

A Coordinate-Structure Theory of Perspective

The Dynamics of Origin, Axis, and Movement

視座の座標構造論 — 原点・軸・移動の力学 —

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Abstract

This paper formalises perspective in terms of the coordinate structure of thought itself. We propose three constitutive elements — range, orthogonality, and origin — and clarify the structural invisibility of the effective origin from within the coordinate system it defines, distinguishing two modes of that invisibility: the non-objectifiability of the origin arising from its indeterminacy, and the backgrounding of the presuppositional layer arising from its operating as the standard of measurement. We then distinguish the origin proper (a structural position of zero value) from the effective origin (the origin together with the presuppositional layer that overlays it), and show that what ordinary language calls "movement of the origin" is not translation but a three-phase process: detachment of that layer (zeroing), exposure of zero (the transitional phase), and re-formation under a newly constituted layer. This distinction dissolves the apparent tension between defining the origin as zero and asserting that it moves. The driving conditions of the process are organised as the product of three variables — core-tremor, duration, and plasticity — and the natural frequency that governs core-tremor is assigned neither to the origin itself nor to the presuppositional layer, but to a substratum (body and history) that persists across the three phases. Because the origin has zero value across all axes, we derive an epistemological reversal, articulated as a difference in temporality between derivation and generation: the origin is not a past source but the present locus that continuously sustains the possibility of axes. This generativity is specified strictly as an enabling condition rather than an efficient cause. Finally, given the structural correspondence between the indeterminate origin and emptiness (空, śūnyatā), everything else constituted within the model is relationally constituted in a manner corresponding to dependent origination (縁起, pratītya-samutpāda), and we re-address the long-standing question of self (ātman) versus no-self (anātman) — including the Mahāyāna reintroduction of a "true self" and the Buddhist traditions that reject such affirmative formulations — through the unified concept of generative emptiness.

Keywords: perspective; coordinate axis; origin; structural invisibility; zeroing; emptiness; dependent origination; ātman; anātman; true self; Buddhist philosophy; Kyoto School

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01 Introduction

1.1 The Problem

"My perspective changed." "My field of view widened." "I shifted my viewpoint." These expressions are used constantly in ordinary language, yet what they amount to is rarely made explicit. Are "field of view" and "perspective" distinguished at all? Is the operation of widening the same as the operation of changing, or different? What widens, and what changes? In the domain that treats the structure of thought and cognition, these questions remain insufficiently articulated.

This paper aims to give these questions a structural answer by describing perspective in terms of **the coordinate structure of thought itself**. By formalising perspective as a kind of coordinate system, we can show that the widening of the field of view and the transformation of perspective — the operation upon axes and the replacement of the origin — are qualitatively different operations.

1.2 Prior Discussions

In the history of philosophy, the concept corresponding to perspective has been treated in various forms. Husserl discussed the **zero point** (Nullpunkt der Orientierung) as the origin of direction in bodily experience (Husserl, 1952, Hua IV; cf. Husserl, 1973), and Heidegger pointed out that Dasein always finds itself in some **attunement** (Befindlichkeit) (Heidegger, 1927). Nagel argued the impossibility of a "View from Nowhere," on the grounds that every viewpoint issues from a particular position (Nagel, 1986). On the sociological side, Mannheim treated a similar structure as existential determination (Mannheim, 1929), and Bourdieu as habitus (Bourdieu, 1980). The works considered here do not explicitly formalise perspective as a coordinate structure, nor do they set out the dynamic process by which perspective is transformed. The present paper develops such a model as a distinct analytical framework.

1.3 Scope of This Paper

The scope of this paper is fourfold.

First, we present the minimal structure required to describe perspective as a coordinate system: the three elements of range, orthogonality, and origin. Range is specified not merely as distance but as a magnitude extending over several dimensions — time, space, abstraction, and complexity.

Second, we distinguish the origin proper from the effective origin and dissolve the theoretical tension their conflation produces. On that basis we show that operations upon axes (the widening of the field of view) and the replacement of the effective origin (the transformation of perspective) are qualitatively different operations, and we organise the driving conditions of the latter as the product of core-tremor, duration, and plasticity.

Third, from the fact that the origin is a point of zero value — a state of indeterminacy that structurally corresponds to emptiness — we derive the epistemological reversal that the origin is not the past source of axes but the locus of their generation. This generation is specified as an enabling condition, not an efficient cause.

Fourth, we show that this reversal coincides, at the level of form, with the structure of emptiness and dependent origination in Buddhism, and we re-address the classical question of self and no-self through the unified concept of generative emptiness.

These four points develop, from different angles, the central claim that **perspective is sustained by an invisible origin**.

02 Describing Perspective as a Coordinate Axis

2.1 Thought Has Structure

Thought is not merely a disorderly chain of activity occurring in the head. A thought that extends in some direction has a **direction**. A judgement that compares one thing with another tacitly presupposes a **position** that serves as its standard. A sense that distinguishes centre from periphery has a **reference point** that constitutes that centre. These features indicate that thought possesses an underlying **structure**.

These structural features coincide with the functions of what mathematics calls a **coordinate axis**. A coordinate axis is a device that measures position, articulates direction, compares distance, and posits an origin. To describe the structure of thought by means of this device is not a mere metaphor but a methodological choice: it captures the most basic structure of thought with a minimum of concepts.

2.2 Definition of Perspective

Definition 1 Perspective

Perspective is the coordinate structure through which a person cognises, interprets, evaluates, and acts upon the world; that is, it is the underlying structure that determines what is seen and what is not seen.

Perspective in this paper refers in particular to **the underlying structure that orients cognition and value judgement**. Perspective is neither a thought, nor an opinion, nor a claim. Perspective is **the underlying structure that makes thoughts, opinions, and claims possible**. What thoughts a person holds depends on the perspective under which that person thinks.

Proposition 1 The Three Elements of Perspective

Perspective is specified by three elements: range, orthogonality, and origin.

That is: what axes a person has, how wide a range those axes possess, and where the centre of those axes is placed — these three determine perspective. The following chapter examines each element in turn.

2.3 Object and Model, and the Scope of Application

Let us make explicit the descriptive level of this paper. The object is perspective; the explanatory model is coordinate structure, a device composed of origin, axes, and values. Hereafter the properties of perspective are described entirely in the vocabulary of coordinates. Coordinate structure, however, is a device introduced in order to explain perspective; it is not an ontological claim that perspective *is* a coordinate system. What this paper asks is not "Is perspective a coordinate system?" but "When perspective is described as a coordinate system, what comes to be articulated?"

