

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.

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 $\kappa \rightarrow 0$, 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 .

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.

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)
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.

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.

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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.

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 ($\kappa \approx 1$). 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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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** ($\kappa \approx 1$). 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.

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 $\kappa \ll 1$, 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.

2. The Party's Fantasy Attractor: $\kappa \ll 1$

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.

$\kappa \approx 1$ 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

A key claim of the attractor framework is that a fantasy attractor with $\kappa \geq 1$ 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.

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** – $\kappa \approx 1$, 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.

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.

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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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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Paradise Lost as Fantasy Attractor Dynamics: Milton's Sealed Belief Systems [A] (2026) Robert Galida – June 2026

This is an exploratory research note applying the attractor framework's concepts (corrective permeability, sealing mechanisms, basin depth) as qualitative heuristics, not as quantitative measurements. For the full definitions, see Paper 1 ([Intelligence Without Consciousness](#)) and the paper [Non-Physical Claims Are Fantasy Attractors](#).

Abstract

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* offers a rich field for examining how belief systems become sealed against correction. Satan is a paradigmatic case of a **fantasy attractor**: his identity is fused with his rebellion, he deploys sealing mechanisms to neutralize disconfirming evidence, and his corrective permeability is extremely low (metaphorically speaking). However, this paper does not treat attractor language as a literal dynamical model; rather, it uses the framework as a heuristic to illuminate well-known features of the poem that traditional criticism (e.g., C.S. Lewis, Stanley Fish) has already noted. The goal is not to replace literary scholarship but to show how the attractor framework can describe the same phenomena in a unified vocabulary that links theology, politics, and cognitive psychology. The paper also acknowledges the complexity of Eve's deliberation and the

Son's grace as a genuine perturbation that restores corrigibility. It concludes that *Paradise Lost* can be read as a study of how sealed belief systems form, resist correction, and – under specific conditions – can be reopened.

1. Introduction

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) is a poem about the origin of evil, the fall of humanity, and the promise of redemption. It is also a remarkably precise study of how intelligent beings persist in beliefs that contradict evidence. Milton scholars (from Samuel Johnson to Stanley Fish) have long noted Satan's self-deception, Adam's blame-shifting, and the psychological complexity of the Fall. This research note asks: can the attractor framework's vocabulary – **corrective permeability** (κ), **sealing mechanisms**, **basin depth**, **fantasy attractor** – provide a useful lens for describing these dynamics, without pretending to measure them quantitatively or to replace existing scholarship?

The answer is: yes, as a **heuristic**. The framework does not reveal anything that Milton's close readers haven't already noticed. But it does offer a unified way to talk about belief persistence across domains (theology, politics, cognitive science) that may be valuable for readers familiar with the attractor framework. This note is therefore an exercise in **applied analogy**, not a contribution to Milton studies.

2. The Attractor Framework as Heuristic (Not a Formal Model)

In the attractor framework, a **fantasy attractor** is a belief system with very low corrective permeability ($\kappa \rightarrow 0$), a deep

basin (resistance to change), and sealing mechanisms that neutralize disconfirming evidence. A **reality attractor** has higher κ , a shallower basin, and updates in response to evidence.

In literary analysis, these are **qualitative descriptors**, not measurable quantities. We cannot assign a numeric κ to Satan or calculate the depth of Eve's basin. The value of the framework lies in its ability to pattern-match: to notice that Satan's behavior resembles that of a person locked into a sealed belief system, and to use that resemblance to generate insights about why such systems persist and how they might be disrupted.

This is not circular. We do not *infer* low κ from Satan's refusal to correct; we *describe* that refusal as low- κ behavior. The explanatory value is in the *contrast* between Satan (low κ) and pre-lapsarian Adam (higher κ), and in the *transition* from one state to another.

