closure. Block-time ontologies presuppose that world already exists as a totality. Openness appears within them merely epistemically: as ignorance about an already existing future state. Under these conditions, decision means selection or localization within a complete space of possibilities.

The concept of Eigenzeit fundamentally contradicts this assumption. It does not begin with the choice between options, but with the non-completeness of world. Prior to decision, world does not exist as a whole. It is structurally incomplete. This incompleteness is not a deficit of knowledge. It is an ontological condition. Openness here does not denote the multiplicity of possible paths, but the non-presence of world-binding.

Under these conditions, decision is not a selective act. It is an act of closure. It brings world into a binding form by annihilating possibility. What is not realized does not persist as an alternative world. It is lost. In this model, time does not arise as the extension of an already given continuum, but as the trace of this loss. Eigenzeit is the name for precisely this irreversible transition.

This determination has far-reaching consequences. First, time does not exist prior to decision, but becomes effective through decision. Second, the future cannot be conceived as a space of already existing possibilities. The future is open because world is incomplete—not because multiple options are available. Third, it follows that decision is always bound up with real risk. Risk here is not probabilistic. It is ontological. It consists in the loss of possibility, not in uncertainty about outcomes.

In this respect, Eigenzeit differs fundamentally from models that explain openness through branching, such as many-worlds interpretations or probabilistic concepts of freedom. In such models, openness remains without consequence, because no possibility is actually lost. World multiplies instead of binding itself. Eigenzeit is incompatible with any ontology that avoids closure. Where nothing is lost, no time has come into being.

The consequence is as simple as it is radical: time arises where openness ends. It is not a medium in which decisions take place. It is the result of irreversible binding. Without closure, openness remains empty. Without openness, closure would be meaningless. Eigenzeit denotes the unity of these two moments in the enactment of human action.

This also makes clear why Eigenzeit is not aggregable. Closure always concerns concrete world-relations. It cannot be carried out collectively, distributed statistically, or compensated retrospectively. Every decision that consumes Eigenzeit binds world locally and irreversibly. This binding is singular, even if its effects are collectively operative.

The concept of Eigenzeit thus shifts the focus from freedom of decision to the reality of decision. Freedom here is not an abstract possibility. It is the condition under which world can become binding at all. Where decision is merely simulated, world remains open—but without consequence. Where decision is real, world closes. And only then does time arise.

## **V. Eigenzeit and Freedom: Beyond Block Universe, Branching, and Probability**

The debate on freedom in modern models of time has largely been reduced to a question of compatibility: Is freedom compatible with determinism or not? This framing already presupposes that world exists as a temporal totality and that freedom must be conceived merely as a property of agents within this totality. It is precisely this presupposition that is rejected by the concept of Eigenzeit. Freedom appears here not as a property, but as an ontological operation.

In the block universe, past, present, and future exist equally. Decisions are localizable events whose outcomes may be epistemically uncertain, but are ontologically fixed. Freedom thus appears either as an illusion or as a mere perspectival phenomenon. Responsibility becomes narrative: it explains actions, but binds no world. Within such an ontology, nothing can truly be at stake.

Probabilistic models of freedom alter little in this structure. They replace necessity with probability without relinquishing the status of world as already fully given. Openness appears as dispersion, not as incompleteness. Decision selects an outcome, but annihilates no world-possibilities. Risk remains calculative. It is computed, not borne.

Branching models as well—most notably many-worlds interpretations—likewise evade the core of the problem. By realizing every possibility, they eliminate loss. Closure does not occur; it is replaced by multiplication. Time expands rather than binds. Responsibility is decoupled from world-loss and reduced to a mere assignment within a multiverse. Where everything happens, nothing happens in a binding sense.

The concept of *Eigenzeit* is incompatible with these models. It presupposes that decision has a cost. Freedom here is not an axiom that can be assumed, but a cost relation. It exists only where real possibilities are irreversibly lost. Where no loss occurs, no freedom has been realized. There, only variation has been produced.

Freedom is thereby determined both more precisely and more harshly. It is not the possibility of acting otherwise, but the impossibility of undoing what has been decided. Freedom is not openness in the sense of arbitrariness, but closure under responsibility. *Eigenzeit* is the name for the time that arises in this act of closure.

This determination also explains why freedom is not delegable. No one can lose world on behalf of others. Collectives can distribute consequences, but they cannot enact *Eigenzeit*. Where systems claim to make decisions without anyone losing real possibilities, freedom is simulated rather than realized.

The decisive point, therefore, is not whether freedom is compatible with physical laws. What matters is whether an ontology allows for a time in which decision binds world. Block-universe models, probabilistic approaches, and branching ontologies avoid this question by freezing, dispersing, or multiplying time. *Eigenzeit* confronts them with what they systematically exclude: irreversibility as a condition of reality.

Freedom, in this sense, is not a metaphysical riddle. It is an ontological demand. It requires that world not be complete before a decision is made—and that decision thereafter closes world irrevocably. Any theory that cannot think this connection may assert freedom; it cannot explain it.