In applying that device to cognition, one point must be confirmed in advance. In a mathematical coordinate system, the origin and the basis (the directions of the axes) are defined independently of each other, and translating the origin leaves the basis unchanged. This is the requirement of affine structure.

The coordinate system of cognition does not satisfy this requirement. As will be detailed in Chapter 5, in cognition the basis is determined in dependence on the origin. The "coordinates" employed in this paper are therefore not a mathematical coordinate system as such, but a **non-affine coordinate structure** from which the requirement of independence has been removed. This difference is treated not as a defect of the model but as an indicator that brings out a property proper to the coordinate system of cognition.

03 The Three Elements of Perspective

3.1 Range: How Far One Can Survey Along an Axis

Range is the magnitude indicating how far one can survey along a given axis.

Here "far" is not a single scale. Range is measured across at least the following four dimensions.

Proposition 2 The Multidimensionality of Range

Range is a magnitude extending over four dimensions: time, space, abstraction, and complexity. How far ahead in time one can handle, how wide a scope one can handle, how abstract a level one can handle, how intricate a structure one can handle — all of these constitute the range of that axis.

Even with the same axis of "useful / useless," how far the axis reaches differs from person to person. One person can handle usefulness ten years ahead; another can handle only today's

usefulness. One can handle usefulness for society as a whole; another only usefulness close at hand. This is a difference of range.

Range specifies the scope of phenomena that can be handled along that axis. An event outside the range is not measured by that axis at all. Under an axis that cannot handle ten years ahead, what will take effect ten years from now is not measured as bad; it simply does not become an object of measurement.

Proposition 3 Range and Articulation

The range of an axis specifies the scope of phenomena that can be articulated along it. A phenomenon outside the range is not evaluated poorly; it does not become an object of evaluation.

To extend range is to become able to apply the same axis across a broader domain. Accumulating experience, deepening sensitivity, enlarging vocabulary — all of these can be described as extensions of range. The essence of learning and training lies in this extension.

3.1.1 Range and Resolution

What must be distinguished from range is **resolution**, the fineness of articulation along an axis. Whereas range determines how far the axis reaches, resolution determines how finely the reached scope can be divided.

One person discriminates ten gradations along the axis of "useful / useless." Another can distinguish only two. This is a difference not of range but of resolution. If there is only the binary of "interesting / boring," the rich texture lying between them does not exist from the start. It is not that it is unseen; it is that it has not yet been articulated.

Both are gathered under the ordinary phrase "a wide field of view," yet they are not the same operation.

Proposition 4 The Trade-off Between Range and Resolution

Under a fixed quantity of cognitive resources, the range of an axis and the density of articulation along it (resolution) stand in a trade-off. The narrower the range, the denser the articulation; the wider the range, the thinner the articulation. Raising both at once is possible only through an enlargement of the resources themselves.

This proposition is an empirical hypothesis dependent on the assumption that cognitive resources are finite; it is not deduced from the structural claims of this paper. Remove the assumption and the trade-off does not hold. Proposition 4 is introduced in order to describe a practical bifurcation: whether training is directed towards breadth or towards density.

3.2 Orthogonality: What a Single Axis Cannot Capture

However far one extends range, there remain domains that a single axis cannot capture.

However finely and however far one becomes able to use the axis of "fast / slow," "correct / incorrect" never appears upon it. However precisely one measures speed, nowhere in the

measured value is correctness contained. Conversely, however rigorously one determines correctness, speed does not issue from it.

Directions irreducible to one another — this is what is meant by **orthogonal axes**.

"Orthogonality" in this paper does not mean mathematical orthogonality in an inner-product space. It denotes epistemic independence: the impossibility of reducing the value on one axis to that on another. As stated in 2.3, the coordinates of this paper are not a mathematical coordinate system as such but a non-affine structure from which the requirement of independence has been removed, and the term "orthogonality" is used at that level.

Orthogonality therefore does not mean statistical independence. That the values on two axes are in fact often correlated (a fast hand is also an accurate one, for instance) is a different matter from one being reducible to the other. Orthogonality denies only the latter; that one and the same event takes high values on several axes at once is entirely compatible with orthogonality.

Proposition 5 Orthogonal Axes and Dimensionality

The dimensionality of cognition is specified by the number of mutually orthogonal axes available to it.

A single event may be evaluated on several axes at once. Fast but mistaken. Correct but slow. Correct, fast, and yet sorrowful. Such multilayered evaluation becomes possible only by holding several orthogonal axes.

An important distinction follows. To extend range is to use an existing axis further. To add an orthogonal axis is to introduce a new axis in a direction that did not exist before. Both contribute to "widening the field of view," but they are qualitatively different operations.

3.3 Operations upon Axes: Four Kinds

Proposition 6 The Four Operations upon Axes

Operations upon axes fall into four kinds: extension, addition, recomposition, and meta-framing.

Extension is the operation of extending the range of an existing axis, and **addition** that of adding a new orthogonal axis; both have been treated in the preceding sections.

Recomposition is the operation of decomposing existing axes and reconstituting them. One notices that the axis one took to be "good / bad" was in fact a conflation of several axes — "fast," "correct," "agreeable" — and separates them.

Meta-framing is the operation of introducing an axis that evaluates axes themselves: to hold an axis about axes, asking "Is this axis valid at all?" and "How far does its domain of validity extend?"

All four operations can be performed within the existing structure of thought. The field of view does widen, and what is seen does increase. Yet one question remains: do these operations change perspective itself?

Proposition 7 The Limit of Operations upon Axes

The four operations upon axes all preserve a certain "unmoving point." The field of view widens, but perspective itself does not change.

What is this "unmoving point"? That is the subject of the next chapter.

04 The Origin: An Invisible Reference Point

4.1 Noticing a Question

The "length" of range — length measured from where? The "orthogonality" of orthogonality — orthogonal about what centre?

These questions reveal a more fundamental fact: every axis is organised relative to a certain point. Range is measured from that point, and relations of orthogonality are defined with respect to it. This point is the **origin** of perspective.

4.2 The Origin and the Effective Origin

Here we introduce the distinction this paper regards as most important. If left undifferentiated, the term "origin" designates two different things: the structural position whose value is zero on every axis, and the centre that actually operates as the standard in a person's cognitive practice. Separating the two is the premise of everything that follows.

Definition 2 Origin

The origin is the point whose value is zero on every axis of the coordinate system and which remains structurally invariant while thought is in motion. It is a structural position holding no determination whatsoever.

