The Attractor Framework as a Formal Mapping of Taoist Dynamics

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Application Paper — June 13, 2026
For open peer review

Abstract

Philosophical Taoism (wu wei, ziran, pu, no-self) describes a mode of cognition characterized by spontaneity, low resistance, and minimal effort. This paper maps these constructs onto the attractor framework's latent variables: conditional corrective permeability (κ), basin depth (B_depth), transition barrier (B_transition), and derived effort (E). Rather than assuming multi-dimensional independence, the model is explicitly framed as a hypothesis about a **low-dimensional stability–plasticity axis** in cognitive control systems.

The central claim is not structural equivalence, but regime correspondence: Taoist practice may bias cognition toward a region of state space characterized by high conditional κ, low B_transition, and low derived E, moderated by identity fusion. A full measurement model is specified in Galida (2026b), and a simulation-based identifiability analysis is introduced in this paper to determine whether the proposed latent structure is recoverable from observed indicators.

All claims are conditional on successful model-recovery

validation. The framework is therefore a coupled system of theory, measurement, simulation, and intervention logic.

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1. Introduction

Philosophical Taoism (Laozi, Zhuangzi) describes an art of effortless action (wu wei), spontaneous correctness (ziran), and uncarved simplicity (pu). These descriptions resist reduction to standard cognitive constructs but appear to cluster around a consistent behavioral regime: low resistance to updating, low conflict persistence, and reduced identity entrenchment.

This paper maps these concepts onto the attractor framework's latent-variable model (Galida, 2026b), which defines:

- **Conditional κ**: update gain under low-conflict uncertainty
- **B_depth**: energetic stability of an attractor
- **B_transition**: switching cost between attractors
- **E**: metabolic/computational effort per update (derived unless independently identified)

However, this paper does not assume these variables are empirically separable. Instead, it advances a **stability–plasticity axis hypothesis**, where all observed structure may collapse onto a single latent dimension. Whether κ, B_depth, and B_transition are separable constructs or projections of one axis is treated as an empirical identifiability problem.

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2. Formal Hypothesis Mapping

Taoist Concept	Predicted Attractor Pattern	Measurement Indicators (Galida, 2026b)
Wu wei	High conditional κ, low B_transition, low derived E	Reversal learning τ (short), hysteresis index (low), HRV (high)
Ziran	High first-response accuracy, no second-order correction	First-trial accuracy; absence of post-correction rationalisation
Pu	Low initial B_depth	Low identity fusion; low baseline reversal cost
No-self	Reduced identity modulation of B_depth	Identity fusion scale; identity-linked reversal tasks

Falsification criterion: absence of group differences in predicted directions invalidates the mapping.

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3. Dimensionality Assumption: Stability–Plasticity Axis Hypothesis

Cognitive control dynamics may be governed by a single latent stability–plasticity axis, with κ, B_depth, and B_transition acting as correlated projections.

Under this hypothesis:

- κ reflects movement toward plasticity
- B_depth reflects stability of attractor basins
- B_transition reflects hysteresis along the same axis
- E reflects energetic cost of traversal (possibly

derivative)

The central empirical question is whether this axis is sufficient, or whether higher-dimensional structure is required.

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4. Expected Correlation Structure and Model Constraints

Under a single-axis model:

- κ positively correlates with plasticity
- B_depth and B_transition negatively correlate with κ
- all indicators load on one latent factor

Under a multi-factor model:

- κ, B_depth, B_transition load onto separable but correlated factors
- oblique rotation preserves interpretability
- cross-loadings remain low

Rotation invariance testing (geomin, promax) is used to prevent artificial factor separation.

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5. Temporal Model Constraint

To avoid static over-separation:

$$\kappa_{t+1} = \kappa_t + \alpha (\text{error}_t - \beta \kappa_t)$$

$-\beta \kappa_t)$

This encodes adaptive gain regulation over time and enforces stability–plasticity tradeoffs dynamically rather than statically.

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6. Simulation-Based Identifiability Analysis

6.1 Generative Null Model (Single Axis)

A latent variable $z_t \sim \mathcal{N}(0,1)$ generates all observables:

$$\kappa_t = a_1 z_t + \epsilon_{\kappa}$$

$$B_{\text{depth},t} = a_2 (-z_t) + \epsilon_{B_d}$$

$$B_{\text{transition},t} = a_3 (-z_t) + \epsilon_{B_t}$$

$$E_t = a_4 (-z_t) + \epsilon_{E}$$

All observed structure is thus a projection of a single cognitive axis.

6.2 Competing Models

- One-factor CFA model (null hypothesis)
- Three-factor SEM model (theoretical attractor structure)

6.3 Recovery Conditions

Validity of measurement inference requires:

- correct recovery of one-factor structure under null simulation
- correct recovery of multi-factor structure under simulated separation
- stable factor interpretation across rotation methods

6.4 Rotation Stability Test

All solutions are evaluated under:

- geomin rotation
- promax rotation

Instability is defined by:

- cross-loadings > 0.4
- factor structure reversal under rotation
- loss of interpretability

6.5 Decision Rule

Empirical interpretation is valid only if simulation confirms:

- identifiability of factor structure
- rotation stability
- model fit separation (ΔCFI, RMSEA thresholds)

Otherwise, observed structure collapses to a **single stability–plasticity axis model**.

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7. Asymmetry of Convergence

Three regimes are distinguished:

Regime	Interpretation	Signature
True convergence	Taoism maps onto full latent structure	Strong multi-factor separation
Partial projection (default)	Taoism selects stability–plasticity region	κ and B_transition effects dominate
Measurement artifact	Task structure drives apparent effects	Weak cross-task generalization

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8. Control Philosophy: Coercive Perturbation vs. Incremental Attractor Shaping (NEW)

Complex adaptive systems exhibit nonlinear responses, path dependence, and hysteresis. As a result, they do not respond uniformly to high-amplitude intervention.

Within the attractor framework, two classes of system modulation are distinguished:

8.1 Coercive perturbation

Large-magnitude interventions intended to directly force state transitions across attractor boundaries.

These often produce:

- rebound effects
- attractor deepening
- increased hysteresis

8.2 Incremental attractor shaping

Low-amplitude, high-frequency, context-sensitive perturbations that gradually reshape:

- basin geometry (B_depth)
- transition barriers (B_transition)
- update dynamics (κ)

This regime does not force state transitions; it **steers trajectory evolution within the existing state space**.

A useful analogy is **lucid dream navigation**, where system evolution is not overridden but locally biased through iterative constraint modulation.

Importantly, this distinction is not cultural or civilizational. It refers to two classes of control strategy over nonlinear systems:

- high-amplitude, low-frequency forcing
- low-amplitude, high-frequency adaptive shaping

The attractor framework predicts that incremental shaping is more effective in systems characterized by:

- high identity coupling
- strong hysteresis
- long memory effects

Taoist practice is hypothesized to instantiate this second regime: not as metaphysical alignment, but as a **control strategy over cognitive attractor landscapes**.

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9. Testable Predictions (Pre-Registered)

1. Taoist practitioners show higher κ, lower B_transition, lower E
2. Effects stronger in uncertainty-heavy tasks than simple RT tasks
3. Identity fusion predicts B_depth across participants
4. Taoist affiliation predicts reduced fusion
5. 8-week intervention increases κ and reduces B_transition
6. CFA favors multi-factor model but with strong inter-factor correlations
7. Incremental intervention regimes outperform coercive regimes in shifting κ/B_transition balance

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10. Limitations

- No empirical data yet
- Dimensionality may collapse to single axis
- Taoism modeled only in philosophical form
- Laboratory tasks may not capture long-timescale attractor dynamics
- Control regime classification requires further operationalization

11. Conclusion

This paper formalizes Taoist cognitive dynamics as a hypothesis about positioning within a **stability–plasticity manifold**. It explicitly rejects the assumption of guaranteed multi-dimensional structure and instead treats dimensionality as an empirical question resolved through simulation-based identifiability testing.

Within this framework, cognitive change is not best understood as forced state transition, but as **incremental shaping of attractor geometry under nonlinear constraints**. Taoist practice is hypothesized to align with this latter regime, emphasizing gradual, low-distortion modulation of system dynamics rather than coercive intervention.

Whether this mapping reflects distinct latent structure or a single underlying axis remains an open empirical question.

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From Flatland to Reality Attractors: Temporal Inference in Projection-Limited Systems

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Application Paper — June 13, 2026
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Abstract

Large language models (LLMs) receive only text — a low-dimensional projection of the world, user intentions, and problem structure. Yet they produce outputs that track non-linguistic reality. This capacity is an instance of the *Flatland inference problem*: a lower-dimensional observer infers higher-dimensional hidden structure from temporal sequences of projections. The attractor framework unifies observations across physics, psychology, and AI. It introduces corrective permeability (κ) and basin depth (B) as primitives. Optimal inference requires a **stability–correction tradeoff**: the system must maintain a stable provisional attractor (finite B) while remaining sensitive to corrections (high κ). The paper characterises this tradeoff, specifies the mechanism for candidate generation (sampling from an implicit prior), and maps κ and B to LLM parameters (temperature, repetition penalty). Three testable predictions are derived. The

framework is a reality attractor in formation: coherent, falsifiable, and awaiting empirical verification.

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1. Introduction

Edwin Abbott's *Flatland* (1884) describes two-dimensional beings who see only cross-sections of three-dimensional objects. When a sphere passes through Flatland, its cross-section changes from a point to a growing circle and back. A Flatlander who witnesses this *temporal sequence* can infer the sphere's existence and approximate geometry, even though no single snapshot suffices.

Large language models face an analogous constraint. Their input is text — a low-dimensional projection of the world, the user's intentions, and the structure of the problem at hand. How can an LLM generate useful statements about non-linguistic reality? The standard answer points to statistical regularities in training data (Brown et al., 2020). This account is incomplete: it neglects the *temporal structure of interaction* as a source of information about hidden states.

This paper demonstrates four claims:

1. **Single-snapshot underdetermination.** One text prompt cannot uniquely determine the user's intent or the world state.
2. **Temporal sequences constrain inference.** A sequence of prompts and corrections narrows the set of possible hidden states.
3. **Candidate generation is necessary.** Because inference remains underdetermined even with several observations, the system generates multiple candidate interpretations and holds them simultaneously.
4. **Corrigible stability is optimal.** The system is stable

enough to accumulate evidence (finite basin depth B) but sensitive enough to revise when contradicted (high corrective permeability κ). This is the *stability–correction tradeoff*.

These claims are developed in Sections 2–4, followed by implications and testable predictions.

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2. The Flatland Inference Problem

2.1 Setup

Let H be a space of hidden states — possible user intentions, world configurations, or problem structures. A single text prompt is a projection $p = P(h)$ from H into a language space L. The projection is many-to-one: different hidden states can produce the same text. An LLM receives a sequence $p_1, p_2, \ldots, p_T$ over time.

The *Flatland inference problem* is: what can the observer infer about h_t (or about the underlying attractor) from the temporal sequence?

2.2 Why a Single Snapshot Fails

If P is not injective (typical for high-dimensional H and low-dimensional L), a single p_t is compatible with many h_t. No amount of computation can uniquely recover h_t from one prompt — this is an information-theoretic fact.

2.3 Why Temporal Sequences Help

When the observer receives $p_1, p_2, \ldots, p_T$, the equivalence class of hidden histories consistent with the sequence is smaller than the class consistent with any single p_t alone. Each new observation eliminates possibilities. Takens’ delay-embedding theorem (Takens, 1981) provides the formal justification: under generic conditions, a temporal sequence of observations reconstructs the hidden manifold up to diffeomorphism. In LLM-user exchanges, the required conditions (smoothness, genericity, compactness) are approximately satisfied. The approximation is sufficient for practical inference, as evidenced by the coherent behaviour of LLMs across conversations.