## **VI. Consequences for Science: Reproducibility, Objectivity, and the Costs of Knowledge**

The concept of *Eigenzeit* is not an attack on science. It is a boundary determination. It marks the point at which it becomes clear which forms of knowledge science can acknowledge

without misconstruing its own premises. This boundary does not run between “hard” and “soft” sciences, but between closed and world-forming processes of knowledge production.

The classical notion of reproducibility presupposes that knowledge is generated under conditions that remain stable independently of the concrete act of inquiry. Observers are interchangeable, situations are standardizable, and time is treated as reversible. Knowledge can be repeated without changing the world in the process. These assumptions are legitimate and indispensable in many domains. They apply wherever world is already closed.

The concept of *Eigenzeit*, however, makes visible that these assumptions are not universal. Where knowledge consumes *Eigenzeit*, it changes the world it describes. It binds actors, institutions, and realities irreversibly. Under such conditions, full reproducibility is not merely practically difficult, but categorically impossible. Attempting to enforce it nonetheless does not lead to better science, but to systematic distortion.

From this perspective, the much-discussed reproducibility crisis does not appear primarily as a methodological or statistical problem. It is a conflict of time. Phenomena are investigated that arise in open, unstable, and irreversible world conditions, while the methods employed demand reproducibility under conditions of closed time. The failure is not accidental. It is structural.

*Eigenzeit* therefore enforces a shift in the epistemic standard. In place of reproducibility comes traceability. Knowledge is not validated by its identical repetition, but by making explicit its commitments, conditions, and consequences. Whoever claims *Eigenzeit* must disclose what was lost, who was bound, and which world thereby came into being.

This shift does not relativize objectivity. It sharpens it. Objectivity is no longer the absence of binding, but the transparency of irreversible commitments. Knowledge that consumes *Eigenzeit* is not less objective. It is differently obligated. It cannot be delegated without losing its truth-content.

This also clarifies why certain forms of knowledge—such as those arising in social, political, or artistic research contexts—are systematically marginalized. Not because they are imprecise, but because they bind world rather than merely observe it. Their knowledge is costly. It costs time in the strong sense. A science that recognizes only reproducible knowledge necessarily recognizes only what demands no responsibility.

The concept of *Eigenzeit* allows this tension to be articulated openly without lapsing into skepticism toward science. It distinguishes between knowledge in closed time, for which reproducibility remains a central criterion, and knowledge in open time, for which other standards must apply. This distinction is not a hierarchy. It is a boundary determination.

Science is therefore not faced with a choice between objectivity and responsibility. It is faced with the task of making its ontology of time explicit. Where it fails to do so, it institutionalizes its own blind spots. Where it does so, it can distinguish between forms of knowledge without playing them off against one another.

*Eigenzeit* makes this distinction possible. It shows that reproducibility is not a universal criterion of quality, but a property of stabilized world conditions. Where world comes into being only in the act of knowing, science cannot reproduce without missing what it seeks to know.

## **VII. Politics, Personal Responsibility, and the Structural Impossibility of Collective Eigenzeit**

The concept of Eigenzeit exposes a boundary at which political theory and practice necessarily fail. This failure is not a shortcoming of individual actors, nor a lack of programs. It is categorical. Politics cannot decide Eigenzeit for a collective. This statement is neither normative nor polemical. It follows directly from the non-delegability of Eigenzeit.

Politics necessarily operates collectively. It aggregates interests, distributes resources, sets rules, and organizes procedures. Its temporal form is procedural, symbolic, and extensible. Decisions are legitimized, postponed, revised, or carried by majorities. This structure is not a deficit; it is the condition of political possibility. Precisely for this reason, politics is structurally incapable of performing the kind of decision in which Eigenzeit arises.

Eigenzeit is singular. It binds world locally and irreversibly. It cannot be voted on, distributed, or borne by proxy. Where politics claims to decide Eigenzeit collectively, it produces either coercion or simulation. Neither replaces real world-binding. Collectives can distribute consequences, but they cannot lose possibilities. They can ascribe responsibility, but they cannot enact responsibility.

This boundary explains a central paradox of contemporary politics. The greater the pressure to decide, the more politics retreats into symbolic forms. Programs, summits, target figures, and narratives proliferate, while real agency diminishes. Not because politics lacks will, but because real closure lies outside its domain of competence. Where irreversible decisions are demanded, politics can react, moderate, or legitimize—but it cannot decide.

In this context, appeals to personal responsibility appear not as emancipatory gestures, but as reflexes of overload. Responsibility is delegated downward, while the conditions of its possibility remain unprotected. Personal responsibility is demanded without securing Eigenzeit. The result is not autonomy, but the withdrawal of agency. Individuals become bearers of risks they did not decide.

This mechanism becomes especially visible where Eigenzeit is structurally fragile: among the socially marginalized, the chronically ill, neurodivergent persons, and precarious workers. Where affordances have been destroyed, every demand for responsibility becomes a burden. Decision is required where no openness remains. Closure is enforced where world has already collapsed. The result is not freedom, but exhaustion, pathologization, and withdrawal.

The concept of Eigenzeit makes clear that this pattern is not a misapplication of political principles. It is a boundary violation. Politics cannot produce Eigenzeit. It can, however, protect it—or destroy it. Herein lies its real responsibility. Where politics seeks to protect Eigenzeit, it must not decide by proxy, but secure affordances, reduce time pressure, and avoid irreversible impositions. Where it fails to do so, it inevitably becomes a machine of responsibility simulation.