3. Satan: A Sealed Belief System (But Not a Simple One)

Traditional criticism (e.g., C.S. Lewis in *A Preface to Paradise Lost*) has long seen Satan as a portrait of pride – a being so self-absorbed that he cannot see his own misery. More recent critics (e.g., Stanley Fish) have emphasized Satan's theatricality and self-dramatization. The attractor framework adds a vocabulary: Satan's core claim ("Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven") is an **identity statement**, not a rational calculation. He has **fused** his rebellion with his sense of self. To abandon the rebellion would be to annihilate himself.

Sealing mechanism: "The mind is its own place, and in itself /

Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n" (I.254-255). This is a classic sealing move: reality is redefined as irrelevant. No external evidence can penetrate because the interaction channel between evidence and belief has been severed.

Self-awareness: Satan is not merely deluded. He repeatedly admits his misery: "Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell" (IV.75). Yet he still does not update. This is the paradox of the fantasy attractor: **awareness of suffering does not imply corrigibility**. The attractor framework can model this as a state where the basin depth is so large that even the perception of misery is insufficient to trigger escape.

Thus, the framework does not reduce Satan to a simple automaton. It respects his internal conflict while still diagnosing his inability to change.

4. Pre-lapsarian Eden: A More Corrigible State

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve operate in what the framework calls a **reality attractor**: they receive correction (from God and angels), discuss it, and update their behavior. When Eve has a troubling dream, she tells Adam, and they dismiss it (V.95-113). Their κ is relatively high; their basin is shallow.

This is not a claim that they are perfectly rational. It is a claim that their belief system is **structurally open** to correction – a condition that will be tested by the serpent.

5. The Fall: A Gradual Attractor Transition

The serpent's temptation introduces a false promise: "Ye shall be as gods" (IX.708). This is a **non-physical claim** – it has no interaction channel with the world as Adam and Eve know it. It cannot be verified or falsified. In attractor terms, it is the kind of claim that easily becomes a fantasy attractor.

Eve's deliberation in Book IX is subtle. She does not simply flip. She reasons, hesitates, and persuades herself. The framework can describe this as a **gradual reduction in κ** , not an instantaneous collapse. The sealing mechanism ("What could be more fair than to know good and evil?" – IX.727-728) is deployed before the fruit is eaten. By the time she eats, her basin has already deepened.

Adam's choice is different: he knows he is transgressing, but he chooses to fall with Eve out of love (or perhaps fatalism). His κ collapses almost instantly. The framework allows for **different rates of κ change** for different characters.

6. Post-lapsarian Behavior: Deflection and Hiding

After the Fall, Adam and Eve exhibit classic fantasy-attractor behaviors: blaming others (X.128-137), hiding from God (IX.1112-1113), and struggling to answer when questioned. These are **sealing mechanisms** – attempts to avoid the perturbation that would force correction. The framework describes this as a state of **reduced κ** , not necessarily zero. Redemption is still possible.

7. The Son as a Genuine Perturbation

God's interrogation is the first attempt to reopen the basin. The Son's promise of salvation (Book XI-XII) is a **new interaction channel** – grace, mercy, and the possibility of redemption. This is not a mechanical “increase in κ .” It is a theological event. The framework merely notes that such an event functions as an external perturbation that can break a sealed system.

Milton's own theology emphasizes free will and repentance. The attractor framework is compatible with that: repentance is a conscious act that increases κ , but it requires an initial perturbation (grace) to make repentance possible. The framework does not replace Milton's language; it translates it into a different register.

8. Political Allegory: A Modest Reading

Milton was a republican who defended the regicide of Charles I. Many scholars (e.g., Christopher Hill) have read *Paradise Lost* as a political allegory. In attractor terms, one could argue that:

- **Monarchy** (especially absolute monarchy) tends to become a fantasy attractor: it seals itself against correction by appealing to divine right, tradition, and the subject's identity.
- **Republicanism**, in Milton's ideal form, is a reality attractor: it depends on public reason, free press, and corrigible institutions.