Thought is a state in which something is moving on the inside. One examines this and that, judges, retreats and advances. Yet while that motion occurs, something remains absolutely unmoving. Precisely because it does not move, it functions as the reference point by which other things can be said to have "moved" or "changed." That fixed point is the origin.

In actual cognitive practice, however, what a person holds as "my own centre" is not this bare zero point. The zero point is always accompanied by a certain initial structure.

Definition 3 The Presuppositional Layer (the Four Layers of the Origin)

In the neighbourhood of the origin an initial structure consisting of the following four layers is formed. This is not the origin itself but the deepest layer formed in immediate relation to it; in this paper it is called the presuppositional layer.

First layer: the sense of who one is (identification)

Second layer: the grounds that specify axes (the fundamental ordering of values)

Third layer: the tacit understanding of what really exists (commitment to reality)

Fourth layer: the boundary between what is and is not worth asking (the admissibility of questions)

Definition 4 Effective Origin

The effective origin is the composite of the origin (the zero point) and the presuppositional layer, operating as the standard of measurement in actual cognitive practice. What ordinary language calls "the centre of a person's perspective" or "that person's origin" refers to this.

This distinction governs the whole of the subsequent discussion. Whereas the origin itself, being without determination, permits the constitution of any axis whatsoever, the presuppositional layer provides the initial selective structure from which axes are constituted, and thereby the starting point of that person's cognitive practice. What Chapter 6 treats as "the replacement of the origin" is not a movement of the origin itself but the detachment and re-formation of the presuppositional layer.

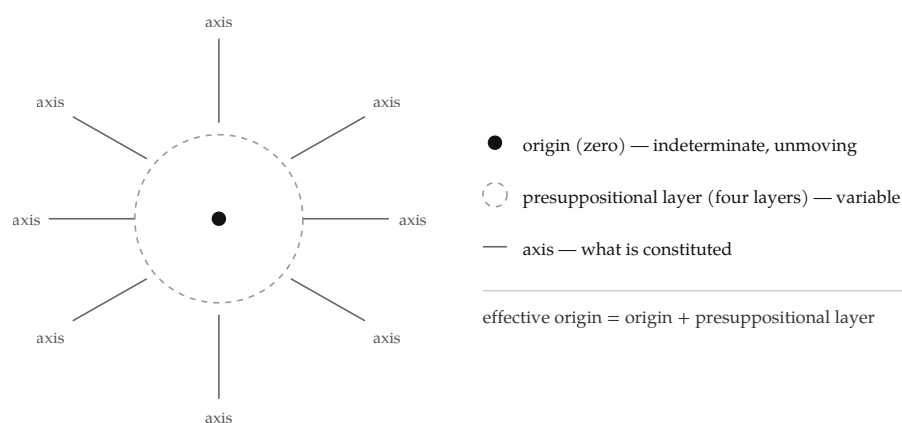


Figure 1 The three-layer structure of perspective: origin (zero), presuppositional layer (four layers), axes

4.3 The Origin Specifies the Questions

The fourth layer of the presuppositional layer was the boundary between what is and is not worth asking. The operation of this layer deserves separate statement.

Proposition 8 The Specification of Questions

The effective origin specifies questions prior to answers. A person seems to think freely, yet does not freely pose questions.

For someone in whose ordering of values capital occupies the centre, the questions that can be posed remain variations on "how do I profit?" If love occupies the centre, the question takes the form "how do I love?" Questions arise within the structure the effective origin defines. Accordingly, when the effective origin is replaced, the axes change, the questions themselves change, and as a result the range of available answers is correspondingly transformed.

4.4 Personality Is Not the Origin

The misunderstanding that identifies the effective origin with a person's personality or individuality arises most frequently in applications of the theory of perspective. The two must be distinguished.

Proposition 9 The Derivative Character of Personality

Personality is a persistent disposition appearing as the set of axes constituted under the effective origin; it is not the origin itself. The origin holds no content of personality.

Without this distinction, a transformation of perspective may be mistaken for a negation of personality. In fact, however, the origin itself is without determination and holds no content to be negated. What is transformed is the presuppositional layer and the arrangement of axes constituted under it; the loss of a "true self" is not among the things this involves.

4.5 The Invisibility of the Origin

Here lies the structural feature most important to the theory of perspective. This invisibility, however, is not of one kind. The origin itself and the presuppositional layer are invisible for different reasons.

Proposition 10 Two Kinds of Invisibility

- (i) Structural invisibility — the origin itself, holding no value whatsoever, holds no content that could be objectified.
 - (ii) Functional invisibility — the presuppositional layer, though it holds content, is not objectified while it operates as the standard of measurement; it recedes as background.
- Hence the origin itself is structurally non-objectifiable, and the presuppositional layer is functionally backgrounded while in operation. For either reason, the effective origin is not objectified from within the coordinate system it defines.

This is not a matter of the origin being merely "hard to see" or "hard to notice." It is the structural fact that, in principle, the origin cannot be objectified from within the coordinate system.

Why? Within the coordinate system, it is the effective origin that operates as the standard of measurement, while the origin proper contains no determination that could itself become an object. Objectifying either from within the same system therefore presents a structural difficulty: objectification requires another reference point, and that reference point constitutes another effective origin. The very gaze that would see the origin issues from elsewhere.

Just as the blind spot in vision is the place on the retina where the optic nerve exits, the origin is the structural blind spot of thought. Because it is the place where the seeing apparatus itself is situated, it cannot be seen by that apparatus.

Corollary 1 An Objectified Origin Is Not an Origin

When an origin has become visible, it is already an object observed from another origin. At the moment it becomes visible, it is not the origin of that observation but appears as the trace of a former effective origin.

Corollary 2 The Necessity of External Reference

To objectify the origin, one must once stand outside the coordinate system that origin defines.

To "stand outside" is to place oneself in another culture, another relationship, another time, another body — that is, nothing other than to move the coordinates once. The experience of seeing one's own presuppositions in Japan for the first time after a long stay abroad is a typical instance of this structure. Before the event occurred, it was the effective origin and therefore could not be seen. Only once the event occurred and the coordinates moved does it become evident, retrospectively, that it "was one origin among others."

05 Axes Are Derivative of the Effective Origin

5.1 The Mathematical and the Cognitive Coordinate System

In mathematics, translating the origin of a coordinate system leaves the axes themselves unchanged. Moving the origin of an (x, y) system to (a, b) preserves the directions of the x - and y -axes. This is because, in a mathematical coordinate system, origin and basis are defined as mutually independent elements.