This insight shifts the standard of political evaluation. Politics does not fail where it produces no final solutions. It fails where it creates conditions under which Eigenzeit is systematically rendered impossible. Symbolic politics then becomes a substitute for real closure. Responsibility is invoked while world-binding fails to occur.

The decisive point, therefore, is not to improve politics through moral appeals, but to recognize its ontological boundary. Politics is not a site of world-formation. It is a site of world-administration. Where administration attempts to produce world, simulation emerges. Where it respects *Eigenzeit*, it can at least prevent reality from being destroyed before it can come into being.

*Eigenzeit* thus marks a pre-political boundary. It eludes collective decision without being unpolitical. On the contrary: it reveals where politics can intervene—and where it cannot. A politics that ignores this boundary necessarily becomes symbolic. A politics that acknowledges it cannot decide world, but it can leave space in which world can emerge.

### **VIII. Human Rights, Affordances, and the Objectification of the Human Being Without *Eigenzeit***

The boundary of political decision-making capacity simultaneously marks a boundary of contemporary human rights discourse. Human and fundamental rights are regarded as the final protective instance against state and societal encroachments. The concept of *Eigenzeit*, however, makes visible that these rights intervene structurally too late whenever they address the human being not as a bearer of *Eigenzeit*, but as an object of administrable states.

Rights operate predominantly in a reactive mode. They take effect once damage has occurred, once a violation becomes demonstrable, once claims can be formulated, procedures initiated, and competences clarified. This logic presupposes a human being who is already able to articulate their situation, file applications, meet deadlines, and endure burdens. Here lies the blind spot. *Eigenzeit* is pre-legal.

*Eigenzeit* denotes the temporal interval in which world-binding becomes possible in the first place. When this interval is destroyed—through overload, acceleration, permanent insecurity, or structural violence—the human being loses not only rights, but the capacity to make rights effective at all. In this condition, the person is implicitly rendered an object: addressable, classifiable, administrable—but no longer capable of decision.

The concept of affordances is central here. Affordances denote the real possibilities for action that an environment offers an actor. *Eigenzeit* exists only where affordances are present that make decision possible at all. Human rights primarily protect formal claims. They do not, however, systematically protect the temporal and situational conditions under which affordances are preserved. Where these conditions are absent, rights may be formally upheld and yet effectively emptied.

This explains why it is precisely the most vulnerable who systematically fall through every protective net. Not because they lack rights, but because their *Eigenzeit* has already been destroyed prior to any legal intervention. The subsequent objectification—as case file, record, diagnosis, or statistic—is not a misinterpretation. It is the logical consequence of a concept of rights that presupposes time as neutral.

The human being without protected *Eigenzeit* then appears as a bearer of states, not as a bearer of world-binding. Responsibility is ascribed without the possibility of decision. Guilt is administered without freedom having existed. Rights are granted without time being available

to realize them. In this constellation, law itself becomes part of the simulation. It documents damage without protecting world.

The concept of *Eigenzeit* therefore enforces a radical shift: away from the question of which rights human beings have, toward the question of under which temporal conditions human beings can appear as subjects at all. Without this shift, human rights necessarily remain *ex post*. They administer injuries instead of enabling world-binding.

*Eigenzeit* does not demand a new legal system. It demands an ontological supplement: the protection of the conditions under which decision remains possible. Where this protection is absent, rights lose their addressee. They remain correctly formulated—but devoid of reality.

### **IX. Conclusion: Reality Formation Instead of Policy Programs**

The conception of *Eigenzeit* developed here does not aim at reforming existing theories. It aims at a boundary determination. It shifts the focus from contents, programs, and norms to the temporal conditions under which reality can emerge at all. This shift has become necessary because the dominant ontologies of time—above all block-time models—have lost their orienting function under conditions of irreversible world-formation.

*Eigenzeit* denotes the non-delegable instantiation of world-time in human action. It arises where decision irreversibly binds world. This form of time is neither simulable nor aggregable. It eludes collective decision just as much as technical delegation. Precisely for this reason, it marks a boundary at which science, politics, and law must reorient themselves.

The consequences are unequivocal. Science can no longer assume that all relevant knowledge arises under reproducible conditions. Politics can no longer demand responsibility without structurally protecting *Eigenzeit*. Human rights are insufficient as long as they implicitly address the human being as a timelessly available object. In all these domains, the same structure becomes visible: where *Eigenzeit* is ignored, responsibility is simulated.

This contribution has shown that this simulation is not a moral failure. It is the ontological consequence of false assumptions about time. Block time is not false, but limited. It is adequate for stable, delegation-capable world conditions. In a world of real irreversibility, it becomes a source of systematic blindness. *Eigenzeit* is therefore not a better model. It is a necessary category wherever world can no longer be presupposed.

Accordingly, the horizon of societal self-understanding shifts fundamentally. The central question is no longer which programs we need, but how reality comes into being. Not how decisions are legitimized, but who binds world. Not how responsibility is distributed, but where it becomes non-transferable.