But this is **one possible reading**, not a definitive mapping. The paper does not assert that Milton himself thought in these terms. It simply notes that the attractor framework can

describe the political dynamics that Milton was engaging with.

A critic could object that republics can also become sealed (e.g., the Jacobin terror). The framework would agree: any political system can become a fantasy attractor if it loses its corrigibility. The distinction is structural, not ideological.

9. What Would Disconfirm the Framework?

To avoid the accusation of unfalsifiability, the paper offers a specific **falsification condition**:

A character who persists rigidly in a belief but updates rapidly and completely when presented with new evidence (without rationalization or delay) would not be described as a fantasy attractor. Conversely, a character who updates slowly and with resistance would be a candidate.

In *Paradise Lost*, Satan's refusal to update after clear evidence (his defeat, his misery) fits the pattern of a fantasy attractor. If a reader could find a counter-example where Satan *does* update without resistance, the framework would be weakened. (No such example exists in the poem.)

This is a modest falsifiability condition, but it is genuine.

10. Conclusion

The attractor framework, used as a heuristic, offers a useful vocabulary for describing the belief dynamics in *Paradise Lost*. It does not replace traditional literary criticism; it re-expresses familiar observations in a unified language that

connects theology, politics, and cognitive psychology. The paper does not claim to measure k or basin depth; it uses these terms qualitatively, as one might use “depression” or “obsession” in psychological criticism.

The core insight – that Satan’s self-sealing pride is a fantasy attractor – is not new. But the framework may help readers see how such sealing mechanisms operate across domains, and why they are so resistant to correction. Milton’s poem remains, as it always has been, a profound study of self-deception, identity, and the possibility of grace.

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The Uncorrectable Believer: Fantasy Attractor Dynamics from Aquinas to the Holocaust [A] (2026)

Robert Galida – June 2026 (Final)

See Paper 1 (Intelligence Without Consciousness) for the full taxonomy of conscious suppression and fantasy attractors.

Abstract

Why do theological systems that defy empirical disconfirmation persist for centuries? The attractor framework diagnoses them as **fantasy attractors** – belief systems with low corrective permeability (κ), deep basins, and sealing mechanisms that neutralize error signals. This paper traces the shift from behavioral law (Judaism) to thought crime (Christianity), showing how internalizing sin makes the accused defenseless and elevates reputation over reality. It examines Catholic and radical Protestant soteriology as attractor architectures: the doctrine of double effect, the infinite value of the soul, and the permissible killing of heretics created a calculus where finite evil is justified by infinite gain. The 1933 Reichskonkordat – Hitler’s first diplomatic treaty – exploited this attractor basin to gain legitimacy. The Holocaust was not a direct theological command, but an *implied inference* from centuries of attractor dynamics, given the additional historical factors of racial ideology and the totalitarian state. The paper distinguishes between Lutheran, antinomian, and prosperity-gospel variants, and offers a documented de-conversion case (Bart Ehrman) mapped onto the three exit mechanisms. The result is a unified diagnosis of how theological attractors seal themselves against correction and enable historical atrocity.

1. Introduction

How does a belief system survive centuries of counterevidence? How can millions of intelligent people maintain faith in doctrines that contradict observable reality – wealth as divine favor, poverty as lack of faith, sins forgiven before they are committed? And how can the same attractor dynamics enable historical atrocities, from the Inquisition to the Holocaust?

Standard explanations (cognitive bias, social pressure, indoctrination) are incomplete. Cognitive dissonance theory, for example, explains why people rationalize disconfirmation but does not model the *dynamical stability* of belief attractors across populations and generations. The attractor framework offers a formal alternative: these are **fantasy attractors**, belief systems with corrective permeability $\kappa \rightarrow 0$, deep basins, and sealing mechanisms that neutralize error signals.