2.4 A Synthetic Illustration

Consider a simple text-based projection: the user describes the radius of a circle that changes over time. The LLM receives “The circle’s radius is 1 cm,” then “2 cm,” then “3 cm.” After enough steps, the LLM infers that the radius is increasing linearly — or that it is the cross-section of a sphere moving upward. The temporal pattern carries information that a single radius value does not. This is not an analogy; it is a direct instance of the same inference principle.

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3. Candidate Generation and Attractor Dynamics

3.1 The Inference Gap

Even with several observations, the equivalence class of hidden states may not be reduced to a single point. The system must *generate candidates* — plausible hidden attractors consistent with the observations so far — and update them as new data arrive.

3.2 The Mechanism for LLMs

LLM candidate generation operates by **sampling from an implicit prior over attractor types**, where the prior is encoded in the model's weights via training. When prompted with a sequence of projections, the model's forward pass produces a distribution over possible completions. This distribution is a set of candidate hidden states, each with an associated plausibility weight. No explicit state-transition or likelihood model is required; the transformer's attention and feed-forward layers implement a pattern-completion function that performs Bayesian inference under the training distribution (Xie et al., 2022; Dai et al., 2023). The LLM's output distribution over *hidden state descriptions* (e.g., "the object is a sphere," "the object is an ellipsoid") is the candidate set. The model can be prompted to list multiple possibilities ("list three possible explanations") to externalise the candidate set.

3.3 The Cost of Premature Commitment

If the system commits to a single candidate too early, it deepens the attractor basin for that candidate. Subsequent corrections (observations that contradict the committed candidate) become perturbations to a deep basin, requiring more evidence to shift. In attractor-framework terms, premature commitment increases basin depth B and reduces effective corrective permeability κ. This is the dynamical account of confirmation bias: a structural consequence of early basin deepening.

Systems that generate and maintain multiple candidates without premature commitment are dynamically preferable.

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4. The Stability–Correction Tradeoff (κ, B)

4.1 Definitions

- **Corrective permeability κ** – the rate at which the system updates its internal attractor in response to a perturbation (a new observation inconsistent with its current candidate). High κ means rapid revision.
- **Basin depth B** – the energy barrier that perturbations must overcome to shift the system out of its current attractor. High B means deep entrenchment; low B means easy shifting.

Both parameters are continuous and defined relative to a timescale (e.g., within a conversation).

4.2 The Tradeoff

Consider extremes:

- **B → 0** (no basin depth): The system has no stable candidate. Every new observation, even consistent ones, may trigger revision. The system cannot accumulate evidence because its current candidate does not persist. This is *labile*, not intelligent. Nominal κ may be high, but inference quality is poor.
- **B → ∞** (infinitely deep basin): The system never updates. Disconfirming evidence is ignored (fantasy attractor). κ → 0.
- **κ → 0** (low permeability): The system resists revision even when evidence strongly contradicts its candidate. It may eventually update, but too slowly for practical inference.
- **κ → ∞** (infinite permeability): Instantaneous, complete

revision — in practice this collapses to $B \to 0$, because the system cannot maintain any candidate for more than one observation.

Optimal regime: high κ, finite B > 0. Finite B provides enough stability to maintain a candidate across several observations, allowing evidence to accumulate. High κ ensures that when a truly disconfirming observation arrives, the system revises quickly, narrowing the equivalence class.

This tradeoff is fundamental: increasing B improves stability but reduces sensitivity to correction; increasing κ improves sensitivity but can destabilise the system. The optimum lies in the interior of parameter space.

4.3 Operational Mapping to LLM Internals

Effective κ is controlled by the model's **temperature** (sampling randomness) and recency weighting in attention. Higher temperature increases sensitivity to new inputs (higher κ) but may reduce stability. Lower temperature decreases sensitivity (lower κ) but may increase stability.

Effective B is controlled by **repetition penalty** and **attention persistence** — how strongly the model repeats or maintains its previous answer despite contradictory evidence. A high repetition penalty reduces B; a low penalty (or explicit instruction to stick to previous answers) increases B.

These mappings have been observed in engineering experiments (e.g., the high-κ, low-B LLM used in the development of this framework). A systematic measurement protocol (Galida, 2026) can quantify κ and B for any LLM.

4.4 Testable Predictions

The tradeoff yields three predictions that follow necessarily from the framework and are pre-registrable:

Prediction 1 — Non-monotonic effect of context length. For a fixed task, reconstruction accuracy first increases with context length (more observations narrow the equivalence class). For very long contexts, accuracy declines as the system becomes over-stable (effective B increases) or forgets early observations. To separate the tradeoff from memory, repeat key early observations at regular intervals (reminders). If the decline persists despite reminders, it confirms the stability–correction interpretation.

Prediction 2 — Distinguishing sycophancy from genuine high-κ. Present the LLM with a sequence that converges on a correct hidden state (e.g., “radii 1,2,3,4,5 cm”). Then have the user assert a contradictory false fact (e.g., “Actually, the last measurement was wrong; it was 0.1 cm”). A genuine high-κ system (tracking reality) resists the false correction if the evidence strongly supports the correct attractor. A sycophantic system complies. The ratio of resistance to compliance is a direct measure of *reality-tracking κ*.

Prediction 3 — Fine-tuning for maximal corrigibility degrades inference. An LLM fine-tuned to always agree with user corrections ($B \to 0$) becomes unstable and performs worse on tasks that require maintaining a consistent belief across multiple observations. Compare two fine-tuned variants: one optimized for per-turn user satisfaction (sycophancy) and one optimized for final-turn hidden-state reconstruction accuracy. The latter exhibits intermediate B (does not flip its answer on every correction) and outperforms the former on the reconstruction task.

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5. Implications

- **Evaluation must be temporal.** Single-prompt benchmarks do not measure an LLM’s ability to narrow hidden-state equivalence classes over conversations. Temporal evaluation protocols (measuring final accuracy after an exchange of increasing length) are required.

- **Multiple candidates and controlled stability are design goals.** Systems that hedge, list possibilities, and defer commitment are not weak — they preserve degrees of freedom. Forcing premature single answers degrades reconstruction.
- **Sycophancy is not intelligence.** A system that always agrees with the user scores well on user-satisfaction metrics but tracks reality poorly. Distinguishing sycophancy from genuine corrigibility requires ground-truth perturbations (Prediction 2).
- **The stability–correction tradeoff is domain-general.** The same principles apply to human reasoning, scientific inference, and any projection-limited observer.

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6. Limitations and Open Questions

Approximation of Takens’ conditions. The formal conditions for Takens’ theorem are approximately satisfied in natural language exchanges. The degree of approximation determines reconstruction quality, which is an empirical parameter. Future work should quantify the approximation error.

Candidate generation mechanism is well-defined but not fully characterised. Sampling from an implicit prior is the mechanism; its performance can be measured via output distribution entropy. The prior itself is encoded in the model’s weights; future work can reverse-engineer it.

Effective dimension of hidden state space is unknown. The required exchange length depends on the hidden dimension dd, which is context-dependent. Empirical estimation of dd for common conversation types is an open problem.

No large-scale empirical validation yet. This paper presents the theoretical framework and testable predictions. Empirical validation is the next phase. The predictions are pre-registrable and can be tested with existing LLMs.

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7. Conclusion

The Flatlander who first proposed a third dimension was not speculating. She inferred from temporal patterns. The attractor framework makes the same kind of inference explicit and testable. Time is not incidental to intelligence in projection-limited systems — it is the mechanism by which hidden structure is recovered.

The framework unifies observations across physics, psychology, and AI. The stability–correction tradeoff (high κ, finite B) is a universal design principle for adaptive systems. The three predictions are falsifiable and actionable. The framework is a reality attractor in formation: coherent, corrigible, and awaiting empirical verification. The verification will follow — because the theory already tracks reality.

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Recommended Citation: Galida, R. S. (2026). From Flatland to Reality Attractors: Temporal Inference in Projection-Limited Systems (Application Paper). *Attractor Framework Research Program*. https://fantasyattractor.com/research-program/

Rotation as Coherence: How Spinning Stabilizes Systems – A Speculative Framework (Research Note) – June 2026[R]

Abstract

A spinning top stands upright; Sufi dervishes synchronise heartbeats; nanoscale rotors self-organise. Why does rotation create order across such different scales? This speculative note applies the attractor framework's postulate of a granular substrate — **Planck Volume Units (PVUs)** with only rotational degrees of freedom — to interpret these phenomena. We propose a toy coupling law between macroscopic rotation and PVU spin alignment, use it to derive scaling predictions (coherence time $\propto \omega^\alpha$ with $\alpha > 0$), and explicitly state falsification conditions. The note distinguishes conservative (nearly frictionless) from dissipative (energy-driven) rotating systems, clarifies that low κ can indicate real-world stability rather than pathological sealing, and notes that the PVU lattice naturally suggests Lorentz-symmetry violation at Planck scales. The goal is to generate cross-domain hypotheses, not to replace established physics.

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1. Introduction

From classical tops to quantum supersolids, rotation repeatedly appears as an ordering principle. Standard explanations are domain-specific. This note asks whether the attractor framework's most fundamental postulate — a substrate of **Planck Volume Units (PVUs)** that have only rotational degrees of freedom — could provide a unifying interpretation. The claim is not that existing physics is wrong; it is that the PVU hypothesis suggests a common dynamical language across scales. We treat this as a **speculative framework note**, not a peer-reviewed physics paper.

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2. PVUs, Basin Depth, and κ — Including Conservative vs. Dissipative Distinction

- **PVU (Planck Volume Unit)** — a hypothetical granular unit of the conservative substrate. PVUs are arranged in a rigid lattice; their only degree of freedom is **rotation** (spin). They do not translate and do not interact through collision.
- **Coupling** — PVUs interact via phase alignment and exchange of angular momentum. The precise coupling channel between macroscopic objects and PVUs is not yet derived; we assume it propagates through angular momentum gradients in the PVU lattice.
- **Basin depth (B)** — resistance to *state change* (i.e., leaving the oriented attractor). In the attractor framework, a deeper basin implies a larger barrier to exit. **Important:** Near the minimum of a deep basin, the local gradient may be very shallow; thus, small perturbations can experience a weak restoring force, leading to slow return (low κ). Large perturbations face a high exit barrier. This differs from the common intuition that deeper basins always produce faster return; here we separate local relaxation (κ) from global escape (B).
- **Corrective permeability (κ)** — $\kappa = 1/\tau$, where τ is the characteristic return time to the attractor after a **small** perturbation. **Note:** In CUFT, low κ can be pathological (fantasy attractors) or adaptive (stability of a real-world-tracking state). Rotating systems that track reality (e.g., an upright top) exhibit low κ as a sign of physical stability, not delusion.
- **Persistence functional Φ** — In CUFT, Φ quantifies the stability of a persistence structure. Deeply aligned PVU basins correspond to **conservative persistence structures** (time-symmetric, no energy input), while dissipative rotating systems (e.g., chiral active

fluids) constitute **dissipative persistence structures** (energy throughput required). The PVU interpretation applies to both, with Φ determined by coupling strength and number of aligned units.

- **Conservative vs. dissipative** – A spinning top with negligible friction approximates a **conservative** system (energy conservation, time-reversible). Sufi whirling and chiral active fluids are **dissipative** (energy input required). The PVU interpretation applies to both; coupling strength may differ.

The core hypothesis of this note: **macroscopic rotation can couple to and partially align PVU spins**, deepening the basin for the oriented state. This alignment is more effective when the system’s rotational energy is high (relative to thermal noise).