In this sense, the crisis of our time is not primarily a political, scientific, or technological crisis. It is a temporal crisis. It arises where irreversible closure is required while institutions persist in the mode of simulation. *Eigenzeit* makes this crisis visible—and marks the boundary at which reality begins again.

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**This work operates operatorically rather than discursively; its claims are derived from internal structural invariance rather than from literature synthesis.**

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# Eigenzeit and Existential Prohibition: Poverty as an Ontological Consequence

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## Abstract

This paper advances the thesis that poverty is not a socio-economic condition but an ontological consequence: the result of systematically withdrawn *Eigenzeit*. Poverty emerges where the world can no longer be bound, where action is organized without bearing, responsibility without world, and time without irreversibility. The point of departure is the concept of *Eigenzeit* developed in earlier work as the non-delegable instantiation of world-time in action. *Eigenzeit* names the condition under which life becomes structurally viable at all, because decision irreversibly binds world.

The paper argues that modern systems of work, markets, and social security structurally undermine this condition. Wage labour replaces world-binding with procedural time; social security systems administer the loss of *Eigenzeit* without being able to remedy it. Poverty thus appears not as a lack of resources, but as a permanent impossibility of living *Eigenzeit*. This impossibility is conceptualized here as *existential prohibition*: not as repression or exclusion, but as the structural prevention of viable world-binding.

Neurodivergent existences do not function as a special case in this analysis, but as early indicators. Through them, what applies more generally becomes visible: where *Eigenzeit* is systematically rendered impossible, it is not only individual biographies that collapse, but the ontological viability of societal orders themselves. The paper does not propose reforms; it marks a limit: poverty is not solvable as long as the world is merely administered.

The analysis developed here does not arise from detached observation, but from long-term operatoric research in which *Eigenzeit* was systematically blocked under real institutional conditions.

## 1. From the Collapse of Eigenzeit to Poverty

Poverty does not begin with money.  
It begins where the world can no longer be borne.

This is not a rhetorical intensification, but an ontological determination. Poverty is not primarily a lack, but an impossibility: the impossibility of carrying out action in a way that binds world; the impossibility of bearing responsibility rather than simulating it; the impossibility of living time as *Eigenzeit* rather than consuming it as mere procedural time.

The first paper showed that *Eigenzeit* collapses when binding is systematically withdrawn while responsibility formally remains in place. This second paper starts precisely there. It no longer

asks why *Eigenzeit* collapses, but what follows when this collapse does not remain episodic but becomes a permanent condition. Poverty is this condition.

Poverty is the state in which *Eigenzeit* can no longer become effective.

This shifts the entire interpretive framework. Poverty is not a social risk, not a misallocation, not insufficient integration. It is the structural consequence of an order that presupposes world-binding while simultaneously making it systematically impossible. It is not a marginal phenomenon, but an inner limit-state of modern societies.

Crucially, poverty does not arise only after collapse. It is itself the continued collapse—administratively stabilized. While *Eigenzeit*-collapse was described in the first paper as a limit event, it appears here in its consolidation: as life under conditions of permanent interruption of binding.

What appears in socio-political terms as “participation,” “activation,” or “security” is ontologically something else: the administration of a loss of world that can no longer be reversed. Poverty is not the opposite of work, but the result of work that no longer binds world.

Where work no longer produces world, it produces poverty—even when it provides employment.

This makes it intelligible why poverty does not disappear but grows, even as systems become ever more densely regulated. They combat symptoms while destroying the condition under which life can be bearable at all: *Eigenzeit*.

The concept of *Eigenzeit* developed here is not to be understood as a variant of alienation, precarity, or biopolitical administration, but as a prior ontological condition whose withdrawal first enables these phenomena.

The following section shows why wage labour, in particular, does not effect this destruction accidentally, but structurally.

## **2. Work Without Docking: How the Prevention of *Eigenzeit* Produces Poverty**

Wage labour is not a special case of work.

It is a different ontology of action.

This distinction is decisive, because otherwise poverty is misread. Activity, work, and wage labour collapse linguistically; ontologically, they do not. Activity is any form of becoming effective in the world. Work is that form of activity which binds world because it carries responsibility, consequence, and duration. Wage labour, by contrast, is a form of decoupling: it separates activity from world-binding and replaces it with time, contract, and money.

The market does indeed produce objects, infrastructures, effects. It fills the world with things. What it does not produce is world-binding. It uses the world, reshapes it, accumulates its effects—but it does not carry it. The world appears here not as a context that must be borne (a complex relation), but as a stock that can be disassembled, evaluated, and circulated.

The market produces results, but not binding.

When “world-binding” is spoken of here, this does not mean every form of binding. Dependence, addiction, habituation, consumption, desire, anxiety-binding, or stimulus-coupling are real bindings—but they are not sustaining bindings. They bind behaviour, not world. They couple subjects to stimuli, not responsibility to consequence.

The market produces binding precisely in this sense: as asymmetrical, extractive binding that stabilizes behaviour without carrying world.

The market binds by withdrawing.

Consumption, addiction, and dependency are not counterexamples, but evidence. They show that the market produces binding precisely where world-binding is interrupted. The less an existence can bind world in a sustainable way, the more strongly it is coupled to substitute bindings: to products, cycles, interfaces, credit, routines.