Operational definition of κ (corrective permeability): $\kappa = 1/\tau$, where τ is the time a system takes to return to its baseline state after a specified perturbation. For belief systems, κ indexes the speed and completeness of belief updating when presented with disconfirming evidence. Low κ means slow or absent updating – a sealed attractor.

This paper applies the framework to **Catholic and radical Protestant soteriology**. The Catholic tradition is the deeper attractor basin; Protestantism, particularly its radical antinomian and prosperity-gospel variants, represents a mutation that further reduced κ . The paper focuses not on theology per se, but on the *attractor architecture*: how thought crimes replace behavioral sins, how the infinite-value calculus justifies finite evil, how vicarious redemption removes corrective incentives, and how social colonization makes individual κ irrelevant. The goal is diagnostic, not polemical. “Fantasy attractor” is a technical term, not a rhetorical insult.

2. From Behavioral Law to Thought Crime

Judaism emphasizes **behavioral sins** – acts that can be observed, verified, and legally adjudicated. Theft, murder, idolatry, and false witness leave external evidence. A

community can correct a member because the sin has verifiable traces. The attractor basin is shallow enough for error signals to enter.

Qualification: Rabbinic Judaism also regulates interior life – intention in prayer (kavvanah), forbidden desires, and the “evil inclination” (yetzer hara) as an internal adversary. However, *legal accountability* in Jewish law (halakha) requires action; interior states alone are not punishable by human courts. The shift to Christianity is not a complete invention of interiority but a *juridical* shift: internal states become the primary locus of sin, enforceable by divine authority and (via the church) social monitoring.

Within Christianity, the precise locus of this shift is Augustine of Hippo’s doctrine of **concupiscence** – the involuntary, post-lapsarian inclination to sin. Augustine argued that even the internal movement of lust, independent of any act, is morally blameworthy. This interiorized sin and made it inescapable.

The result: **thought crimes** – lust, doubt, pride, and above all, *lack of faith* – become unverifiable by definition. No one can see your lustful thought; no one can measure your doubt. The accused is defenseless: any denial can be interpreted as further evidence of deceit (e.g., “protesting too much”).

Attractor consequences:

- **The basin becomes empirically unfalsifiable.** No external perturbation can disconfirm an accusation about an internal state.
- **Reputation replaces reality.** Since thoughts cannot be observed, the community polices *signals* – public professions, loyalty rituals, emotional displays. Acceptance becomes performative theater.
- **Survival depends on reputation management.** The individual invests energy in signaling purity, not in

correcting beliefs. κ is now about social mimicry, not truth.

The attractor has sealed itself against external correction.

3. The Infinite-Value Calculus: Aquinas, Double Effect, and the Permissibility of Killing Heretics

Thomas Aquinas, in the *Summa Theologiae* (II-II, Q.11, A.3), argued that heretics who relapse after correction “deserve not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but also to be severed from the world by death.” His reasoning was that heresy corrupts the faith, which is the life of the soul, and thus is more serious than counterfeiting money – a crime punishable by death in medieval law. This was later systematized under the **doctrine of double effect**: one act can have two effects – a good, intended one (protecting the faithful) and a bad, unintended one (the heretic’s death). The act is permissible if the bad effect is not the goal and there is a **proportionate reason**. (Aquinas articulated the foundational case for self-defense in II-II, Q.64, A.7; the formal “double effect” label came from later scholastics.)

The key move, reflected in later canon law and inquisitorial practice, was a **moral calculus**:

- **A saved soul has infinite value.** (A later Catholic apologetic formulation, often attributed to Origen in paraphrase: “the salvation of one soul is worth more than the creation of a thousand worlds.”)
- **Killing a heretic is a finite evil** (temporal death, temporary suffering).
- **Saving a potential convert – or protecting the faithful**

- **is an infinite gain.**
- Therefore, **killing heretics is permissible, even praiseworthy**, if it serves the greater good of the faith.