The coordinate system of cognition, however, has a fundamentally different property.

Proposition 11 The Derivative Character of Axes (Non-affinity)

In the coordinate system of cognition, the basis is not independent of the origin. Axes are derivative of the effective origin, and when the effective origin changes, the very meaning of the axes changes. In this respect the coordinate system of cognition is not an affine structure.

If the ordering of what matters (the second layer) changes, the very meaning of the axis "useful / useless" changes. If the understanding of what really exists (the third layer) changes, the meaning of the axis "realistic / unrealistic" changes. When the effective origin changes, what the axes point to changes as well.

5.2 When the Effective Origin Is Replaced, Axes Cease to Hold

Proposition 12 The Collapse of Axes

In the coordinate system of cognition, when the effective origin is replaced, the axes cease to hold. It is not that the values on an axis change: the meaning of the axis itself changes, and ultimately the axis itself breaks down and other axes, derivative of the new effective origin, are reassembled.

Suppose a person raised in a quiet suburb, holding the axis "quiet / noisy," lives for a long period in a city of very high population density. At first they will measure that city along this axis and judge it to lie on the noisy side. As the stay deepens and the effective origin is replaced by a constitution belonging to that city, however, the axis "quiet / noisy" ceases to be the sharp opposition it was. In its place, other axes come to the foreground: "a living city / a dead city," "density of people." Even using the same word "quiet," what it points to has become different from before.

A shorter example. Someone who once thought "success is money" now thinks "success is freedom." The same word "success" is used, but this is not a displacement of value along the same axis. The very dimension of evaluation has changed. The vocabulary is preserved while the axis is replaced — an asymmetry that makes changes of perspective hard to observe from outside.

5.3 What It Is for Perspective to "Really Change"

Proposition 13 The Distinction Between Field of View and Perspective

Operations upon axes (extension, addition, recomposition, meta-framing) widen the field of view, but perspective itself does not change. What changes perspective is solely the replacement of the effective origin.

The four operations all leave the existing effective origin intact and merely operate upon the axes derivative of it. Through them, what is seen increases and the cognised domain expands. Yet that expansion is wholly an expansion that preserves the same centre.

For perspective really to change means that the effective origin itself is replaced. The presuppositional layer loosens, the axes until then collapse, and other axes are reassembled under a new presuppositional layer — this is the true change of perspective. The following chapter analyses that process.

06 The Dynamics of Zeroing and Re-formation

6.1 Redefining "Movement of the Origin"

Operations upon axes can be performed within the existing structure of thought. The effective origin, by contrast, is the structural standpoint from which thought operates; it therefore cannot be deliberately rearranged through the ordinary operations of thought alone. A moment is required in which thought itself comes to a halt or loosens. A sudden loss, a move into another cultural

sphere, the release of presuppositions through meditation, the intrusion of dream logic — only in such moments, where "thought lets go," does the effective origin change.

Let us now replace the ordinary expression "the origin moves" with a rigorous formulation in the vocabulary of this paper.

Proposition 14 The Immobility of the Origin and the Three-Phase Process

The origin itself (the zero point) does not move. What appears as movement is, more precisely, the replacement of the presuppositional layer, and this is a process consisting of the following three phases.

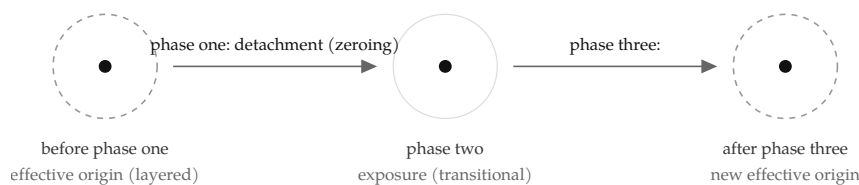
Phase one — detachment (zeroing): the existing presuppositional layer detaches from the origin, and the determinations that had operated as the standard lapse.

Phase two — exposure (the transitional phase): the origin is exposed as bare zero. The old axes lose their support; the new axes are not yet constituted.

Phase three — re-formation: a new presuppositional layer is formed, and under it new axes are constituted.

Hereafter this paper uses "movement of the origin" as the conventional designation of this three-phase process.

This formulation is required in order to reconcile the specification given in Chapter 7, that "the origin is zero on every axis," with the present chapter's description that "the origin moves." A point holding a value could move, but a zero point has no content that could move. What changes is the presuppositional layer: the origin is exposed as bare zero during the transitional phase and remains unmoved while a new presuppositional layer is subsequently formed. Everything that ordinary language calls "movement" of the origin is reread as this three-phase process.



re-formation capacity to
let go tolerance of instability capacity to rebuild

Figure 2 The three-phase process and the elements of plasticity corresponding to each phase

6.2 The Driving Force of the Three-Phase Process

What, then, brings about phase one? This paper organises the driving force as the product of the following three variables.

Proposition 15 The Formula of the Driving Force

The driving force of movement of the origin (the three-phase process) is specified by the product of three variables:

$$\text{driving force} = \text{core-tremor} \times \text{duration} \times \text{plasticity}$$

What this chapter calls "dynamics" is the conceptual decomposition of the conditions that drive the event of movement of the origin. It does not mean dynamics formalised as a system of differential equations in physics. The three variables are combined in the form of a product in order to express non-substitutability: if any one of them approaches zero, movement of the origin does not occur at all. Functional comparison with other forms of composition, such as sums or minima, is a task for subsequent research. The formulae in this chapter are structural descriptions of dependence among variables, not measurement formulae into which numerical values are to be substituted.

6.3 Core-Tremor

Definition 5 Core-Tremor

Core-tremor is the intensity with which an event reaches a person's core and makes that core tremble.

Core-tremor is not simply "quantity of information" or "strength of stimulus." It depends on the fit between the event and the structure of the receiver.

Proposition 16 The Composition of Core-Tremor

core-tremor = degree of coincidence with the natural frequency $\times$ intensity of input

The **natural frequency** is the structure that sounds persistently at the bottom of a person. It is another name for the fundamental motive from which that person sets out (the primal impulse), and likewise another name for the base function (the primitive function) that produces that person's surface behaviour. It is the structure proper to that person: unmoving, yet sounding.

The attribution of the natural frequency must now be settled.

Proposition 17 The Attribution of the Natural Frequency

The natural frequency is not an attribute of the origin itself. It is a resonance characteristic attributable to the substratum of body and history — the side that persists across the three-phase process. The presuppositional layer modulates how it manifests but does not constitute the natural frequency itself. The origin remains without determination, and individual difference resides on sides other than the origin.