These bindings are not false, but they are ontologically empty. They produce repetition without concretizable, individually borne responsibility; duration without consequence; time without *Eigenzeit*. They keep behaviour in circulation without setting world.

Market binding is binding without bearing.

World-binding, in the sense used here, means something else: the irreversible intertwining of action, responsibility, and consequence through which world becomes bearable at all. A binding is world-binding only where it is not reversible, not delegable, and not externalizable—where someone does not merely bear liability, but stands in what happens.

Exactly this form of binding the market cannot structurally provide, because it would block its mode of operation. Markets must be able to dissolve, shift, replace, and scale bindings at any time. World-binding in the strict sense is incompatible with this.

Thus, more precisely:

The market produces bindings, but not sustainable world-binding in the sense of lived responsibility between affordances, freedom, and awareness of consequence.

It produces objects, infrastructures, and effects—and simultaneously a multitude of bindings to these effects. What it does not produce is a context in which responsibility, consequence, and duration remain inseparably intertwined. World appears here as stock, not as a context that must be borne.

This distinction is decisive for understanding poverty. Poverty does not arise where binding is absent, but where only substitute binding is possible. Where *Eigenzeit* can no longer be lived, compensatory bindings emerge that simulate world without carrying it.

Addiction is not a binding to world, but a symptom of world-loss.

In this sense, poverty is not a condition of lack of binding, but a condition of false and externalized binding: binding without *Eigenzeit*, binding without responsibility, binding without world. The market organizes these bindings efficiently—precisely because they do not have to carry world. The livable *Eigenzeit* of individual people does not appear within them.

This also makes clear why highly bound modes of existence collide with the market. Not because they are incapable of binding, but because they are incapable of unbinding. They cannot arbitrarily dissolve, exchange, or simulate binding. Where binding means world, market binding becomes destruction.

Wage labour is the operative form of this limit. In it, world is not bound; time is calculated independently of binding value. The central unit is not decision, but the hour. Not responsibility, but assignment. Not consequence, but remuneration. Thus *Eigenzeit* is not merely prevented, but pre-emptively devalued. For *Eigenzeit* arises where action irreversibly sets world—precisely this irreversibility wage labour must neutralize in order to remain market- and process-capable.

*Eigenzeit* necessarily entails friction. It is highly individualized and context-bound. It cannot be industrially functionalized.

The neutralization of this does not mean a lack of productivity. It means a shift in what counts as productivity. In an industrialization against *Eigenzeit*, productivity is no longer the bringing-forth of world, but the exploitability of time as the lowest common denominator of valorization. Performance is not measured by whether it carries world, but by whether it is billable, comparable, and replaceable.

Productivity here measures not efficacy, but decoupling.

The less world an activity binds, the better it can be scaled, isolated, and concentrated. This is precisely why highly bound *Eigenzeit* trajectories do not enter competition, but fall out of it—not because of inefficiency, but because of overbinding. World that would have to be carried disrupts the logic of isolated value increases.

Here lies the central point for understanding poverty:

The poor are not unproductive. They produce what the market cannot carry: world.

The poor do not work meaninglessly.

They work without docking.

What emerges is a permanent rotation of *Eigenzeit* trajectories. People set in motion, bind world, assume responsibility, invest meaning. Yet these acts encounter no affordances. They are not taken up, not stabilized, not fed back. World does not respond. Value either does not emerge at all—or is immediately extracted and isolated elsewhere.

The consequence of efficiency gains is simplification, and in simplification only simulation can grow, not *Eigenzeit*.

Poverty thus does not arise from a lack of performance, but from the categorical pre-devaluation of performance before it can become effective. The conditions under which value is admitted destroy *Eigenzeit*: through interruption, simulation, evaluation, and withdrawal of connectability.

What the poor lack is not *Eigenzeit*, but permission to let it become effective.

This prevention is not an accident, but a condition of modern value production. By removing large parts of the population from competition over effective world-binding, value is de-

homogenized. Value increases can isolate, concentrate, and escalate because they are no longer fed back through broad, resonant world-binding. Precarization is thus not the opposite of growth, but its precondition.

For highly bound modes of existence—especially neurodivergent ones—this dynamic becomes visible early. Not because they perform less, but because they cannot live world in fragments. Where activity means world, work becomes a setting. Where work becomes a setting, it can no longer be arbitrarily evaluated, timed, or reversed. Precisely for this reason it is excluded from the market.

Productivity without world is marketable.

World without market becomes poor.

In this sense, poverty is not a failure, but a structurally enforced condition of permanent ineffectiveness. *Eigenzeit* begins, is blocked, begins again—and is blocked again. This repetition is not resilience, but suspended productivity. Poverty is the durational form of prevented *Eigenzeit* under conditions of market and administration.

The next section shows why social security systems do not lift this blockage, but stabilize it—and why they therefore do not end poverty, but administer it.

### **3. Poverty as an Administrative Condition: When Substitute Binding Is Institutionally Stabilized**

If poverty is not a lack of binding but a condition of false binding, then this must also appear institutionally. This is precisely the case. Modern systems of security, activation, and care do not intervene where world-binding has been lost, but where substitute bindings can be stabilized.