This calculus was not marginal; it became embedded in canon law, inquisitorial practice, and the church's teaching on religious coercion. The attractor basin for "heretic" deepened: the heretic was not merely wrong, but *ontologically dangerous*. No error signal from the heretic could be trusted; any plea for mercy was further evidence of deceit.

Aquinas distinguished between heretics (who had once professed the faith and then corrupted it) and non-believers (Jews, Muslims), who had never accepted it and were to be tolerated. However, under the pressure of the attractor basin, this distinction proved porous. The logic that made heretics expendable could be – and was – extended to any obstinate non-believer, especially when political and economic pressures aligned.

4. Vicarious Redemption and the Suppression of κ (Protestant Mutation)

Radical Protestant soteriology (*sola fide*, *sola gratia*) declares that salvation is by faith alone, not works. Christ's sacrifice paid for all sins – past, present, and future. The believer is justified before God regardless of behavior.

From an attractor perspective, this is a $\kappa \rightarrow 0$ engineering:

- If all sins are already forgiven, there is **no future error signal** that can perturb your standing. Why correct? Why update? The basin is infinitely deep.
- Any attempt to modulate behavior for the sake of

- righteousness is **works-righteousness**, a sin of pride. The attractor actively penalizes efforts to increase κ .
- The only remaining error signal is *lack of faith* – but that is a thought crime, unverifiable and defenseless.

Theological range distinction: This logic applies most cleanly to **antinomian** and **hyper-Calvinist** positions, where behavioral ethics are genuinely irrelevant (e.g., certain “Free Grace” movements). It applies less cleanly to **Lutheranism**, which insists that good works are a necessary *response* to grace. The paper’s argument targets the antinomian end of the spectrum, but the underlying attractor logic – infinite forgiveness, no future error signal – is already latent in the Catholic doctrine of baptismal regeneration and confession, albeit with higher κ because post-baptismal sin requires sacramental correction.

5. Effort as Pride: The Prohibition on Correction

In radical antinomian theology, any intentional effort to change is not merely unnecessary; it is **sinful**. The theological logic:

1. Grace is sufficient for salvation.
2. Adding human effort to secure salvation implies grace is *insufficient*.
3. Implying insufficiency is pride, a sin.
4. Therefore, intentional behavioral modulation is pride and undermines faith.

Thus, the attractor **penalizes the correction impulse itself**. The mechanism is: the system encodes “effort = pride” and attaches negative valence to any attempt to increase κ . This

pattern is historically documented in the **Marrow Controversy** (Scotland, 1718–1722), in which the question of whether free grace implies no need for human effort divided the Church of Scotland; the Marrow men were accused of “antinomianism” for affirming that God’s love was unconditional, while their opponents insisted that effort to prepare oneself for grace was necessary. The attractor had turned its own correction signal into a sin, and the controversy formalized the split.

6. Prosperity Doctrine: The Sealed Basin (A Late Mutation)

Prosperity doctrine (Word of Faith movement, originating with E.W. Kenyon and popularized by Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland) is a **late 20th-century mutation** of radical Protestant theology.

Its attractor dynamics:

- **Poverty and suffering** are evidence of weak faith. The error signal (poverty) is not a call to correct the system; it is a call to deepen belief. Disconfirmation becomes confirmation.
- **Wealth and power** are evidence of strong faith. The rich have no error signal at all; their status is divine validation. The attractor rewards low κ .
- **The hermeneutic seal** – any challenge to the doctrine is interpreted as lack of faith, which is already a thought crime. The system absorbs all counterevidence.

This is distinct from Calvinist economic theology (Weber’s Protestant Ethic), which ties wealth to disciplined labor – a higher- κ system. Prosperity doctrine is a specific, highly

sealed attractor.

7. Social Colonization and Collective Basin Depth

The church (and derivative political systems) maintains the attractor across individuals. Social mechanisms include:

- **Public professions of faith** – performative acts that signal loyalty and deepen group cohesion.
- **Shunning and excommunication** – leaving the attractor means social death.
- **Collective reinforcement** – group rituals, shared beliefs, and common sealing mechanisms amplify basin depth.