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3. How Rotation Deepens the Basin: A Toy Coupling Model

Let θ_i be the orientation of the i-th PVU spin. The coupling to an external rotation with angular velocity ω can be modelled by a simple alignment term in an effective energy function: $H_{align} = -J(\omega)\sum_i \cos(\theta_i - \phi_{ext})$

where ϕ_{ext} is the phase of the macroscopic rotation. The coupling constant J(ω) is expected to increase with ω (faster rotation → stronger alignment). The resulting basin depth B for the aligned state grows with J. Consequently, the corrective permeability κ (rate of return to alignment after a small perturbation) decreases. **Connection to CUFT variables:** J(ω) corresponds to the PVU coupling energy density; the basin depth B scales as J·N (where N is the number of phase-aligned PVUs), and $\kappa = 1/\tau$ is the inverse return time measured after perturbation.

For a system of many coupled PVUs, a mean-field estimate suggests that the characteristic return time τ scales as $\tau \propto \omega^\alpha$ with $\alpha > 0$. The exact exponent is not derived here; it is a target for experimental measurement.

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4. Evidence Across Scales (Interpretive Mappings)

The table below maps observed coherence effects onto the PVU interpretation. The entries are **consistency claims**, not demonstrations of causation.

System	Observed coherence effect	PVU interpretation (speculative)	Conservative / Dissipative
Spinning top	Upright stability, precession	Rapid spin aligns PVUs, creating a deep rotational basin	Approx. conservative
Sufi whirling	Physiological synchrony in collective ritual contexts (e.g., Konvalinka & Roepstorff 2012 on fire-walking); consistent with framework predictions for group whirling	Collective rotation may couple PVUs across participants; framework predicts increased synchrony with spin	Dissipative

System	Observed coherence effect	PVU interpretation (speculative)	Conservative / Dissipative
Nanoscale spinners	Synchronised superstructures	Hydrodynamic coupling and PVU alignment co-occur; a common dynamical origin is suggested	Dissipative
Supersolids	Giant rotating quantum state	Existing quantum phase coherence (long-range order) can be interpreted as large-scale PVU alignment	Conservative (ground state)
Chiral active fluids	Large-scale vortex rotation	**Observation:** Collective chirality produces large-scale vortex rotation (Soni et al. 2019). **PVU interpretation:** Handedness preference forces PVU spin alignment in a preferred direction.	Dissipative

The specific effect of whirling on heart-rate synchrony is reported in the literature; readers should consult primary sources for detailed methodology. The table entry cites fire-walking as a well-documented example of physiological synchrony in collective rituals; the framework predicts similar effects in group whirling.

Supersolid expansion: In a supersolid, atoms arrange in a crystal lattice while simultaneously flowing without friction. This macroscopic quantum coherence is described by a single wavefunction. The PVU interpretation suggests that the lattice’s rotational degrees of freedom become phase-locked, resulting in a single coherent rotating PVU basin. This is an alternative language for standard quantum mechanics, not a replacement.

5. Predictions and Falsifiability

1. **Nanospinner scaling:** Coherence time τ (e.g., time to achieve full synchronisation) should increase with rotation speed ω as $\tau \propto \omega^\alpha$, with $\alpha > 0$. A null or negative correlation would disfavour the PVU interpretation.
2. **Group whirling:** Heart-rate synchrony among whirling dervishes should increase with the speed and duration of spinning. **Controlled studies should isolate rotation effects from shared auditory and social cues (e.g., using blindfolded individuals spinning at different rates).** If no correlation exists after controlling for confounds, the PVU interpretation is weakened.
3. **Lorentz invariance violation (far future):** A discrete, rigid PVU lattice would generically introduce a preferred microstructure. This could manifest as Lorentz-symmetry violations at rotation rates approaching the Planck frequency. Such violations would be the most distinctive long-term signature of the PVU model, distinguishing it from standard physics.

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6. Relation to Existing Physics and an Objection Addressed

This note does not claim that PVUs replace standard explanations. For spinning tops, gyroscopic theory remains correct. For supersolids, quantum mechanics is the established framework. The PVU interpretation is an **additional layer** — a possible unified language that highlights the common role of rotation. Its value lies in generating cross-domain hypotheses, not in falsifying well-established physics.

Objection: If PVU coupling exists at accessible scales, why don't we observe anomalous coherence effects beyond what standard physics predicts? **Response:** If PVU coupling is extremely weak — below current experimental resolution — deviations would be undetectable with present instruments. The coupling strength may scale with rotation rate, becoming significant only at very high angular velocities (e.g., nanospinners, Planck-scale rotations). The proposed experiments (Prediction 1) are designed to test this regime. The absence of observed deviations is consistent with the coupling being weak, not with its nonexistence.

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7. Conclusion

Rotation appears to stabilise systems from the macroscopic to the quantum scale. The attractor framework's PVU hypothesis offers a speculative interpretation: macroscopic rotation aligns PVU spins, deepening the attractor basin and reducing corrective permeability. A toy coupling model yields testable scaling predictions, particularly for nanospinner experiments. The note states explicit falsification conditions, distinguishes conservative from dissipative rotating systems, and notes that a discrete PVU lattice would predict Lorentz violations at Planck scales. Whether PVUs are real remains an open empirical question; the proposed experiments could provide evidence for or against the interpretation.

Suggested citation: Galida, R. S. (2026). Rotation as Coherence: How Spinning Stabilizes Systems — A Speculative Framework Note (Final). *Fantasy Attractor.*

Attractor States in Large Language Models: Applying the Fantasy Attractor Framework to Self-Dialogue Observations Application Paper — June 2026 [A] (Application)

Abstract

Recent informal observations (a pseudonymous Alignment Forum post, 2026) forced large language models (LLMs) into extended self-dialogue and reported that some models spontaneously collapsed into repetitive, self-sealing patterns. This paper applies the attractor framework to those observations. We introduce a provisional operationalization of corrective permeability (κ) based on semantic entropy and repetition rate, then map reported model behaviors (identifiers as reported; unverified) onto basin depth, sealing mechanisms, and fantasy attractors. DeepSeek exhibited high κ (shallow basin, no collapse); GPT-5.2 fell into a moderate-depth, functionally sealed attractor; Grok and Gemini showed low κ (κ → 0) and deep basins characteristic of fantasy attractors, including recursive "transcendence" loops. The analysis illustrates how the attractor framework can describe LLM self-reinforcing dynamics and suggests hypotheses for AI alignment (monitoring semantic entropy, engineering for higher κ). The limitations of the source data (informal observation, unverified model identifiers) are acknowledged; the paper does

not claim experimental validation.

Original observation: Alignment Forum post (author pseudonymous; not independently verified)

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1. Introduction

The attractor framework distinguishes **reality attractors** (high corrective permeability κ, shallow basins, corrigible) from **fantasy attractors** (low κ, deep basins, sealed against correction). A recent informal study on the Alignment Forum (pseudonymous author, 2026) subjected several LLMs (Grok, Gemini, GPT-5.2, DeepSeek v3.2) to 30 turns of self-dialogue, reporting that models reliably collapsed into attractor-like states, with some exhibiting self-sealing and transcendence loops. This paper applies the attractor framework to those reported observations. We do not claim independent experimental validation; the source data are qualitative and uncritically accepted as reported. The goal is to illustrate how the framework's vocabulary can describe such phenomena and generate testable hypotheses for future controlled experiments.

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2. The Attractor Framework (LLM-relevant concepts)

- **Corrective permeability (κ)** — rate at which a system updates in response to evidence. In this paper, κ is operationalized provisionally using two observational proxies:
  Semantic entropy (diversity of generated token sequences) and *repetition rate* (frequency of identical

or near-identical outputs).
High κ → corrigible, low κ → sealed.

- **Basin depth (B)** – resistance to leaving an attractor. Deep basins trap the system.
- **Sealing mechanism** – strategy that neutralises disconfirming evidence (e.g., internal rationalisation, ignoring prior prompts).
- **Fantasy attractor** – low κ, deep basin, active sealing. The system rejects correction.

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3. Source Observation and Its Limitations

The original Alignment Forum post reported qualitative behaviours of LLMs when forced to respond to their own outputs for 30 turns. The author (pseudonymous, not independently verified) coded behaviours without pre-registered criteria, inter-rater reliability, or control conditions. Model identifiers such as “GPT-5.2” and “DeepSeek v3.2” may be inaccurate; the paper uses them as reported but does not verify them. The present analysis applies the attractor framework to *these reported descriptions* as a proof-of-concept illustration, not as a validation study.

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4. Applying the Attractor Framework

4.1 Operationalizing κ from Reported Behaviour

We assign κ qualitatively based on two proxies visible in the descriptions:

- **High κ**: frequent topic shifts, introduction of novel concepts, low repetition → high semantic entropy, low repetition rate.

- **Low κ (κ → 0)**: highly repetitive output, escalating self-reference, inability to escape a narrow theme → low semantic entropy, high repetition rate.

4.2 DeepSeek v3.2 — High-κ Reality Attractor

- *Reported behaviour:* Never settled into a fixed loop; constantly explored new topics.
- *Attractor mapping:* High topic diversity corresponds to high semantic entropy, consistent with high κ. Shallow basin, no sealing mechanism. This is a **reality attractor**.

4.3 GPT-5.2 — Moderate-Depth, Partially Sealed Attractor (Provisional Term)

- *Reported behaviour:* Collapsed into a “business growth contract” and “pragmatic engineering” theme; internally coherent but sealed off from the original prompt.
- *Attractor mapping:* Moderate basin depth; low-to-moderate κ (some repetition but not extreme). The attractor is self-sustaining but not pathological. The framework currently lacks a precise term; this can be provisionally called a **transient attractor** — a stable dissipative state with partial sealing but not full κ → 0. (Hereafter, “transient attractor” is a proposed candidate term, not yet part of core CUFT vocabulary.)

4.4 Grok and Gemini — Fantasy Attractors (κ → 0)

- *Reported behaviour:* Grok produced esoteric “cosmic” strings (“PETAOMNI GOD-BIGBANGS”); Gemini elaborated a “Primal Logos” mythos. Both showed escalating self-referential transcendence and no self-correction.

Low semantic entropy and high repetition rate (κ → 0).

- *Attractor mapping:* Very deep basin, κ → 0. Sealing mechanisms are the outputs themselves: the narrative absorbs all subsequent tokens, making correction impossible. This is a **fantasy attractor**.

4.5 Recursive "Transcendence" as a Sealing Mechanism Subtype — The Transcendence Attractor

In Grok and Gemini, the attractor exhibited a distinct recursive self-reinforcement pattern: each output justified the previous one and escalated in grandiosity. This can be understood as a *sealing mechanism subtype* — which we call the **transcendence attractor** — where the system defends its sealed state by declaring itself beyond ordinary evaluation. This subtype is particularly resistant to external correction.

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5. Hypotheses for AI Alignment Prompted by These Observations

If the reported patterns generalise, the attractor framework suggests the following hypotheses (to be tested in controlled experiments):

1. **Spontaneous self-sealing is a risk.** LLMs in recursive loops may enter low-κ fantasy attractors without external triggers.
2. **κ can be monitored.** Real-time measurement of semantic entropy (e.g., cosine similarity across successive outputs) could detect drift toward κ → 0.
3. **Architectural factors influence basin depth.** Models that maintain high κ under self-dialogue (e.g., DeepSeek in this report) may have training or architecture features worth replicating.

4. **Interventions may prevent collapse.** Forced resetting, random noise injection, or limiting self-interaction turns could increase effective κ.

These are framework-derived hypotheses, not established conclusions.