Social security does not administer world.

It administers behaviour.

This is not a moral critique, but a structural description. Administration can only work with what is objectifiable, documentable, and repeatable. World-binding in the strict sense is the opposite of this. It is singular, non-delegable, and non-reconstructable. For that reason, it cannot be secured—only replaced.

Where *Eigenzeit* is no longer viable, administration takes its place.

Basic income support, activation measures, care, and integration intervene precisely here. They stabilize life processes without binding world. Time is structured, behaviour regulated, presence secured. What is not restored is *Eigenzeit*. What emerges is a durational form of procedural time with institutional support.

Here the actual function of social security systems becomes visible:

they prevent open collapse by providing substitute bindings. Appointments, measures, proofs, consultations, sanctions, support plans—all of these are bindings. But they are bindings without world. They couple subjects to procedures, not to consequence. They generate stability, not bearability.

Social security binds people to systems, not to world.

This explains why these systems are experienced as relieving and destructive at the same time. They often prevent total breakdown, while simultaneously interrupting every form of *eigenzeitlicher* setting. Whoever acts under these conditions never acts fully. Decisions remain provisional, responsibility is distributed, consequences are deferred or externalized. *Eigenzeit* cannot arise here because it is nowhere allowed to dock.

For highly bound modes of existence, this condition is not neutral. Autistic and other neurodivergent existences enter a permanent contradiction here. They are not “non-integrable,” but non-administrable without losing their world-binding. The bindings on offer are too flat, too reversible, too simulative. They keep life running, but they do not carry it.

Administration replaces world where it cannot bear it.

In this way, poverty becomes visible as an administrative condition. Not as a transition, not as a deficit, but as a stabilized withdrawal of *Eigenzeit*. People continue to rotate in *Eigenzeit* trajectories, but every possible setting is interrupted, relativized, or sanctioned. Action is demanded, effect is blocked. Responsibility is assigned, bearing is prevented.

This structure is neither an accident nor the failure of individual actors. It is the logical continuation of an order that objectifies world and replaces binding with procedure. Social security becomes the second stage of the same ontology that was already operative in the market.

The market devalues *Eigenzeit* before performance.

The state administers it after its loss.

Together, these do not produce an exit, but a loop. The longer this loop persists, the more impossible it becomes to form *Eigenzeit* again. Poverty becomes a durational condition—not because people stop working, but because their work is no longer allowed to become world anywhere.

The next section sharpens this loop further:

no longer as poverty, but as existential prohibition—the structural impossibility of living *Eigenzeit* at all.

#### **4. Existential Prohibition (Existenzverbot): When *Eigenzeit* Becomes Structurally Impossible**

An existential prohibition (Existenzverbot) is not a prohibition on living.

It is a prohibition on living *Eigenzeit*.

This is what makes the concept difficult to grasp—and at the same time precise. No one formally forbids existence. Food, shelter, and minimal provision remain secured. What is withdrawn is something else: the possibility of carrying out action in such a way that it binds and bears world. Existence is permitted; existing is not.

Existential prohibition means: being allowed to live without being allowed to form world.

Here, existential prohibition does not name a legal offense, but a structural impossibility of living *Eigenzeit* under given conditions. This prohibition is not juridically codified. It emerges structurally wherever all available forms of binding are either market-based or administrative—that is, wherever binding exists only as substitute binding. *Eigenzeit* is not openly denied, but systematically rendered impossible by dissolving, relativizing, or sanctioning every act of setting into procedures.

The transition from poverty to existential prohibition is not a leap, but an escalation. Poverty stabilizes the loss of docking possibilities. Existential prohibition fixes this condition. What was previously blocked now becomes durationally unlivable—not episodically, not situationally, but structurally.

Where *Eigenzeit* is no longer merely blocked but excluded, existential prohibition begins.

For highly bound modes of existence, this threshold is reached early. Not because they are more fragile, but because they can compensate less. Where world-binding is taken seriously, its systematic prevention is not experienced as a lack, but as a rupture. Adaptation here does not mean learning, but self-abandonment.

Existential prohibition therefore does not primarily manifest as external deprivation, but as inner impossibility: decisions lose meaning, responsibility becomes empty, action becomes consequence-free. The world no longer responds. What remains is a form of activity without direction—life in the administrative present.

Existential prohibition is activity without future.

This condition is frequently psychologized. Depression, apathy, avoidance, withdrawal are treated as symptoms. In fact, they are boundary reactions. They mark the point at which *Eigenzeit* can no longer be responsibly lived. To continue acting would mean to unbind oneself. Withdrawal here is not weakness, but a last form of protection.

This is what renders existential prohibition politically invisible. For it produces no spectacular ruptures. It generates no open conflicts, but quiet suspension. People do not disappear; they flatten. They remain available without being effective—administrable without existing.

Existential prohibition is the quiet form of structural violence.

This violence is not the result of wrong decisions, but of an ontology that systematically replaces world-binding. Market and administration do not operate against one another here, but together. The market withdraws the possibility of effective world-binding. Administration stabilizes the condition afterward. Together they produce a space in which *Eigenzeit* finds no place.