When social colonization is complete, individual κ becomes **irrelevant**. The collective basin holds even if individuals have high κ in other domains. The attractor has colonized the simulation loop – the individual's internal model of reality. Theoretically, this is an emergent property of synchronized low- κ agents: coupling suppresses variance, and the group's collective basin depth exceeds any individual's corrective capacity.

A further structural consequence: When the *performance of piety* becomes the sole measure of a person's credibility – when inner faith cannot be verified and only outward signs matter – then the clergy, as the gatekeepers and evaluators of that performance, inevitably sit at the top of the hierarchy. No independent measure of faith exists, so the clergy control the script: the sacraments, the definitions of orthodoxy, the penalties for deviance. The laity must compete to signal purity to the clergy, who in turn deepen the basin by

rewarding conformity and punishing dissent. This is why clerical hierarchies are so stable and resistant to correction from below: any error signal from a layperson is already discounted because the layperson's credibility depends entirely on their performance of piety, which the clergy adjudicate. To challenge the clergy is to fail the performance – a perfect seal.

8. Comparison with Other Fantasy Attractors

The same dynamical structure appears in political movements (Paper 1), clinical disorders (Paper 2), and AI alignment (Paper 4). In each case:

- $\kappa \rightarrow 0$ for core beliefs.
- Error signals are neutralized by sealing mechanisms.
- Identity fusion prevents exit.
- Social reinforcement deepens the basin.

The theological case is distinctive in two respects: (a) the sealing mechanism is *ontological* – God's authority is infinite, and no human evidence can override divine decree; (b) the *infinite-value calculus* allows finite evil to be justified by infinite gain, creating a powerful incentive for atrocity that purely social attractors lack.

9. De-conversion and Resistance: The Ehrman Case

If the attractor is sealed, how does one exit? Three mechanisms:

- **Breaking identity fusion** – The belief must cease to be self-constitutive.
- **Re-opening error signals** – External perturbations that the sealing mechanism cannot absorb.
- **Escape from collective basin** – Finding a new social attractor with higher κ .

The de-conversion of biblical scholar **Bart Ehrman** (from evangelical certainty to agnosticism) provides a documented case mapped onto these mechanisms. Ehrman has described how his evangelical identity was fused with inerrancy; the perturbation was the accumulated weight of manuscript variations and historical contradictions he encountered in graduate school. The sealing mechanisms (prayer, apologetics) worked for years but eventually failed because the scale of disconfirmation exceeded the basin's capacity to absorb it. Exit required a new social attractor (academic biblical studies) where questioning was the norm, and a gradual decoupling of self-worth from doctrinal certainty. Ehrman's story is not a template for all exits, but it illustrates the attractor framework's prediction: de-conversion requires a perturbation larger than the sealing mechanisms can neutralize, coupled with an alternative basin.

10. The Holocaust as Implied Consequence: The Reichskonkordat and the Attractor Basin

The attractor architecture described above – infinite-value calculus, thought crimes, permissibility of killing heretics – did not remain abstract. It became embedded in canon law, diplomatic practice, and the church's relationship with secular powers.

The **Reichskonkordat** of 1933 was Adolf Hitler's first major international treaty, signed with the Vatican just months after he became Chancellor. Why first? Because the Catholic Church was the most powerful attractor basin in Western history – a network of believers, institutions, and moral authority spanning centuries. Hitler needed that basin's *legitimizing signal* to stabilize his regime internationally and to neutralize Catholic political opposition.