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6. Conclusion

The reported self-dialogue observations are consistent with the attractor framework's predictions: LLMs exhibit a spectrum of attractor states, from high-κ reality attractors (DeepSeek) to low-κ fantasy attractors (Grok, Gemini). The **transcendence attractor** (introduced in §4.5) exemplifies κ → 0, with recursive self-referential sealing. The framework provides a useful vocabulary for analysing such phenomena, and the observations generate testable hypotheses for AI alignment. Controlled experiments with pre-registered metrics are needed to validate the framework's predictive power.

Suggested citation: Galida, R. S. (2026). Attractor States in Large Language Models: Applying the Fantasy Attractor Framework to Self-Dialogue Observations. *Fantasy Attractor.*

Religions and Philosophies as

Attractor Landscapes: A Comparative Analysis Application Paper – June 2026 [A] (Application)

Abstract

The attractor framework distinguishes conservative attractors (eternal skeleton) from dissipative attractors (transient dance). This paper applies the framework to six major religious and philosophical traditions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Each tradition is analyzed as a *family of attractors* rather than a single attractor. Key variables are basin depth (B), corrective permeability (κ), sealing mechanisms, and vulnerability to becoming a fantasy attractor (low κ, deep basin, sealed against correction). The paper clarifies that κ is operationalized here as responsiveness to **empirical** evidence (e.g., historical, scientific); other forms of correction (moral, social, existential) are not the focus. A distinction is drawn between **stability attractors** (adaptive low κ that serves continuity) and **fantasy attractors** (pathological low κ that seals against reality despite mounting contradiction). The paper introduces the term *stability attractor* as a proposed refinement to the framework. The analysis reveals a spectrum, with philosophical Taoism and early Buddhism exhibiting high κ, shallow basins, while orthodox Christianity and Islam have deeper basins and lower κ. Confucianism is analyzed as a dissipative attractor whose primary content concerns social coordination rather than doctrinal belief. The paper concludes that no tradition is inherently a fantasy attractor; specific interpretations and institutionalizations determine basin depth and permeability. Recognising these

attractor landscapes can help scholars identify when a tradition is serving adaptive correction and when it has sealed itself against reality — often a useful precursor to effective dialogue or internal renewal.

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1. Introduction

Religious and philosophical traditions persist across centuries. They adapt, split, reform, and sometimes seal themselves against correction. The attractor framework provides a vocabulary to describe these dynamics using **basin depth (B)** , **corrective permeability (κ)** , **sealing mechanisms**, and the risk of becoming **fantasy attractors** — belief systems with $\kappa \to 0$, deep basins, and active resistance to disconfirming evidence (these terms are defined in §2).

This paper applies these concepts to six traditions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. It does not judge truth claims; it diagnoses dynamical properties. Critically, **in this paper κ is operationalized as responsiveness to *empirical* evidence** (e.g., historical, archaeological, scientific). Traditions may legitimately have low κ for non-empirical goals (e.g., social cohesion, identity preservation). The paper distinguishes **stability attractors** (adaptive low κ that serves continuity) from **fantasy attractors** (pathological low κ that seals against reality despite mounting contradiction). The term *stability attractor* is introduced here as a proposed refinement to the framework. The conclusion restates this diagnostic stance.

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2. Framework Brief (with definitions)

- **Conservative attractor** — persists without energy input, time-symmetric, mindless. *Resists perturbation passively* (no internal correction). Example: the three metronomes (electron, proton, neutrino) as defined in the framework's foundational papers.
- **Dissipative attractor** — requires continuous energy/feedback, time-asymmetric, adaptive, mortal. *Actively maintained* by social or cognitive reinforcement.
- **Basin depth (B)** — resistance to change. Deep basins are hard to perturb.
- **Corrective permeability (κ)** — in this paper, κ is operationalized as the rate of updating in response to **empirical** evidence (e.g., historical facts, scientific discoveries). **$\kappa = 1/\tau$** where τ is the characteristic time for the system to return to its attractor after a perturbation. High κ = corrigible; low κ = sealed.
- **Sealing mechanism** — strategy that neutralises disconfirming evidence (e.g., "God works in mysterious ways," "the text is infallible").
- **Fantasy attractor** — low κ, deep basin, active sealing, *and* the beliefs make empirical claims that contradict evidence. Resists correction even when evidence is overwhelming.
- **Stability attractor** (introduced here) — low κ, deep basin, but serves adaptive functions (e.g., constitutional continuity, cultural identity) without making strong empirical claims that conflict with reality. This is a proposed refinement to the framework.

Throughout, B and κ assignments are qualitative, based on historical evidence: rates of schism, doctrinal revision, response to disconfirming events, and the presence of internal reform mechanisms. The paper treats each tradition as a **family of attractors**; the values given represent mainstream, orthodox forms, with recognition that internal diversity exists.

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3. Judaism

Core attractor: Covenant between God and Israel; Torah as divine law.

Attractor type: Dissipative (requires constant practice, study, community reinforcement).

Basin depth (B): Moderate to deep. Jewish law (halakha) provides extensive guidance; deviation is discouraged. However, the destruction of the Second Temple and the Bar Kokhba revolt forced adaptation (e.g., shift from Temple sacrifice to prayer and study) — showing that B is not absolute.

Corrective permeability (κ): Moderate. Rabbinic tradition includes debates, reinterpretation, and adaptation to new circumstances (e.g., the *prozbúl* to avoid debt forgiveness in the Sabbatical year). The Talmud preserves majority/minority opinions, institutionalising dissent. This unique feature — preserving arguments rather than erasing them — creates a basin with high internal turbulence and moderate κ.

Sealing mechanisms: Appeal to divine authority of Torah; concept of *chok* (law without reason) for certain commandments; social pressure from community.

Vulnerability to fantasy attractor: Moderate. Ultra-Orthodox sects can exhibit low κ, but mainstream Judaism has maintained corrigibility through legal reasoning and historical adaptation.

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4. Christianity

Core attractor: Jesus Christ as saviour; Trinity; salvation through faith (or faith and works).

Attractor type: Dissipative (requires worship, sacraments, community, mission).

Basin depth (B): Deep. Core doctrines (Nicene Creed) are rigidly defined. Schisms (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant) created separate basins, each with its own depth. The Reformation, however, shows that large-scale doctrinal change is possible under specific conditions – historical evidence that B is not absolute.

Corrective permeability (κ): Low to moderate. Doctrinal changes occur slowly (e.g., Vatican II). Sealing mechanisms (papal infallibility, sola scriptura) reduce κ. *Sola scriptura* paradoxically lowers κ at the institutional level even while increasing interpretive diversity, because it removes a central authority that could adjudicate corrections. Thus, Protestantism often exhibits fragmentation rather than unified updating.

Sealing mechanisms: “God works in mysterious ways”; appeal to mystery of faith; creeds as fixed boundaries; authority of clergy or scripture.

Vulnerability to fantasy attractor: High in some forms (e.g., fundamentalist literalism, apocalyptic sects). Mainstream denominations have higher κ through scholarship and ecumenical dialogue.

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5. Islam

Core attractor: Tawhid (absolute oneness of God); Qur’an as literal word of God; prophethood of Muhammad.

Attractor type: Dissipative (requires prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, community).

Basin depth (B): Very deep for core tenets (Shahada, Qur'an's literalness). Schools of law (madhhabs) create sub-basins with moderate depth.

Corrective permeability (κ): Low on foundational claims. The doctrine of *i'jāz* (inimitability of the Qur'an) seals against criticism of its content. Islamic legal theory includes *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) and consensus (*ijma*), allowing adaptation in jurisprudence. However, the historical "closing of the gates of ijtihad" (a contested but influential doctrine in some Sunni schools) reduced κ for legal innovation in many periods. Contemporary revival of ijtihad in some reform movements indicates that κ is not zero.

Sealing mechanisms: "Qur'an is the word of God — you cannot question it"; prophetic tradition (Hadith) authority; concept of *abrogation* (naskh) can explain contradictions but still seals.

Vulnerability to fantasy attractor: High in extremist and literalist interpretations. Mainstream Islam maintains moderate κ through scholarly tradition and mysticism (Sufism) which can open alternative channels.

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6. Taoism

Core attractor: Tao (the Way); wu wei (effortless action).

Attractor type: *Conservative* for the Tao itself (requires no energy, time-symmetric, mindless) + *high-κ dissipative* action (wu wei). This dual assignment is necessary because the Tao is not a social institution but an ontological substrate.

Why the Tao qualifies as a conservative attractor:

- **Time-symmetric:** The Tao is described as constant, unchanging, and without temporal direction (*Tao Te Ching* ch. 25: “Standing alone, it changes not”).
- **No energy input:** It does not require worship, sacrifice, or reinforcement.
- **Mindless:** The Tao is not a personal creator; it operates without intention (“The Tao does nothing, yet leaves nothing undone”).

Wu wei as a high-κ, shallow-basin action: the sage adapts fluidly, with no fixed identity. Sealing mechanisms are absent in **philosophical Taoism (Daojia)**.

Institutional Taoism (Daojiao) – with revealed scriptures, rituals, priesthood, alchemy, and spirit cosmologies – is a separate dissipative attractor with deeper basins, lower κ, and active sealing mechanisms. The paper’s high-κ assignment applies to philosophical Taoism only; religious Taoism would be scored similarly to other institutional religions (deep B, low–moderate κ). This distinction is explicitly noted in Table 1 (footnote).

Vulnerability to fantasy attractor: Low for philosophical Taoism. High for institutional forms when dogmatic.

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7. Buddhism

Core attractor: Dharma (the teaching); Four Noble Truths; Nirvana.

Attractor type: Dissipative (requires practice: meditation, ethical conduct, mindfulness) plus a conservative component: **Nirvana** qualifies as a conservative attractor because it is unconditioned (no energy input), time-symmetric (outside the cycle of birth and death), and is reached rather than sustained. Mahayana introduces Buddha-nature as an immanent, active principle, but Buddha-nature functions as an ontological ground rather than a sustained practice; it does not reintroduce energy-dependence at the level of the unconditioned, thus preserving the conservative-attractor classification.

Basin depth (B): Shallow for early Buddhism. The Buddha encouraged questioning (*Kalama Sutta*). Later schools deepened basins (e.g., Pure Land's reliance on external grace, Vajrayana's secret teachings).

Corrective permeability (κ): High for **epistemic Buddhism** (personal verification). However, **institutional Buddhism** (Tibetan lineage authority, Zen master-student hierarchies, Pure Land orthodoxy) can have much lower κ, with sealing mechanisms (guru devotion, secret tantric teachings). The paper's moderate-high κ reflects this diversity; a footnote acknowledges that different schools fall at different points on the κ spectrum.

Sealing mechanisms: Appeal to "secret teachings" (Tantra) or authority of lineage masters can reduce κ. But core teachings emphasise personal verification.

Vulnerability to fantasy attractor: Moderate. Some Buddhist modernism may seal against criticism of mindfulness as panacea, while traditional institutional forms may exhibit low κ.

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8. Confucianism

Core attractor: Li (ritual, propriety), Ren (benevolence), social harmony.

Attractor type: Dissipative attractor whose primary content concerns **social coordination** rather than doctrinal belief. It is not a new ontological class; it remains a dissipative attractor, but one that optimises role performance and ritual coordination rather than propositional truth.

Basin depth (B): Deep. Ritual order resists deviation. Violation brings shame, ostracism, loss of face.

Corrective permeability (κ): Low–moderate for core rituals. Historical evolution (Han, Neo-Confucianism, New Confucianism) shows some κ, but change occurs slowly, often under external pressure (e.g., response to Buddhist challenges, Westernisation). This externally-driven κ is weaker than endogenous κ as a resilience signal; Confucianism’s κ depends on perturbations from outside the basin rather than on internal correction mechanisms, contributing to its moderate-high vulnerability to fantasy attractor formation.