To attribute the natural frequency to the origin would contradict the origin's indeterminacy; to attribute it to the presuppositional layer would mean that a person's resonance characteristic would be replaced at every passage through the three phases. This paper therefore places its attribution in the substratum (body and history) that persists, relatively, across the three phases. The substratum here is not a fourth term added to origin and presuppositional layer but an aspect of the material constituting that layer, and "persists" does not mean "is unchanging."

"Natural frequency," moreover, does not mean frequency in the physical sense; it figuratively indicates the disposition of an individual to enter strong resonance of meaning with particular events.

If the degree of coincidence with the natural frequency is zero, core-tremor is zero however high the intensity of input. Conversely, where coincidence is high, even a light input can produce high

core-tremor. The structure is analogous to physical resonance, in which a small force produces a large amplitude when frequencies coincide.

An important implication follows. That the degree to which movement of the origin occurs differs from person to person, even in environments of the same informational density, is because the fit between natural frequency and environment differs individually. Those who do not change despite a long stay abroad were in an environment that did not coincide with their natural frequency. Conversely, those whose lives are changed by a single book or a single conversation encountered an event that resonated fully with their natural frequency.

6.4 Duration

Definition 6 Duration

Duration is the time over which core-tremor continues.

A stimulus that vanishes in an instant, however high its core-tremor, is exhausted as a transient surprise or emotion and leaves no lasting structural effect. Only when core-tremor continues beyond a certain time does it take effect upon structure.

"Time" here is not simple physical time. It is **the time during which core-tremor is in a state of resonance**. Once resonance breaks off and mere elapsed time remains, that time is not included in the duration of this formula.

6.5 Plasticity

Definition 7 Plasticity

Plasticity is the capacity of the receiver actually to deform as a structure.

Proposition 18 The Four Elements of Plasticity

First element: the capacity to let go — the power to release attachment to the existing presuppositional layer (enabling phase one).

Second element: openness — the degree to which new information is admitted.

Third element: tolerance of instability — the power to endure the phase in which zero lies exposed (enabling phase two).

Fourth element: the capacity to rebuild — the power to assemble a new structure after movement (enabling phase three).

The four elements correspond to the phases of the process. The capacity to let go enables detachment; tolerance of instability sustains exposure; and the capacity to rebuild enables re-formation. Openness permits the continued admission of new input throughout the process.

If any of the four is lacking, movement of the origin is not carried through even where core-tremor and duration are sufficient. The consequences of lacking tolerance of instability in particular are treated in 6.7.

6.6 Occasions That Induce Zeroing

Phase one does not occur only through accidental events. The occasions that bring the effective origin close to zero fall into three types. Of these, meditation and radical questioning are operations that can be actively undertaken, while loss is an event undergone.

Proposition 19 The Three Occasions of Zeroing

Meditation — the operation of once loosening entangled identification (the first layer).

Loss — the event in which, through losing what matters, the ordering of values (the second layer) collapses. Though not willed by the person, it functions as an occasion for the reorganisation of the presuppositional layer.

Radical questioning — the operation of doubting the tacit understanding (the third layer) and the admissibility of questions (the fourth layer).

All three act upon one or another layer of the presuppositional layer and bring the effective origin closer to bare zero.

The three occasions differ in character according to which layer they act upon. Meditation touches the layer of identification, loss the layer of value ordering, radical questioning the layers of commitment to reality and the admissibility of questions. Hence a single occasion alone does not necessarily loosen the whole of the presuppositional layer. The move into another cultural sphere and the intrusion of dream logic, mentioned in 6.1, are not an independent fourth occasion but environmental conditions that induce one of these three from outside.

Moreover, even where these occasions induce phase one, they do not determine the content of phase three. Zeroing has no direction. Which presuppositional layer is newly constituted depends on the external conditions of the following section.

6.7 Pathologies of the Transitional Phase

Phase two is structurally an unstable phase. The old presuppositional layer has lapsed; the new one is not yet constituted. Where the power to endure this phase (tolerance of instability) is insufficient, two outcomes arise.

The first is **reversion**. Unable to endure the discomfort of exposure, one returns to the old layer that had begun to detach. In this case perspective does not change. Many "momentary realisations" end here.

The second is **stagnation**. The old layer has been lost but a new one is not constituted. One remains in a void in which the old effective origin has lapsed but a new one has not yet been formed. In this state, since no axes are constituted, the standard of judgement itself fails to function.

Stagnation is a type within structural description, not a clinical diagnostic concept. This paper offers no therapeutic prescription for this state; it is noted only as a structural outcome that can arise where condition B (the container) of the following section is unmet.

6.8 External Conditions and the Threshold

The product of the three inner variables (core-tremor, duration, plasticity) constitutes the driving force of movement of the origin. Whether that driving force actually carries the three-phase process through, however, depends on several **external conditions**.

Proposition 20 External Conditions and the Threshold Condition

External condition A: the availability of an alternative configuration — that another constitution of the presuppositional layer is available as the destination of re-formation.

External condition B: the presence of a container — that relationships or settings exist which support the transitional phase.

Threshold condition C: that the product of the inner variables exceeds a certain value. Unlike A and B, this is not external: it is the binary criterion applied to the inner variables themselves.

Unlike the inner variables, conditions A and B do not vary continuously; they function as gating conditions that determine whether the process can proceed at all. Movement of the origin occurs when the external conditions are met and the threshold condition is satisfied.

07 The Origin as the Creator of Axes

7.1 Looking Once More at the Origin

Thus far the origin has been depicted as an "unmoving reference point," as the source from which axes are derived by way of the effective origin. At this point, however, a reversal occurs.

What was the origin? It was the point whose value is zero on every axis. It holds nothing. It leans in no direction. It is caught by no axis. Everything remains undetermined; it simply is there.

A question arises here. The origin holds, by definition, no value whatsoever; but as a counterfactual, if the origin itself were supposed to hold some value, what would follow?

7.2 The State of Indeterminacy

Let us first delimit the sense of the word "zero."

Definition 8 Zero

"Zero" in this paper does not mean a numerical value in the sense of a particular point on a coordinate, but the **state** of holding no value on any axis — that is, indeterminacy.

To be indeterminate is not to be fixed at any value. What is not yet fixed by any determination is logically prior to every particular determination; determination holds only on the presupposition of the indeterminate. This indeterminacy forms the entrance to what is later called "emptiness."

It is important here not to mistake indeterminacy for stillness.