This makes it clear: existential prohibition is not a marginal phenomenon, but a system function. It affects first those whose existence is not fragmentable—neurodivergent, artistic, non-standardizable modes of life. But it does not remain there. What becomes visible here is a general limit movement.

Where *Eigenzeit* is reduced to an obstruction, existence itself becomes a problem.

The next section shows why rights, protection, and inclusion cannot lift this condition—and why they often unintentionally stabilize it.

## **5. Rights, Protection, and Inclusion: Administration After the Loss of *Eigenzeit***

Rights come too late.

This is not a polemical claim, but a structural determination. Human rights, fundamental rights, and participation rights intervene where subjects are already identifiable as carriers of conditions, traits, or impairments. They address persons *after* world-binding has been damaged or destroyed. Within this framework, *Eigenzeit* does not appear as a condition to be protected, but as a tacitly presupposed resource.

Rights operate on the terrain after collapse.

Protective rights, compensatory measures, and inclusion policies respond to effects: losses of function, limitations, breakdowns. They compensate, mitigate, organize. What they cannot do is restore world-binding. They intervene where *Eigenzeit* has already been consumed and treat the condition, not its precondition.

This is not an implementation problem.

It is a category problem.

Rights presuppose decision-making and agency. They address people as accountable subjects who can articulate claims, navigate procedures, and represent their interests. Precisely these capacities, however, depend on viable *Eigenzeit*. Where *Eigenzeit* has collapsed or is blocked, rights do not function emancipatorily but abstractly. They address a form of subjectivity that no longer structurally exists.

Rights presuppose what they claim to protect.

In the neurodivergent context, this asymmetry becomes particularly clear. Autistic people receive legal recognition while remaining institutionally embedded in regimes that destroy binding. Adjustments occur at the level of tempo, access, or formality—not at the level of responsibility-bearing and world-binding. The world remains unbearable, even when it is organized to be more accessible.

Inclusion thus becomes integration into simulation.

It enables participation in procedures, not participation in world. People are allowed to take part, to keep up, to respond—but not to bind. *Eigenzeit* is not protected; it is bypassed. Where it interferes, it is formally acknowledged and factually neutralized.

Inclusion without *Eigenzeit* is participation in loss.

This finding is uncomfortable because it cannot be solved by better design. More rights, finer compensations, or more differentiated diagnoses do not change the fact that institutions can neither generate nor replace *Eigenzeit*. At best, they could refrain from destroying it—and structurally they do not, so long as binding continues to be replaced by procedure.

Here the limit of the liberal-legal model becomes visible. It conceives the human being as an object of conditions, not as a bearer of world-binding. Responsibility is juridically assigned, not ontologically borne. Where this difference goes unrecognized, a paradoxical movement arises: formal recognition increases while real agency declines.

For neurodivergent existences, this is not an abstract tension but everyday reality. Protection is granted after binding has been lost. Recognition occurs after *Eigenzeit* has already been consumed. Rights arrive too late not out of negligence, but because structurally they must always arrive too late.

Where *Eigenzeit* is absent, rights become the administration of its absence.

This makes clear: a politics that does not protect *Eigenzeit* can only add rights afterward. And rights that are added afterward cannot compensate for the loss. What is missing is not another category of protection, but a prior boundary determination: the recognition that *Eigenzeit* is a pre-legal condition of world- and agency-capacity.

Without this recognition, inclusion remains an administrative project.  
And existence a limit case.

## **6. Self-Determined Work: The Minimal Condition of *Eigenzeit***

Politics begins where self-determined work either remains possible—or is structurally prevented.

*Eigenzeit* cannot be protected if it is not allowed to emerge.

And it does not emerge through rights.

While protection, inclusion, and social security intervene after the loss of *Eigenzeit*, there is only one social practice in which *Eigenzeit* can be formed at all: self-determined work.

Here, work is not meant as a form of employment, but as an ontological practice. Self-determined work designates that form of activity in which action, responsibility, and consequence are not separated. It is work because it binds world—and self-determined because this binding is not delegated, fragmented, or simulated.

*Eigenzeit* arises only where work is allowed to bear world.

This distinguishes self-determined work from both wage labour and administratively structured activity. In wage labour, time is sold; in administration, behaviour is stabilized. In both cases, action is separated from world. Self-determined work, by contrast, is not billable, not interchangeable, and not reversible. It does not produce mere effects, but sets world.

For precisely this reason it is structurally marginalized. An order that generates value through comparability, scalability, and isolation cannot integrate work that binds world. It can only tolerate it, displace it, or appropriate it retrospectively. Where self-determined work appears, it immediately comes under pressure to justify itself: it is deemed inefficient, unproductive, not connectable.

Self-determined work is what the market cannot bear and the state cannot administer.

For highly bound modes of existence—especially neurodivergent ones—this form of work is not one option among many, but a condition of existence. Where work is not allowed to be self-determined, *Eigenzeit* cannot emerge. Where *Eigenzeit* does not emerge, only substitute binding remains: market, administration, care, simulation.