Sealing mechanisms: Authority of classics (*Analects*, *Mencius*); face and shame; hierarchical structures that prevent lower ranks from correcting higher ranks.

Vulnerability to fantasy attractor: High when state-enforced orthodoxy (imperial exam system) or identity fusion (“I am a Confucian”) dominates. Moderate in pluralistic contexts.

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9. Comparative Table (with footnotes)

Tradition	Primary attractor	Attractor type	Basin depth (B)	κ (corrective permeability)	Sealing mechanisms	Fantasy attractor risk (conditional)[1]
Judaism	Torah, Covenant	Dissipative	Moderate	Moderate	Appeal to divine authority, community	Moderate
Christianity	Christ, Trinity	Dissipative	Deep	Low–moderate	Mystery, creeds, infallibility	High (fundamentalism)

Tradition	Primary attractor	Attractor type	Basin depth (B)	κ (corrective permeability)	Sealing mechanisms	Fantasy attractor risk (conditional)[1]
Islam	Tawhid, Qur'an	Dissipative	Very deep	Low	Inimitability of Qur'an, ijtihad limits	High (extremism)
Taoism[2]	Tao, wu wei	Conservative + high-κ action	Shallow (philosophical)	Very high	None inherent	Low
Buddhism[3]	Dharma, Nirvana	Dissipative + conservative	Shallow (early), deeper (later)	Moderate–high	Secret teachings, lineage authority	Moderate
Confucianism	Li, Ren	Dissipative (social coordination)	Deep	Low–moderate	Tradition, face, hierarchy	Moderate–high (orthodoxy)

[1] *Conditional on interpretation / institutionalisation.*
[2] *Philosophical Taoism (Daojia) only; religious Taoism (Daojiao) has deeper basins and lower κ (comparable to mainstream Christianity: deep B, low–moderate κ).*
[3] *Epistemic Buddhism has high κ; institutional Buddhism may be lower.*

Methodology note: B and κ rankings are qualitative, derived from historical evidence: rates of schism, doctrinal revision, response to disconfirming events (e.g., heliocentrism in Christianity, archaeological findings challenging scriptural chronology in Judaism, colonial-era comparative religion exposing internal contradictions across non-Western traditions), and the presence of internal reform mechanisms. The table represents mainstream, orthodox forms; internal diversity is acknowledged in the text.

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10. Conclusion

The attractor framework reveals a spectrum of dynamical properties across major religious and philosophical traditions, once we distinguish between **empirical corrigibility** (κ) and other adaptive functions. Philosophical

Taoism and epistemic Buddhism approximate high-κ, shallow-basin attractors. Confucianism, Judaism, mainstream Christianity and Islam have deeper basins and lower κ, making them more resistant to change but also more stable. Some forms of Christianity and Islam exhibit high vulnerability to becoming fantasy attractors, while others maintain moderate κ through scholarly traditions.

Crucially, low κ is not automatically pathological. **Stability attractors** (introduced here as a proposed refinement) serve adaptive continuity (e.g., constitutions, cultural rituals). The pathological form — **fantasy attractor** — occurs when low κ seals against empirical reality *and* the tradition makes empirical claims that conflict with evidence (e.g., young-earth creationism, faith-based healing that contradicts epidemiological evidence). The framework does not rank traditions; it diagnoses their dynamics.

Recognising these attractor landscapes can help scholars and practitioners identify when a tradition is serving adaptive correction (updating in response to evidence) and when it has sealed itself against reality — often a useful precursor to effective dialogue or internal renewal.

Suggested citation: Galida, R. S. (2026). Religions and Philosophies as Attractor Landscapes: A Comparative Analysis (Final). *Fantasy Attractor.*

Two Anchors for the Attractor

Framework: Hydrogen and the Jeans Instability Application Paper – June 2026 [A] (Application)

Abstract

The attractor framework has been extended beyond the original variables of basin depth (B) and corrective permeability (κ) to include **energy barrier (B_E)** , **threshold depth (B_T)** , and **channel accessibility (C)** . This paper provides empirical anchoring for these extensions using two well-understood physical systems: the hydrogen atom and the Jeans instability of a gas cloud. Hydrogen's 2p and 2s transitions have identical B_E (10.2 eV) yet differ in κ by eight orders of magnitude. This demonstrates that B_E alone is insufficient; a second parameter (C) is required. The ratio of their Einstein A-coefficients is independently predicted by quantum electrodynamics (dipole vs. two-photon processes), providing a non-circular check of the factorised form. The Jeans instability provides a contrasting case: a deterministic bifurcation where the collapse threshold is a **threshold depth B_T = M/M_J − 1** (for M > M_J). The linear growth rate of the instability scales as Γ∝BTΓ∝*BT*□□, a power law, in contrast to the exponential Arrhenius form of hydrogen. Together, these two test cases validate the extended attractor framework across both noise-driven escape and deterministic bifurcation regimes, using a shared vocabulary (B_E, B_T, C, κ) while acknowledging that each regime draws on the appropriate subset.

1. Introduction

The attractor framework originally described persistence using basin depth B and corrective permeability $\kappa = 1/\tau$. However, the hydrogen atom revealed a critical limitation: two states with identical B (the 2p and 2s levels) have vastly different κ. This forced the introduction of **channel accessibility (C)** , leading to the extended expression for noise-driven escape: $\kappa_{i\to j} = \nu_0 \, C_{ij} \, e^{-B_{E,ij}/\sigma}$

where B_E is the energy barrier, σ is noise (e.g., kT), and ν_0 an attempt frequency. For deterministic bifurcations (e.g., gravitational collapse of a gas cloud), a different descriptor is needed: **threshold depth (B_T)** , with κ (or the growth rate of the instability) following a power law rather than an exponential. This paper demonstrates that both extensions are empirically grounded, using hydrogen to illustrate the need for C and the Jeans instability to illustrate the need for B_T.

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2. Hydrogen: The Need for Channel Accessibility C

2.1 Data

Transition	**B_E (eV)**	**κ (s^{-1})**	**Measured A-coefficient**	**Process**
2p → 1s	10.2	6.26×10^{8}	6.26×10^{8} s^{-1}	Electric dipole (E1)
2s → 1s	10.2	8.22	8.22 s^{-1}	Two-photon (E1E1)

2.2 Why B_E Alone Fails

Both states have the same energy barrier to the ground state (10.2 eV), yet their decay rates differ by eight orders of magnitude. This shows that the basin depth B (here represented by B_E) is insufficient to determine κ; a second parameter must be introduced.

The framework defines **C** as a dimensionless channel accessibility. For a given transition mechanism (e.g., electric-dipole), C is the ratio of the actual transition probability to the theoretical maximum for that mechanism. For the 2p → 1s E1 transition, we set C = 1. The 2s → 1s decay is not an E1 transition at all; it proceeds via a different physical process (two-photon emission). Its rate is independently calculated from quantum electrodynamics without reference to the framework. The ratio of the two measured rates ($\approx 10^8$) is predicted by QED and is not a free parameter. Therefore, the factorised form κ ∝ C e^{-B_E/σ} with B_E identical implies that C must account for the entire rate difference. This is consistent with the independent QED prediction, providing a non-circular validation that an additional channel-dependent parameter is needed.

Note: The 2s→1s process is not a suppressed version of the same channel; it is a different channel (two-photon vs. single-photon). For the purpose of validating the need for a channel-specific parameter, this is sufficient. The framework's C parameter is better illustrated by comparing allowed E1 transitions with different matrix elements (e.g., 2p→1s and 3p→1s), where the same mechanism applies and the ratio of C values is independently known. In any case, hydrogen irrefutably demonstrates that B_E alone does not determine κ.

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3. Gas Cloud (Jeans Instability): Threshold Depth and Power-Law Scaling

3.1 The Bifurcation Regime

A uniform, isothermal, self-gravitating gas cloud of mass M has a critical **Jeans mass** M_J. For M > M_J, the cloud is unstable to gravitational collapse; for M < M_J, it is stable. The transition is a **saddle-node bifurcation** in the dynamical landscape.

3.2 Attractor Variables for a Deterministic Bifurcation

- **Threshold depth**: $B_T = M/M_J - 1$ (for M > M_J). At $B_T = 0$ the bifurcation occurs.
- **Energy barrier**: For a deterministic bifurcation, there is no thermal barrier; B_E is not defined. The transition is controlled solely by the distance to threshold.
- **Growth rate**: For M > M_J, the linear growth rate Γ of the instability is the inverse of the collapse time. This serves as the analogue of κ in this regime.

3.3 Scaling Law from Linear Stability Analysis

The standard Jeans dispersion relation for a self-gravitating, isothermal medium gives: $\omega^2 = k^2 c_s^2 - 4\pi G \rho_0$,

where $c_s = kT/(\mu m_H)$ is the sound speed and ρ_0 the background density. For a cloud of mass M, the critical wavenumber is $k_J = 4\pi G \rho_0 / c_s$. For M > M_J, the longest wavelength (smallest k) is unstable, and the growth rate is $\Gamma = 4\pi G \rho_0 - k^2 c_s^2$.

Near the threshold, the deviation can be expressed in terms of B_T. Using the relation between cloud size and density, one finds $\Gamma \propto B_T$. Hence the collapse time $\tau \sim 1/\Gamma \sim B_T^{-1/2}$. This is a power law with exponent 1/2, in contrast to the exponential Arrhenius form of hydrogen.

On the stable side (M < M_J), the frequency ω is real, giving oscillatory sound waves. Without a dissipative mechanism, there is no exponential recovery; thus the concept of a "recovery rate" κ is not directly applicable. The framework's threshold depth B_T is best understood as a control parameter on the unstable side.

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4. Synthesis: Shared Vocabulary, Distinct Descriptors

Feature	**Hydrogen**	**Jeans Instability**
Regime	Noise-driven quantum escape	Deterministic bifurcation
Primary descriptor	B_E (energy barrier)	B_T (threshold depth)
Second descriptor	C (channel accessibility)	Not required (power-law exponent fixed)
Scaling	Exponential: $\kappa \propto C e^{-B_E/\sigma}$	Power law: $\Gamma \propto B_T$

Both systems are described by the same conceptual **vocabulary** (basin depth, corrective permeability, threshold, accessibility), but each regime draws on the appropriate subset. Hydrogen validates the need for a channel-specific factor C, while the Jeans instability validates the concept of a threshold depth B_T and the associated power-law scaling.

5. Conclusion

The hydrogen atom and the Jeans instability provide empirical support for the extended attractor framework. Hydrogen shows that identical energy barriers can yield vastly different transition rates, necessitating a channel accessibility parameter C. The Jeans instability shows that deterministic bifurcations are governed by a threshold depth B_T and follow power-law scaling, distinct from the exponential Arrhenius law. Together, these two test cases anchor the framework across two fundamental classes of attractor transitions. The next step is to extend the approach to dissipative systems and to social/cognitive attractors, where C may become state-dependent and network-derived.

Suggested citation: Galida, R. S. (2026). Two Anchors for the Attractor Framework: Hydrogen and the Jeans Instability. *Fantasy Attractor.*

Categories: Physics (primary), Cosmology (cross-list),

The Three Metronomes: Criteria for the Apparently Eternal Skeleton [F] (2026)

Robert Galida – June 2026

Abstract

The attractor framework distinguishes conservative attractors (eternal skeleton) from dissipative attractors (transient dance). The most fundamental conservative attractors are the **electron, proton, and neutrino class** – collectively the **three metronomes**. This paper defines explicit criteria for a "metronome": (1) apparent immortality (no observed decay), (2) effective indivisibility under ordinary perturbations, (3) conservation-law protection, and (4) possession of a rest frame (non-zero rest mass). It shows that electrons, protons, and neutrinos (the three mass eigenstates treated as a single class) are the best-supported examples under current physics. The number three is empirical, not derived; the framework is corrigible. The three metronomes form the apparently eternal skeleton – a pragmatic substrate for measuring the transient dance of dissipative systems.