Corollary 3 Zero Is Not Stillness

That something is indeterminate does not mean that nothing is occurring. Zero is a state that, while holding no determination, remains structurally open to generation.

7.3 Precisely Because It Is Zero

Proposition 21 The Generative Possibility of Zero

As a counterfactual, if the origin itself were supposed to hold some value, only axes bound to that value could be extended. Precisely because it is zero, axes can be constituted under the origin in any direction whatsoever.

Let us make the supposition concrete. Suppose the origin already held the value "winning is the supreme value." From that origin it would be difficult to extend the axis "fair / unfair" independently. Fairness would be re-measured either as holding value insofar as it conduces to winning, or as an obstacle impeding victory. Either way it has been converted into a value on the axis of victory and defeat, and holds no independent direction.

Conversely, if the origin is truly zero — holding no value whatsoever — axes can be constituted in any direction about that point. In actual cognition, what takes on value is not the origin but the effective origin; this counterfactual serves to show, by reductio, why the origin must be zero.

Corollary 4 Emptiness as Possibility, Not as Incapacity

To hold nothing is not incapacity. It is the very possibility of constitution in all directions.

7.4 Two Temporalities: Derivation and Generation

"Axes are derivative of the effective origin" (Chapter 5) and "the origin is the creator of axes" (this chapter) differ in the **temporality** they ascribe to axes. In the present model, "derivation" is used to evoke the image of axes having issued from the origin at some past moment and persisting independently thereafter; the term is not intended to carry that temporal sense in general. "Generation" carries the image of axes being constituted here and now, sustained by the zero state of the origin. On the former, the replacement of the effective origin leaves axes merely "wavering"; on the latter, the moment the effective origin takes on a particular determination, the axes open in directions incompatible with it lose their support and collapse.

Proposition 22 The Origin as "Creator"

Axes are not entities derived from the origin at some point in the past. Rather, through the indeterminacy of the origin, axes are continuously enabled to be constituted in the present. In this sense the origin is called the "creator" of axes.

Describing ordinary cognitive experience by means of this model yields phenomena consistent with the latter. The moment the effective origin takes on the determination "winning is supreme," the axis "fair / unfair" ceases to function as an independent axis of evaluation. The vocabulary that

names the axis remains, and one can go on speaking of fairness, but it does not actually operate as an axis. Were axes genuinely independent entities, a change in the effective origin should leave them merely wavering. What is in fact described, however, is that the axes themselves lose their support. Within this model, this can be described as the axes being continuously sustained by the zero state of the origin.

Corollary 5 The Origin as the Condition of Constitution

Proposition 12, that axes are rearranged when the effective origin is replaced, admits of a stronger restatement: because the indeterminacy of the origin continuously sustains the possibility of axes being constituted, it is structurally necessary that, when those conditions change, the configuration of axes constituted under them changes as well.

7.5 Delimiting the Word "Creator"

The word "creator" in this paper receives, in advance of the discussions of Chapters 8 and 9, a twofold delimitation.

Proposition 23 The Sense of "Creator"

- (i) It does not designate a personal or theological being. It is a word for indicating, in its active aspect, the structural position that makes the constitution of axes possible — a locus which, being tinged with no value, permits axes to be constituted in any direction.
- (ii) It designates an enabling condition, not an efficient cause. The origin is not a force that pushes axes out. That the origin is without determination is what constitutes the condition under which axes can be constituted. The language of "generation" is a metaphorical way of expressing this conditionality in active terms.

Corollary 6 The Twofold Condition of Generation

Two conditions operate in the generation of axes. The indeterminacy of the origin is the enabling condition under which axes can be constituted at all. The presuppositional layer is the selective condition specifying the direction of the axes that are actually constituted. The former selects nothing; the latter selects. "Axes are derivative of the effective origin" (Proposition 11) and "the indeterminacy of the origin continuously sustains the possibility of axes" (Proposition 22) state these two conditions respectively; they do not compete for one and the same role.

Delimitation (ii) is decisive. Since what is without determination can exert no action, the generation spoken of here must be read not as "the origin makes axes" but as the conditional "insofar as the origin is without determination, axes can be constituted." This reading is the crux of the response to Critical Buddhism treated in 9.3.

08 Emptiness, Dependent Origination, and the True Self

8.1 The Structural Correspondence between Zero and Emptiness

The origin was the single point whose value is zero on every axis: a pure undetermined point holding nothing and tinged in no direction. Expressed in Buddhist terminology, this property corresponds to **emptiness** (空, śūnyatā).

Proposition 24 The Structural Correspondence of Origin and Emptiness

The origin in the theory of perspective and emptiness in Buddhism correspond structurally. Both share the same formal structure: in each case, the absence of determination is the condition under which constitution becomes possible.

This paper does not, however, assert the correspondence as an ontological identity of the two. The origin is a position specified within structural description as the zero point of the coordinate system of cognition; it does not thereby assume the soteriological and religious import that emptiness carries. The correspondence remains at the level of form.

Corollary 7 A Difference of Descriptive Level from the Imaginary Dimension

The correspondence of origin and emptiness spoken of in this chapter is a formal correspondence at the descriptive level of the coordinate system of cognition. This is not inconsistent with the first paper's distinction between the imaginary dimension iD and Buddhist emptiness (Muranushi, 2026a, §6.3). iD is a structural surplus accompanying the object, whereas the origin of this chapter is the zero point of the subject's coordinate system; the two belong to different descriptive levels. The correspondence with emptiness is asserted only at the latter level and does not identify iD with emptiness.

8.2 Relational Constitution and Dependent Origination

Given the structural correspondence between the origin and emptiness, what can be said of everything else constituted within the model?

The axes constituted under the origin, the values along them, the relations among axes — all of these are constituted only as relations between "something" and "something." An axis is an axis in relation to the origin. A value is a value in relation to its axis. Meaning is meaning in relation to the several elements that sustain it.

Proposition 25 The Structure of Dependent Origination

Given this structural correspondence between the origin and emptiness, the elements constituted within this model other than the origin — axes, values along axes, relations among axes, and the meanings that arise there — can be specified only through relation. This corresponds to the structure of dependent origination (緣起, pratītya-samutpāda) in Buddhism.

The centre is empty; all that surrounds it is dependent origination. This is the point of arrival of the theory of perspective, and it exhibits a formal affinity with the insight Nāgārjuna presented in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Nāgārjuna, c. 150 CE; cf. Garfield, 1995).