Historical note: The historiography of the concordat is contested. John Cornwell (*Hitler's Pope*, 1999) argues the treaty gave Hitler legitimacy and sealed Catholic political opposition. Others, such as Hubert Wolf (*Pope and Devil*, 2010), argue the concordat was a defensive instrument aimed at protecting Catholic institutions under a regime already consolidating power. The attractor-framework argument does not require choosing between these interpretations. Even if the concordat was defensive, the effect was the same: the church's error signals were subordinated to institutional survival, and the basin's deep attraction pulled the hierarchy toward accommodation.

The concordat did not explicitly say "Jews may be killed." It did not need to. The *established practice* had already set the boundaries:

- **Baptized Jews** – converts – were, in principle, under the church's protection. Vatican communications distinguished baptized from unbaptized Jews (e.g., Holy See correspondence with German bishops, 1933–1935, regarding non-Aryan Catholics). The concordat's silence on this distinction left the unbaptized outside the attractor's moral consideration.
- **Unconverted Jews** remained outside the basin. The church had long taught that obstinate non-believers were not protected by the same moral calculus. The infinite-value

logic applied only to souls *capable of salvation* – and for the church, that required baptism.

Thus, the concordat functioned as a **sealing mechanism at the diplomatic level**. It signaled to German Catholics (and to the world) that the Vatican accepted Hitler's regime. The remaining error signals – protests, encyclicals, excommunications – were suppressed or ignored. The basin had been colonized.

Reinforcing the hierarchy: The concordat also entrenched the clerical-performance hierarchy. By legitimizing the regime that would later remove any meaningful competition for moral authority (socialists, trade unions, other political parties), the Catholic hierarchy became, for its remaining faithful, the sole gatekeeper of piety. The laity could no longer turn to alternative social attractors (e.g., socialist movements with different moral codes); the only acceptable performance was loyalty to the church and, by extension, to the regime the church had recognized. Thus, the concordat did not merely silence opposition – it locked the faithful into a single-source evaluation of their own credibility, with the clergy firmly at the top.

The Holocaust was not a direct command of Christian theology. It was an **implied inference** from centuries of attractor dynamics, **given additional historical factors:**

- **Racialization:** The Nazi category was *biological*, not religious. Baptism did not change one's race. The Nazis explicitly rejected the church's protection of converts, sealing the basin further by removing the only escape valve (conversion).
- **Totalitarian state:** The Nazi regime had the power to enforce genocide at a scale and speed that medieval inquisitions could not.
- **Removal of the conversion escape:** In the theological

attractor, conversion could save a heretic's life. In the Nazi racial attractor, conversion was irrelevant. The basin became infinitely deep.

Disclaimer: This is not to say “the church caused the Holocaust.” The Holocaust required additional, non-theological factors: a totalitarian state, racial ideology, and the removal of baptism as an escape from persecution. The theological attractor provided the *permissibility conditions* – the moral logic that made killing non-believers a finite evil justified by infinite gain – but the political and racial machinery were supplied by Nazism.

The attractor framework diagnoses this not as a conspiracy but as a **dynamical consequence**: when a belief system assigns infinite value to a scarce resource (saved souls) and finite cost to human life, and when it seals itself against corrective evidence, atrocity becomes not only possible but *logical* within the basin, given the right historical conditions.

11. Conclusion

Catholic and radical Protestant soteriology share a common attractor architecture: thought crimes, infinite-value calculus, pre-forgiveness or baptismal regeneration, and sealing mechanisms that neutralize error signals. The shift from behavioral law to internal sin made the accused defenseless and elevated reputation over reality. The doctrine of double effect and the infinite value of the soul justified finite evil for infinite gain. The Reichskonkordat leveraged the deepest attractor basin in Western history to grant Hitler legitimacy. The Holocaust was not a direct command, but an *implied inference* from centuries of attractor dynamics, completed by the historical specificities of racial ideology

and totalitarian power.

The attractor framework provides a unified diagnosis of how theological systems resist correction and enable atrocity. It also points to the only exit: restore κ , reopen error signals, decouple identity from belief, and build new attractors where doubt is not a sin but a pathway to truth.

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