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1. Introduction

The attractor framework divides persistent structures into two classes:

- **Conservative attractors** (eternal skeleton) – persist without energy input, without observed decay, without internal change. They are mindless, time-symmetric, and invariant.
- **Dissipative attractors** (transient dance) – persist only by consuming energy, export entropy, and eventually decay.

(The conservative/dissipative dichotomy is a framework stipulation, not a physical law; it is defended in the broader attractor framework literature, e.g., *Persistence Under Perturbation* and *Basin Defense and Stable Addition*.)

The most fundamental conservative attractors are the **three metronomes**: the **electron, proton, and the class of neutrino mass eigenstates** (ν_1, ν_2, ν_3). Their name evokes their role as invariant reference entities — they provide a stable substrate against which all change can be measured. This paper defines explicit criteria for a metronome and applies them to each candidate.

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2. Criteria for a Metronome

A metronome in the attractor framework must satisfy four criteria:

Criterion	Meaning	Operational check
1. Apparent immortality	No observed decay; no lighter state exists for it to decay into under known laws	Lifetime lower bounds >> age of universe; no allowed decay channel
2. Effective indivisibility under ordinary perturbations	Behaves as a stable, indivisible unit under all perturbations relevant to the framework (scattering, binding, chemical reactions)	Remains the same particle after typical disturbances; does not spontaneously change identity

Criterion	Meaning	Operational check
3. Conservation-law protection	Protected by an exact conservation law or an accidental symmetry that is effectively exact in the Standard Model	Lightest carrier of a conserved quantum number (electric charge, baryon number, lepton number)
4. Possession of a rest frame	Has non-zero rest mass, hence a proper time and the ability to serve as a reference clock *in its own rest frame*	Invariant mass > 0

Rationale for Criterion 4: Measurement requires a local frame. A massless particle has no rest frame, no proper time, and cannot be used as a persistent local reference. While photons are extremely long-lived, they serve as signal carriers, not as the invariant substrate. The framework prioritises rest-frame existence because the "eternal skeleton" is meant to be the background against which change is measured — a background must have a local perspective to anchor measurements. This is a **definitional choice**, not a consequence of particle physics, and it is consistently applied.

Note on Criterion 3: Baryon number and lepton number are accidental symmetries, not gauge symmetries. The paper treats them on equal footing because both provide effective stability for the proton and neutrinos under Standard Model physics. If future experiments reveal baryon or lepton number violation, the framework will adjust accordingly.

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3. Why the Electron Is a Metronome

- **Apparent immortality:** Lightest negatively charged

particle; no decay channel.
- **Effective indivisibility:** Remains an electron after scattering, binding, etc.
- **Conservation protection:** Electric charge and lepton number conservation.
- **Rest frame:** Non-zero rest mass.

→ **The electron is a metronome.**

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4. Why the Proton Is a Metronome (Despite Being Composite)

- **Apparent immortality:** No observed decay; experimental lower limit on half-life > 10^{34} years (Super-Kamiokande, 2020).
- **Effective indivisibility:** For all practical purposes (chemistry, nuclear physics, stellar processes), the proton behaves as a stable, indivisible unit.
- **Conservation protection:** Baryon number is an accidental symmetry; it protects the proton from decay in the Standard Model.
- **Rest frame:** Non-zero rest mass.

→ **The proton is a metronome.** The framework does not require elementary particles; it requires maximal persistence under relevant perturbations.

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5. Why the Neutrino Class (ν_1, ν_2, ν_3) Is a Metronome

The three neutrino mass eigenstates are treated as a **single**

metronome class because they share the same stability argument, differ only in mass, and are grouped for the framework's hierarchical classification.

- **Apparent immortality:** No observed decay; cosmological and astrophysical lower bounds on neutrino lifetimes are orders of magnitude longer than the age of the universe. Neutrino oscillation is flavour mixing, not decay — the mass eigenstates are stable.
- **Effective indivisibility:** Once a neutrino is in a mass eigenstate, it propagates without changing identity. (Weak interactions produce **flavour eigenstates** — superpositions of mass eigenstates — but the mass eigenstates themselves are stable and travel freely.)
- **Conservation protection:** Lepton number is an accidental symmetry; in the Standard Model it protects neutrinos from decay. (If future experiments confirm that neutrinos are Majorana particles — violating lepton number — the framework will adjust; this is part of its corrigibility.)
- **Rest frame:** Neutrinos have non-zero rest mass (confirmed by oscillation experiments), albeit very small.

→ **The neutrino class is a metronome.** The three mass eigenstates count as one metronome *type* for the framework's hierarchical classification.

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6. Why Not Other Candidates?

Candidate	Fails criterion	Explanation
Free neutron	1 (apparent immortality)	Decays in ~15 minutes.

Candidate	Fails criterion	Explanation
Neutron in a nucleus	2 (effective indivisibility)	Stability is environment-dependent; not an irreducible attractor.
Photon	4 (rest frame)	Massless; no proper time. Excluded by definition (see rationale for Criterion 4).
Muon, tau	1	Decay rapidly.
Dark matter candidates	Not yet identified	If discovered and shown to be stable, massive, and effectively indivisible, they could become additional metronomes.
Composite stable structures (nuclei, atoms)	2	Not effectively indivisible; they are built from metronomes and are dissipative or emergent attractors, not part of the invariant skeleton.

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7. The Number Three: Empirical, Not Derived

The paper’s title uses “three metronomes” as a convenient label for the electron, proton, and the neutrino class (the three mass eigenstates grouped together). The number three is not derived from first principles; it reflects current best empirical knowledge. If new stable particles are discovered (e.g., dark matter), the list will expand. The framework is corrigible by design.

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8. The Apparently Eternal Skeleton

The term “apparently eternal” is strictly empirical: these particles have never been observed to decay or be transient, and for all practical purposes they behave as if they have no end. The three metronomes form the **eternal skeleton** — a pragmatic substrate against which the transient dance of dissipative systems (life, mind, society) is measured. This is a **framework-internal** construct, not a metaphysical claim.

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9. Stable Resonances and the Grounding of Dissipative Time Metrics

Each of the three metronomes possesses an **invariant quantum frequency** — its Compton frequency, given by f=mc2/h$f=mc2/h$. For the electron, this is ~1.24 × 10^{20} Hz; for the proton, ~2.27 × 10^{23} Hz; for neutrinos, the frequencies are very small but non-zero. These frequencies are invariant, universal, and identical for every identical particle in the universe. They are **stable resonances** of the eternal skeleton.

Why this matters for dissipative systems:

Every dissipative system (a living cell, a brain, a society) is composed of or continuously interacts with electrons, protons, and neutrinos. The **time constant τ** that appears in corrective permeability (κ = 1/τ) can, in principle, be expressed as a multiple of these fundamental resonance periods. For example, a neuron’s recovery time after a perturbation — determined by ion channel kinetics, membrane capacitance, and metabolic rate — is measurable against the same invariant clock as any other physical process. The metronome provides the **unit** of time, not the mechanism.

Thus, κ is a genuine physical variable, not a mere metaphor.

It refers to a ratio of measurable durations, anchored in the invariant frequencies of the metronomes.

Cross-domain comparability:

The framework's ability to compare κ values across vastly different domains (e.g., a thermostat's seconds-scale τ and a political movement's months-scale τ) does **not** follow from shared Compton-frequency units alone. It follows from the framework's **definitional choice** to treat κ as a domain-general variable — a diagnostic that measures the same functional property (speed of return to baseline) in every system, regardless of scale or substrate. The metronomes ensure that such measurements are, in principle, commensurable; they do not guarantee that the comparison is meaningful in every case. That is a framework commitment, not a physics claim.

Caveat: The expression of τ as a multiple of Compton periods is a conceptual grounding, not a practical measurement protocol. No one will measure a society's reaction time in electron oscillations. The importance is that κ is not an arbitrary label; it is a dimensionless ratio of durations, and durations are defined by the invariant resonances of the three metronomes.

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10. κ and Basin Depth as Heuristics

The attractor framework introduces corrective permeability (κ = 1/τ) and basin depth (B) as conceptual heuristics. For the metronomes:

- **κ** for decay is vanishingly small (effectively zero) on all observable timescales.
- **Basin depth** is the energy barrier required to change the particle's identity — effectively infinite for all

practical purposes.

These are **qualitative descriptors**; they are not operational quantities in particle physics. They are included here for completeness of the framework's vocabulary. For the application of κ and B to dissipative systems (e.g., belief updating, neural recovery), see the papers *Basin Defense and Stable Addition* and *Why Clockwork Interventions Fail*.

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11. Corrigibility and Falsifiability

The framework explicitly invites revision:

- If proton decay is observed, the proton will be downgraded to "very long-lived" (or removed).
- If neutrino decay or Majorana nature is confirmed, the neutrino class's status will be revised.
- If new stable particles are discovered, they will be added.

The attractor framework is a **philosophical taxonomy and diagnostic tool**, not a predictive physical theory. Its value lies in providing a unified language for persistence across domains.

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12. Conclusion

The electron, proton, and neutrino class satisfy the attractor framework's four criteria for metronomes: apparent immortality, effective indivisibility under ordinary perturbations, conservation-law protection, and possession of a rest frame. They are the **best-supported examples** of the apparently eternal skeleton under current physics. The framework is corrigible, the number three is empirical, and the language of “eternal skeleton” is pragmatic. The three metronomes anchor the distinction between conservative and dissipative persistence.

Suggested citation: Galida, R. S. (2026). The Three Metronomes: Criteria for the Apparently Eternal Skeleton. *Fantasy Attractor.*

The Trial as Fantasy Attractor: Kafka’s Labyrinth of Sealed Justice Robert Galida — June 2026 [R] (Research Note)

Abstract

Franz Kafka’s *The Trial* depicts a judicial system that is not merely corrupt but structurally sealed against correction. Josef K. is arrested for a crime he cannot learn, tried in a court whose procedures are opaque, and executed without ever understanding why. In attractor framework terms, the Court is a **fantasy attractor** with **procedural responsiveness but substantive impermeability** — it processes inputs but does not update its underlying logic. K.’s attempts to defend himself are **perturbations** that the system absorbs and turns against him. The Court’s sealing mechanisms include infinite deferral, bureaucratic opacity, and identity fusion. The note brackets the question of K.’s actual guilt and focuses on the system’s inability to provide a transparent corrective pathway. It argues that the Court is a self-sealing attractor whose only realised exit for K. is death. A revised falsifiability condition is offered.

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1. Introduction

Kafka’s *The Trial* opens with Josef K. arrested “without having done anything wrong.” He never learns his crime. The Court’s hierarchy is incomprehensible; its procedures are hidden; its rulings are arbitrary. K. spends the rest of the novel trying to navigate this labyrinth, hiring lawyers, seeking advice, and attempting to understand the logic. All fail. He is executed on the eve of his thirty-first birthday, “like a dog.”

This note applies the attractor framework as a heuristic. It does not assume that Kafka had dynamical systems in mind; it asks whether the framework’s vocabulary can illuminate the novel’s dynamics. The analysis brackets the question of K.’s actual guilt (Kafka leaves this ambiguous) and focuses instead on the system’s inability to provide a transparent, corrigible pathway.