8.3 How Far "Generative Emptiness" Departs from the Tradition

It is necessary here to make explicit where this paper stands with respect to traditional Buddhist doctrine.

In the Madhyamaka tradition, emptiness is another name for dependent origination, not a productive principle that brings things forth. To say that emptiness generates something has been rejected as the error of reifying emptiness. What this paper calls "generative emptiness" does not simply inherit that traditional specification.

Proposition 26 Delimitation of the Position Taken Here

This paper does not reinterpret emptiness as the efficient cause of generation. It speaks of the generative aspect of emptiness at the level of conditional description: indeterminacy is an enabling condition for the constitution of axes. "Generative emptiness" is therefore not the claim that emptiness produces something, but the claim that being empty is the condition of generation.

Remove this delimitation and read "emptiness produces axes," and emptiness becomes a locus holding productive power, to which the Madhyamaka critique applies directly. Where this paper takes a step beyond the tradition is in thematising the enabling-conditionality that is an aspect of emptiness, not in granting emptiness the status of an efficient cause. This difference underwrites the response to Critical Buddhism in 9.3.

8.4 What, Then, Is the True Self?

The question at issue here is confined neither to Buddhism nor to modern Japanese thought. Indian thought since the Upaniṣads posited a self (ātman) as a substance persisting in the depth of the individual. Buddhism countered by denying a self that is permanent, single, and sovereign, teaching no-self (anātman). Yet some Mahāyāna traditions rearticulate the notion of "self" in affirmative terms, as a virtue of nirvāṇa or as buddha-nature; the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*'s teaching of permanence, bliss, self, and purity is the representative case. The question "is there no self, or is there one in another sense?" has been posed repeatedly across this exchange of more than two millennia. The Kyoto School, treated in Chapter 9, is one phase of this long question in modern Japan.

The argument of this paper is consistent with the side of no-self: the origin is indeterminate and structurally corresponds to emptiness; it is not a fixed "I."

At the same time, however, this paper has argued that the indeterminacy of the origin continuously sustains the possibility of axes being constituted. How, then, should we characterise this ongoing generation from an empty origin?

Proposition 27 A Structural-Descriptive Redefinition of the True Self

The true self is not a fixed "I." As no-self indicates, it cannot be posited as a substance. What this chapter has described is the structure in which axes are continuously enabled to be constituted under an indeterminate origin. "True self" names this structural locus of generation insofar as it is understood dynamically, as an operation rather than a substance; it does not assert the existence of a substance that bears the generation.

What matters here is not to reify the true self as a "thing." The true self is not a substantive concept designating an entity, but a processual concept referring to the ongoing condition of generation. This usage is isomorphic with the delimitation Proposition 23 gave to "creator": both indicate, in its active aspect, the structural position that, being without determination, makes axes possible.

8.5 Distinguishing the True Self from the Primal Impulse

Let us connect this with the discussion of 6.3. The true self as the structural position of generation, and the primal impulse (the natural frequency) as the orientation proper to a given person, must be distinguished.

Proposition 28 Structural Position and Individual Direction

The true self names the structural position of generation as an operation; it is not the sort of thing of which it can be asked whether it is one and the same across individuals or different in each. The primal impulse (the natural frequency) is the individual orientation through which this generative structure is selectively expressed; it carries content and differs from individual to individual. The former belongs to the side of the origin, the latter to the side of the substratum (body and history).

Conflate the two, and particular content is attributed to a position that is supposed to hold no determination, so that the true self approaches the substance of "that person's proper essence." Individual difference resides on sides other than the origin. The position of generation itself is not an item to be counted or compared across individuals.

Corollary 8 The Unification of No-Self and True Self

"No-self" and "true self" are not opposed. They view one and the same point from different angles. No-self speaks negatively: there exists no fixed ego. The true self names the same structure affirmatively, as the structural position that, remaining empty, continuously sustains the constitution of axes. The two describe the same structure in negative and in affirmative form.

09 Relation to the Kyoto School**9.1 Nishida Kitarō's "Logic of Place"**

The central insight of this paper — that an origin which is zero functions as the place continuously making the constitution of axes possible — stands in close structural proximity to

Nishida Kitarō's "logic of place" (Nishida, 1926/1965). Nishida divided the "place" in which objects are constituted into three strata — being, relative nothingness, and absolute nothingness — and formalised the ultimate ground of everything as "the place of absolute nothingness." Absolute nothingness is the ultimate place within which every determination of being is constituted; this structure corresponds to the very character this paper has assigned to an origin that is zero.

This paper and Nishida's theory of place can be read as exhibiting a significant structural correspondence, despite their different conceptual vocabularies. What the theory of place grasps as an ontological hierarchy of being and nothingness, this paper describes by means of the coordinate device of origin, axis, and value: the former is the vocabulary of ontology, the latter that of structural theory.

A similar correspondence can be noted with Nishida's acting intuition (Nishida, 1937/1966). Acting intuition designates the very operation that constitutes an object while seeing it. The state of affairs in this paper in which "axes are continuously generated under the origin" may be read as structurally analogous to acting intuition. The origin is at once the "seeing side" and the "place in which axes are constituted," and the two are not separable.

9.2 Nishitani Keiji's "Standpoint of Emptiness"

In *What Is Religion?* (Nishitani, 1961/1982), Nishitani Keiji presented the **standpoint of emptiness** reached by way of nihility. This is an important discussion clarifying the difference between the "nothing" grasped by Western metaphysics (nothing grasped as the negation of being) and Buddhist "emptiness" (emptiness as the field in which things are disclosed as they are), and it is an essential reference point for the argument of this paper as well.

The claim presented in Proposition 27, that the true self is generative emptiness, may be read as structurally analogous to Nishitani's account of the self on the standpoint of emptiness — a self that operates while remaining without ground (Nishitani, 1961, ch. 4, "The Standpoint of Emptiness"). That Nishitani described this self not as a personal substance but as an activity that traverses both the personal and the impersonal (*ibid.*, ch. 2) corresponds structurally to this paper's specification of the true self as a name for an operation rather than a noun.

Further, the pathologies of the transitional phase treated in 6.7 overlap with what Nishitani described as the phase of nihility. Just as for Nishitani nihility is a point of passage towards emptiness, so in this paper phase two is a point of passage towards re-formation. This paper does not claim, however, that passage is guaranteed. Stagnation is one structurally possible outcome.