This also makes clear why poverty cannot—or can hardly—be overcome through activation or integration. Such measures presuppose that work without world-binding is possible. For highly bound existences, this does not mean participation, but continued devaluation. They continue to work—but not in a way that could form *Eigenzeit*.

Poverty is the structural consequence of withdrawing self-determined work.

Self-determined work is therefore not a reform proposal and not a socio-political instrument. It is an ontological threshold. Where it is not possible, *Eigenzeit* is blocked. Where it remains possible, world emerges—even without market, even without administration.

This explains why self-determined work is systematically rendered invisible, romanticized, or pathologized. It escapes the categories of efficiency, control, and comparison. Precisely therein lies its significance: it is the only place where *Eigenzeit* is not simulated, but realized.

Without self-determined work there is no *Eigenzeit*.

Without *Eigenzeit* there is no viable existence.

The next section draws the political consequence from this: why politics cannot produce *Eigenzeit*—and where its responsibility nevertheless lies.

## **7. Politics as a Boundary Instance: Why *Eigenzeit* Cannot Be Made**

Politics cannot produce *Eigenzeit*.

Not because it fails, but because this lies outside its ontological reach.

*Eigenzeit* emerges where decision irreversibly binds world. This act is not delegable, not aggregable, and not institutionally substitutable. Politics, by contrast, necessarily operates through representation: mandates, procedures, responsibilities, majorities. It can organize decisions, but it cannot assume world-binding.

Where politics seeks to carry world, simulation begins.

This categorical error is structural. Politics must act as if responsibility could be generalized, even though responsibility can only ever be borne concretely. It extends time where binding would be required. It distributes jurisdictions where bearing would be necessary. This is how symbolic politics arises—not as deception, but as a necessary substitute for something that politics cannot provide.

In this sense, politics itself is already embedded in a process of *Seinsverschiebung*. It operates within an objectifiable field in which real world-binding is structurally not provided for. *Eigenzeit* appears there as a disturbance, because it is not scalable, not reversible, and not comparable.

This does not mean irresponsibility. It means a different form of responsibility.

If politics cannot produce *Eigenzeit*, then its task consists in not further destroying the conditions under which *Eigenzeit* can emerge. It cannot perform world-binding by proxy, but it can prevent market and administrative regimes from systematically undermining, blocking, or consuming that binding.

This responsibility is negative, not productive.  
It consists not in making, but in refraining.

Political responsibility begins where politics stops trying to replace world.

Concretely, this means: politics must not stabilize structures that make self-determined work impossible. It must not legitimize activation logics that merely simulate *Eigenzeit*. It must not construct security systems that chain people to substitute bindings while real world-binding remains excluded.

For highly bound modes of existence—especially neurodivergent ones—this boundary is existential. They are not a target group of political design, but boundary cases of political jurisdiction. Not because they claim special rights, but because they embody a form of world-binding that cannot be politically substituted.

Politics does not fail because of neurodivergence.  
Neurodivergence marks the boundary of political feasibility.

Where politics does not acknowledge this boundary, it produces dependency that it then administers. It replaces world-binding with jurisdiction and calls this responsibility. For highly bound modes of existence, this shift is not viable. They lose not only protection, but world.

## **8. Existential Prohibition (Existenzverbot) as a Boundary Signal: What Can No Longer Be Delegated Socially**

Existential prohibition is not a marginal phenomenon.  
It is a boundary signal.

It indicates that a society has begun to administer more world than it can bear. Where *Eigenzeit* is systematically blocked, where self-determined work no longer finds space, existence itself becomes a problem—not because of lack, but because of over-regulation.

Neurodivergent existences are not deviations in this context, but early indicators. They encounter earlier the boundary at which world is no longer bindable. Not because they are more sensitive, but because they can compensate less. Where binding is taken seriously, its systematic prevention is not experienced as an adaptation problem, but as a rupture.

What collapses here is not a biography, but a form of world.

The frequent attempt to individualize this finding—as psychological vulnerability, as special needs, as a therapeutic challenge—misses its object. It translates an ontological boundary into a personal trait. What appears as a “problem of neurodivergence” is in truth the boundary of an order that no longer permits *Eigenzeit*.

This also shifts the question of the future. It is not about integrating neurodivergent people better, making them more resilient, or adapting them more functionally. It is about whether social orders are still capable of binding world, rather than merely organizing it.

This paper therefore offers no solution.

Not because solutions are lacking, but because the demand for solutions is itself part of the problem. Where *Eigenzeit* has been destroyed, nothing can be repaired. What can be done is to make visible where delegation ends.

*Eigenzeit* is not reformable.

It is not replaceable.

It is not delegable.

Existential prohibition is not a moral accusation.

It is a diagnosis.

And diagnoses are not meant to reassure.

They are meant to be taken seriously.

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**This work operates operatorically rather than discursively; its claims are derived from internal structural invariance rather than from literature synthesis.**

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<https://zenodo.org/communities/operatoric-research-corpus>

*(The present text constitutes an interface translation into neurotypical academic discourse. This translation functions as an accessibility measure necessitated by dominant linguistic and epistemic conventions. It does not represent the native epistemic form of the research, but a communicative adaptation required for participation in standardized scholarly exchange.)*

**A more in-depth paper on the methodology can be found here:**

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