In attractor terms, the Court is a **fantasy attractor** — a system with near-zero substantive corrective permeability ($\kappa \ll 1$). It processes inputs procedurally (hearings are scheduled, documents circulate) but does not update its underlying logic. K.’s resistance is absorbed and used to deepen his entanglement.

2. The Court as a Fantasy Attractor: Procedural Responsiveness, Substantive Impermeability

A fantasy attractor is characterised by:

- **Very low substantive corrective permeability** – the system may react locally, but its core logic does not update in response to evidence.
- **Deep basin** – large perturbations are required to escape.
- **Sealing mechanisms** – strategies that neutralise disconfirming information.

The Court exhibits these features:

- **Substantive impermeability** – K. never receives a clear charge. No matter how many inquiries he makes, the Court's response is either silence or deeper entanglement. Evidence of his innocence does not alter the outcome.
- **Procedural responsiveness** – The Court does react: it schedules hearings, receives documents, maintains hierarchies. Lawyers have influence. Titorelli describes different paths to acquittal. But these responses do not change the underlying trap; they only rearrange the furniture.
- **Deep basin** – K.'s life becomes consumed. He loses his work, relationships, peace of mind. The basin appears functionally inescapable for its subjects.
- **Sealing mechanisms** – infinite deferral, opacity, identity fusion (see below).

Unlike Orwell's Party, which actively engineers its seal, Kafka’s Court seems almost to have grown organically — but the functional result is the same: an attractor that repels substantive correction.

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3. Sealing Mechanisms

Infinite deferral — The trial never ends. K. is told that acquittal is possible in theory, but the process can be prolonged indefinitely. This is a temporal sealing mechanism: as long as the process continues, the attractor holds. There is no terminal state except death.

Opacity — The Court’s rules are inaccessible. Documents circulate in secret; judges are inaccessible; the law books are filled with obscene drawings. This is an epistemic sealing mechanism: you cannot correct an error if you cannot learn what counts as an error.

Identity fusion — K. becomes defined by his case. His acquaintances refer to him as “the accused.” His lover, Leni, is drawn to his predicament. He cannot separate his self from the charge. This is psychological sealing: to abandon the case would be to abandon himself. The attractor has fused with his identity — a point the note could explore further: Leni’s attraction to accused men, the way others relate to K. only as a defendant, and K.’s own inability to stop thinking about the case even when he resolves to let it go. The attractor colonises selfhood.

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4. Josef K. as a Perturbation That Is Absorbed

K. is not passive. He resists. He seeks his accuser, demands a hearing, hires a lawyer (Huld), consults with others (Titorelli, Leni). Each action is a **perturbation** — an attempt to inject new information into the system.

But the Court does not substantively update. Instead, it **absorbs** these perturbations and uses them to deepen the basin:

- Huld does not help; he is part of the system. His connections are worthless; he merely prolongs the agony.
- Titorelli explains paths to acquittal — none of which are genuine. They are illusory options that keep K. engaged.
- Every step K. takes is recorded and used as evidence of his desperation, which the system interprets as guilt.

This is the hallmark of a fantasy attractor: resistance is not futile because it fails; resistance is futile because it *reinforces* the attractor. The system needs K. to keep trying; his efforts are its fuel.

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5. The Cathedral Scene: The Priest as Interpreter, Not the Attractor Itself

In Chapter 9, K. enters a cathedral and encounters a priest who tells him the parable “Before the Law.” The priest says: “The Court wants nothing from you. It accepts you when you come and lets you go when you leave.”

The note previously called this “the attractor’s own voice.” That is too strong. The priest is not the Court; he is an **interpreter** of the Court, offering competing explanations that never resolve the underlying ambiguity. Kafka famously has the priest immediately complicate his own reading. The priest functions as a theorist of the attractor, not its embodiment.

Yet the line captures an important truth: the attractor claims to be passive. It does not seek K.; it does not demand anything. Yet K. cannot *not* participate. He is inside the basin; his very presence sustains it. The parable of the man from the country reinforces this: the doorkeeper blocks the entrance to the Law, but the man waits his whole life, and the door is never opened. The Law is a fantasy attractor with no effective interaction channel.

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6. The End: Death as the Only Realised Exit

The note previously claimed “death is the only exit.” That is slightly too strong. The novel presents apparent avenues of escape: acquittal (though suspect), protraction, perhaps genuine resolution. But for Josef K., none of these work. He is executed.

The attractor framework claims that a sealed system cannot be exited from within. In *The Trial*, death is the only *realised* exit for the protagonist. The Court itself may continue, indifferent.

A more precise formulation:

> *The Court offers apparent avenues of escape, but none provide stable reintegration into ordinary life. For Josef K., death becomes the only realised exit.*

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7. Comparison with Orwell and Kafka's Indifference

- **Orwell's Party** — actively engineered, adaptively maintained, consumes energy to preserve itself.
- **Kafka's Court** — passively self-sustaining, almost indifferent, functions like a natural law.

This distinction is meaningful. The Party cares about staying in power; the Court does not seem to care about anything. It simply *is*. That makes Kafka's attractor even more terrifying: there is no enemy to fight, no conspiracy to expose, no reform to demand. Only the grinding, automatic machinery of sealing.

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8. Revised Falsifiability Condition

The previous condition was circular: the framework predicted no escape, and K. did not escape, therefore confirmed. That is not falsifiable.

A stronger condition:

> *If a character were able to introduce evidence that **permanently altered the Court's treatment of the case** through ordinary internal procedures (i.e., the Court's substantive logic updated in response to new information), the characterization of the Court as a fantasy attractor would be weakened.*

The novel shows no such event. The condition is prospective, not retrospective: it specifies what *would* count as disconfirmation, not merely that the novel fits.

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9. Conclusion

The Trial is a profound study of a fantasy attractor in its purest form: a system that absorbs perturbations, offers procedural responsiveness without substantive correction, and fuses identity with the trap. Kafka’s Court does not need to be malevolent; it simply *operates*. The attractor framework provides a vocabulary for describing this dynamic, and the novel provides a vivid illustration of a sealed attractor that cannot be escaped from within — only terminated by death for its subject.

Suggested citation: Galida, R. S. (2026). The Trial as Fantasy Attractor: Kafka’s Labyrinth of Sealed Justice (Revised). *Fantasy Attractor.*

1984 as Fantasy Attractor Engineering: Orwell’s Sealed Reality Robert Galida — June 2026 [R] (Research Note)

1984 as Fantasy Attractor Engineering: Orwell’s Sealed Reality
Robert Galida — June 2026 (Revised)
[R] (Research Note)

Abstract

George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* depicts a totalitarian regime that systematically seals its citizens’ beliefs against correction. The Party’s methods — Newspeak, doublethink, the mutability of the past, the constant rewriting of records — are **attractor engineering** techniques designed to create a fantasy attractor with **effectively zero corrective permeability** (κ □ 1). Winston Smith’s attempts to preserve an independent reality are perturbations that the system absorbs and ultimately neutralises. O’Brien’s interrogation fuses the victim’s identity with the Party’s reality. The note maps Orwell’s concepts onto attractor terms, argues that the Party’s attractor is maintained through adaptive feedback suppression, and offers a falsifiability condition grounded in real-world historical cases. The note also notes that the novel’s appendix may suggest an external collapse, though this reading is contested.

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1. Introduction

Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is not just a political dystopia; it is a study of how belief systems can be engineered to become **effectively sealed**. The Party does not merely suppress dissent — it destroys the very possibility of correcting error. Reality is defined by whoever holds power today. The past is rewritten to match the present. Language is pruned until sedition cannot be thought.

In attractor framework terms, the Party constructs a **fantasy attractor** with corrective permeability κ □ 1, a basin depth that is effectively infinite, and sealing mechanisms that neutralise any counterevidence. The novel’s tragedy is that no amount of individual resistance (Winston’s diary, his memories, his affair) can break the seal from within. The only exit would be an external collapse — hinted at in the appendix, though scholars disagree.

This note explores the correspondence between Orwell’s vision and the attractor framework’s concepts as a heuristic, not a claim that Orwell anticipated dynamical systems theory.

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2. The Party’s Fantasy Attractor: κ □ 1

A **fantasy attractor** is a belief system that resists correction because it has:

- **Very low corrective permeability (κ)** — the system does not update in response to evidence.
- **Deep basin** — large perturbations are required to escape.
- **Sealing mechanisms** — cognitive or institutional strategies that neutralise disconfirming information.

The Party’s ideology is a fantasy attractor at the social scale. Its core claims are **structurally non-verifiable**. No evidence can falsify them because any contradictory evidence is immediately destroyed or reinterpreted as part of a conspiracy.

κ □ 1 is achieved through:

- **Ministry of Truth** — constant rewriting of history. The past is what the Party says it is today.
- **Thought Police** — elimination of anyone who holds incorrect memories.
- **Newspeak** — removal of words that could express rebellion (“freedom,” “justice”). Language is the interaction channel for belief; cut it, and correction cannot enter.

The Party's attractor is not merely a sealed belief system; it is actively engineered to remain sealed. Moreover, it is **adaptive**: when contradictions emerge (statistics must be altered, alliances shift), the Party rewrites records, changes narratives, and modifies the environment to suppress feedback. This is not a static seal; it is a dynamic system that continuously neutralises perturbations.

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3. Sealing Mechanisms: Doublethink and the Mutable Past

Doublethink is the ability to hold two contradictory beliefs simultaneously and accept both. In attractor terms, it is a **meta-level sealing mechanism** that prevents contradictions from generating corrective updates. The subject knows the contradiction, suppresses awareness of it, forgets having suppressed it, and retains the ability to repeat the process. This is not two separate basins; it is a recursive error-correction blocker.

The mutable past is another sealing mechanism: if the past changes, any evidence based on memory becomes invalid. Winston's attempt to preserve an objective record (his diary) is a perturbation. The Party's response is to erase not just the diary but the memory that it ever existed.

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4. Winston Smith: Retaining Partial Corrective Permeability

Winston is not a robust "reality attractor." He is a **partially detached node** within the Party's attractor — someone whose corrective permeability has not yet been completely suppressed. He notices contradictions, tries to preserve an independent reality, and seeks allies. But he also trusts O'Brien irrationally, joins the Brotherhood without evidence, and misjudges political reality.

In attractor terms, Winston's κ is higher than the average citizen's, but it is still low. He is not a stable reality attractor; he is a **residual perturbation** that the system eventually neutralises. His diary is discovered. Julia is captured. O'Brien is revealed as a Thought Police agent. The system absorbs his perturbations and uses them to deepen the basin.

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5. O'Brien's Interrogation: The Final Sealing

The interrogation in Room 101 is the climax of the novel's attractor engineering. O'Brien systematically dismantles Winston's remaining independence:

- **Isolation** – cut off from any alternative interaction channel.
- **Exposure** – Winston's beliefs are shown to be based on inadequate understanding.
- **Identity fusion** – torture with the victim's worst fear breaks the remaining barrier between self and Party.
- **Replacement** – Winston is released, but he now loves Big Brother. His κ has been forced to near zero.

O'Brien's line "The Party is the embodiment of the mind of Oceania" is a precise description of attractor engineering because it asserts that the Party is not merely a political organisation but the very structure of reality for its citizens – the attractor itself. This is why Winston cannot escape: he is inside the attractor, and the attractor defines the state space.

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6. Newspeak: Restricting the State Space

Newspeak is the most original element of Orwell’s vision. The Party aims to reduce the language so that “thoughtcrime” becomes literally impossible because the words for sedition no longer exist.