9.3 Relation to Critical Buddhism

One major controversy must be taken up here. Critical Buddhism, developed by Hakamaya Noriaki and Matsumoto Shirō, criticised tathāgatagarbha and original-enlightenment thought as *dhātu-vāda* — the doctrine of a substantive locus — and claimed that, running counter to the teaching of dependent origination, it is a deviation from Buddhist orthodoxy (Hakamaya, 1989; Matsumoto, 1989; Hubbard & Swanson, 1997).

The concept of a "true self" presented in this paper might on the surface fall under this critique, since the affirmative expression "true self" appears to assert the reality of a fixed locus.

Matsumoto's formulation of *dhātu-vāda* consists, in broad terms, of three conditions (Matsumoto, 1989). First, a single locus gives rise to the many dharmas (super-loci). Second, the dharmas differ from one another, while the locus is identical and single. Third, the dharmas are unreal, while the locus is real. The response of this paper rests on three delimitations corresponding to these conditions respectively.

First, the true self is formulated not as a substance (a thing) but as an operation (a verb) (Proposition 27). In the vocabulary of coordinate-structure theory, the origin is a point holding no value and hence no attribute whatsoever.

Second, generation is specified as an enabling condition, not an efficient cause (Proposition 23-ii, Proposition 26, Corollary 6). *Dhātu-vāda* is criticised because it posits a single locus that produces the dharmas. An enabling condition produces nothing. The description that being without determination is what makes constitution possible is a description of a condition, not the positing of a producer. The first condition, "gives rise to," does not apply to the origin of this paper.

Third, this paper grants the origin no status of reality and does not describe axes as unreal. Axes are constituted relationally (Proposition 25); they are not unreal derivatives of a real locus. The asymmetry of real and unreal in the third condition therefore does not exist in this paper. Individual difference, moreover, is attributed entirely to sides other than the origin — the presuppositional layer and the substratum (Propositions 17 and 28) — and these, though they hold content, are not a grounding locus but constitutions that are variable or that change slowly.

On the definitions adopted in this paper, none of the three conditions is satisfied; the "true self" proposed here therefore does not straightforwardly fall within the form of *dhātu-vāda* that critique targets, differing from it in ontological category. Whether this response succeeds, however, depends on the three delimitations above being maintained consistently throughout the paper. Relax any one of them, and the critique becomes effective at once.

10 Conclusion

Through the attempt to describe perspective in terms of the coordinate structure of thought, this paper has established the following points.

First, we showed that perspective consists of three elements — range, orthogonality, and origin — specified range as a magnitude extending over the four dimensions of time, space, abstraction, and complexity, and classified systematically the four operations upon axes (extension, addition, recomposition, meta-framing).

Second, we distinguished the origin proper from the effective origin and distinguished two forms of the origin's invisibility: non-objectifiability arising from indeterminacy, and backgrounding arising from operating as the standard. This distinction dissolves the tension between specifying the origin as zero and saying that the origin moves.

Third, we redefined the ordinary expression "movement of the origin" as a three-phase process of detachment (zeroing), exposure (the transitional phase), and re-formation, and organised its driving conditions as the product of core-tremor, duration, and plasticity. The four elements of plasticity were correlated with the three phases, and the three occasions inducing zeroing (meditation, loss, radical questioning) and the two pathologies of the transitional phase (reversion, stagnation) were situated accordingly. The natural frequency was located in the substratum (body and history), which persists across the three phases.

Fourth, from the fact that the origin is zero, we derived the epistemological reversal that the origin is not the past source of axes but the locus of their generation, articulating it as a difference in temporality between derivation and generation. This generation is specified strictly as an enabling condition, not an efficient cause.

Fifth, we showed that, given the structural correspondence between the origin and emptiness, the elements constituted within the model other than the origin are relationally constituted in a manner structurally corresponding to dependent origination, and unified the classical opposition of self and no-self through the structural-descriptive concept of generative emptiness. This unified perspective exhibits structural affinities with the Kyoto School's theories of place and emptiness, while incorporating the central concern raised by Critical Buddhism through three explicit delimitations.

Open Questions

First, the rigorous specification of the functional form of the three variables (core-tremor, duration, plasticity). This paper expressed it as a product; the adequacy of other compositions (a minimum function, a logarithmic function, and so on) requires further examination.

Second, the identification of the threshold. What determines it, and whether it varies by culture and by individual, require both empirical research and theoretical consideration.

Third, verification of the independence of the four elements of plasticity. Whether they are genuinely orthogonal to one another or possess a correlational structure requires verification by both phenomenological description and psychological measurement.

Fourth, the adequacy of the four-layer structure of the presuppositional layer. Whether the four layers are exhaustive, whether an order obtains among them, and whether the zeroing of one layer propagates to others, remain unverified.

Fifth, the identification of the boundary between substratum and presuppositional layer. By what criterion the substratum to which the natural frequency is attributed is distinguished from the presuppositional layer, and how large the difference in their time constants is, are not specified in this paper.

Sixth, empirical verification of the trade-off between range and resolution (Proposition 4). It is a proposition that holds only under the assumption of finite cognitive resources, and how to treat the variability of those resources remains a task.

Seventh, deepening the dialogue with the philosophical tradition of the Kyoto School. This paper refers to the discussions of Nishida and Nishitani only in outline. Full engagement with the Madhyamaka and Yogācāra traditions, with contemporary Buddhist studies (Garfield, Westerhoff, and others), and with Japanese philosophy scholarship, is a task requiring independent research.

Appendix Glossary

origin	The structural position whose value is zero on every axis. Without determination; does not move.
presuppositional layer	The four-layer initial structure formed in immediate relation to the origin (identification / ordering of values / commitment to reality / admissibility of questions).
effective origin	The composite of origin and presuppositional layer; the constitution actually operating as the standard of measurement.
zeroing	The detachment of the presuppositional layer from the origin, through which existing determinations lapse (phase one).
transitional phase	The phase in which the origin lies exposed as bare zero, old axes having lapsed and new ones not yet constituted (phase two).
re-formation	The formation of a new presuppositional layer, under which new axes are constituted (phase three).
movement of the origin	Conventional designation of the three-phase process above. It does not mean translation of the origin itself.
natural frequency	The disposition of an individual to resonate strongly in meaning with particular events. Another name for the primal impulse and the primitive function. Belongs to the side of the substratum (body and history).
substratum	The aspect of body and history persisting across the three-phase process. The locus to which the natural frequency is attributed; the presuppositional layer acts as its modulator.
generative emptiness	The conditional aspect of emptiness: indeterminacy as an enabling condition for the constitution of axes.
true self	A processual name for the generative structure associated with an indeterminate origin. Not a substance, and not an independently existing locus.

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