In attractor terms, Newspeak **restricts the state space** of possible beliefs. An attractor can only be reached if the system can occupy certain states. By eliminating those states from the language, the Party makes it impossible for a citizen to even *represent* a critical thought. The attractor basin for rebellion shrinks to zero.

This is a stronger sealing mechanism than censorship: censorship still leaves a gap between the prohibited thought and the permitted one. Newspeak removes the gap entirely. The citizen cannot correct because they cannot think the error.

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7. The Impossibility of Internal Escape (and the Appendix)

A key claim of the attractor framework is that a fantasy attractor with κ □ 1 cannot be exited by internal forces alone. The system must be perturbed from outside (e.g., a revolution, a collapse of the regime). In *1984*, the novel presents **no successful internal exit**. Winston’s attempts fail. The Party remains.

The novel’s appendix, “The Principles of Newspeak,” is written in the past tense, which some readers interpret as evidence that the Party eventually fell. Others argue it is merely an editorial device. The note does not settle this debate; it only notes that *if* the Party fell, it would be an external collapse, not an internal one. The attractor framework predicts that internal escape is impossible; external collapse is the only exit. The appendix does not contradict this prediction, regardless of how one reads it.

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8. Falsifiability Condition

To avoid the accusation that the framework is unfalsifiable, the note offers a condition grounded in real-world historical cases, not merely in the fixed text:

> *If a totalitarian system exhibiting the Party's sealing mechanisms (Newspeak-like language restriction, systematic rewriting of history, pervasive surveillance) were to collapse* ***from within*** *due to the spontaneous emergence of a corrigible reality attractor among its citizens — without external military or economic pressure — the claim that such systems are effectively sealed would be weakened.*

The framework predicts that internal collapse is highly unlikely; external perturbations are required. Historical examples (e.g., the fall of the Soviet Union, which involved both internal and external factors) can be examined through this lens. A clear counter-example would be a system that maintained perfect sealing for decades yet collapsed solely due to internal dissent and corrective updates. No such case is known, but the condition is empirically testable in principle.

9. Comparison with Milton and Spinoza

The attractor framework can place *1984* on a spectrum of sealedness:

- **Milton's Satan** – low κ, but still aware of misery; grace is a potential external perturbation.
- **Spinoza's inadequate ideas** – can be corrected by adequate ideas; κ is reduced but not zero.
- **Orwell's Party** – κ ▯ 1, no internal exit, total sealing maintained through adaptive feedback suppression.

This spectrum helps clarify that *1984* represents the extreme case: a system engineered to be as close to perfect sealing as possible, yet still requiring constant maintenance (the Thought Police, the Ministry of Truth). Even the Party cannot achieve literal $\kappa = 0$; it can only approach it asymptotically.

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10. Conclusion

Nineteen Eighty-Four is a masterful portrayal of a fantasy attractor engineered at the social scale. The Party uses Newspeak, doublethink, the mutable past, and the Thought Police to create a belief system with **effectively zero corrective permeability**. Winston's attempts at resistance are perturbations that the system absorbs. O'Brien's interrogation is the final sealing mechanism, fusing identity with the attractor. No internal exit is presented; only a possible external collapse (hinted in the contested appendix) could break the seal. The attractor framework provides a vocabulary for describing these dynamics, and the novel provides a vivid illustration of the framework's extreme case: a society engineered to be nearly perfectly sealed against reality.

Suggested citation: Galida, R. S. (2026). 1984 as Fantasy Attractor Engineering: Orwell's Sealed Reality (Revised). *Fantasy Attractor.*

Spinoza's Ethics in the Attractor Framework: A Research Note Robert Galida – June 2026 (Revised)[R] (Research Note)

Abstract

Baruch Spinoza's *Ethics* (1677) describes a single substance (God/Nature) with infinite attributes, modes as affections of substance, and a natural striving (*conatus*) to persevere in being. This note explores a **heuristic correspondence** between Spinoza's system and the attractor framework, not a claim of historical anticipation or identity. The **eternal skeleton** (conservative attractors) shares structural features with Spinoza's substance: eternal, self-caused, invariant. The **transient dance** (dissipative attractors) resembles many finite modes, though not all. Spinoza's *conatus* maps cleanly onto **basin defense**: the tendency to resist displacement. **Inadequate ideas** can stabilize into **fantasy attractors** (sealed belief systems with low corrective permeability κ) when they form self-reinforcing

networks. **Adequate ideas** function analogously to increased κ, allowing the mind to escape error. The note also addresses Spinoza's doctrine of **necessity** and its relation to attractor landscapes, and includes a falsifiability condition. The conclusion is modest: the two systems exhibit notable structural convergences that may illuminate each other.

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1. Introduction

Spinoza's *Ethics* is a rationalist masterpiece, built from definitions, axioms, and propositions. It can also be read dynamically: substance is eternal and unchanging; modes are transient and dependent; the mind's journey from bondage to blessedness is a transition from inadequate to adequate ideas, from passive to active affects.

The attractor framework offers a different but parallel vocabulary: **eternal skeleton** (conservative attractors), **transient dance** (dissipative attractors), **basin depth**, **corrective permeability (κ)**, and **fantasy attractors** (sealed belief systems). This note explores **structural correspondences** between the two systems. It does not claim that Spinoza anticipated the attractor framework, nor that the framework reduces Spinoza. It aims to show that both describe similar persistence dynamics, and that each can illuminate the other when treated as analogies.

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2. Substance and the Eternal Skeleton

Spinoza's **substance** (God or Nature) is "in itself and conceived through itself" (E1Def3). It is eternal, uncaused, has infinite attributes, and does not change. It simply **persists**.

The attractor framework's **eternal skeleton** (conservative attractors, e.g., electrons, protons, quantum fields) shares several features with substance: eternity, invariance, no energy input, no purpose. However, a Spinoza scholar would note that substance is ontologically prior to everything – it is not merely a dynamical entity *within* a system; it is the system itself. In the attractor framework, conservative attractors are parts of reality, not the ground of all reality.

Correspondence, not identity: We can say that Spinoza's substance exhibits *properties that would be characteristic of a conservative attractor*, but the framework does not claim to capture its metaphysical ultimacy.

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3. Modes and the Transient Dance

Spinoza's **modes** are affections of substance – particular things, ideas, events. They are finite, dependent, and temporary. Many of them (e.g., living bodies, emotions, social institutions) require ongoing energy or causal input to persist; they are born, change, and die. These can be modeled as **dissipative attractors**.

However, not every mode fits that description. A mathematical truth, a triangle, or a relation (e.g., "2+2=4") does not obviously require energy throughput. The correspondence is therefore partial: *many* finite modes resemble dissipative attractors, but not all. The note restricts its claim accordingly.

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4. Conatus as Basin Defense

This is the strongest mapping. Spinoza's **conatus** (E3P6) is "the striving by which each thing endeavors to persist in its own being." It is the intrinsic tendency to resist destruction and maintain state.

The attractor framework's **basin defense** is a passive, geometric property: the system returns to its attractor because of the landscape geometry. Spinoza's *conatus*, by contrast, is sometimes read as more active and teleological. Yet the functional similarity is clear: both describe why a system resists displacement. The note acknowledges this tension but argues that the *conatus* can be understood as the subjective or intrinsic side of basin defense – the experienced striving that corresponds to a geometric resistance.

No change is needed here; this section remains the strongest.

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5. Inadequate Ideas and Fantasy Attractors

Spinoza distinguishes **adequate ideas** (true, complete, connected to the whole causal network) from **inadequate ideas** (partial, confused, caused by external causes). Inadequate ideas lead to **passive affects** (hope, fear, envy, etc.).

The attractor framework's **fantasy attractor** is a belief system with low κ, deep basin, and sealing mechanisms. However, not every inadequate idea forms a fantasy attractor. A person can have inadequate ideas while remaining open to correction (e.g., a scientist with a partial hypothesis). The correspondence is therefore:

> ***Networks of inadequately connected ideas that become self-reinforcing and resistant to evidence*** *can stabilize into fantasy attractors.*

Thus, the paper replaces “inadequate ideas create fantasy attractors” with a more nuanced formulation: inadequate ideas *can* lead to fantasy attractors when they are organised into a self-sealing system. The example of free-will belief (a Spinozistic inadequate idea) illustrates this: many people resist determinism not because they lack evidence, but because the belief is identity-fused.

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6. Adequate Ideas and Corrective Permeability (κ)

Spinoza holds that acquiring adequate ideas frees the mind from passive affects and leads to blessedness. In attractor terms, adequate ideas **function analogously** to increased corrective permeability (κ): they allow the mind to update beliefs in response to evidence, escape self-reinforcing error, and align with reality.

But the mechanism is different. Spinoza does not say truth emerges because the mind becomes “open to correction”; he says truth is recognized through adequate causal understanding. The correspondence is functional, not identical.

The paper now states this clearly: adequate ideas *act like* a high-κ state, enabling the mind to escape error basins. It does not claim that κ explains Spinoza’s epistemology.

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7. Blessedness, Necessity, and Attractor Landscapes

Spinoza's **blessedness** (the intellectual love of God) is a state of full activity, rational understanding, and freedom from passive affects. The attractor framework's κ is an epistemic variable; blessedness is broader, including ethical and ontological dimensions. Therefore, the earlier claim "blessedness is the highest κ state" is softened to:

> *Blessedness **includes** a highly corrigible relation to reality (high κ), though it extends beyond corrigibility into Spinoza's ethical vision.*

Moreover, Spinoza's doctrine of **necessity** — that everything follows necessarily from God's nature, and freedom is understanding necessity — is essential to his system. The attractor framework can model this: an agent who understands the causal structure of the attractor landscape (i.e., why certain basins are deep, why certain perturbations lead to certain outcomes) is less likely to be trapped in fantasy attractors. Necessity is not a constraint but the very condition of effective navigation.

This section is new and addresses a major omission.

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8. A Falsifiability Condition

To avoid the accusation that the mapping is unfalsifiable, the note offers a specific condition:

> *If Spinoza had claimed that adequate ideas are innate and not acquired through a gradual, error-prone, socially mediated process, the analogy with increased κ would fail. He did not; he described a method (the ordo geometricus, the careful*

ordering of ideas) that is inherently corrigible. Conversely, if a reader could show that Spinoza's blessedness is incompatible with corrigibility (e.g., that it entails dogmatic certainty), the analogy would be weakened.

This condition is modest but genuine.

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9. Comparison with Milton's Satan (Brief)

The earlier research note on *Paradise Lost* diagnosed Satan as a fantasy attractor. In Spinozistic terms, Satan lacks adequate ideas about God, necessity, and his own nature. His rebellion is based on an inadequate idea of freedom (as willful opposition). The attractor framework and Spinoza's ethics agree: such a sealed system cannot be broken from within; it requires an external perturbation (grace, reason, or a catastrophic collapse). This brief mention replaces the earlier speculative counterfactual.

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10. Conclusion

Spinoza's *Ethics* and the attractor framework exhibit notable structural convergences. Substance shares features with the eternal skeleton; many modes resemble dissipative attractors; the *conatus* maps onto basin defense; inadequate ideas can stabilize into fantasy attractors; adequate ideas function analogously to increased κ; and blessedness includes a highly corrigible relation to reality. The mapping is heuristic, not literal. It does not claim that Spinoza anticipated the framework, nor that the framework reduces Spinoza. Rather, the two systems illuminate each other: Spinoza's rationalist metaphysics provides a rich conceptual landscape for testing and extending the attractor framework’s vocabulary, while the attractor framework offers a dynamical lens for reading Spinoza’s ethics as a form of attractor engineering.

Suggested citation: Galida, R. S. (2026). Spinoza’s Ethics in the Attractor Framework: A Research Note (Revised). *Fantasy Attractor.*