Ideal States

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(Structured Tooling Assistance by ChatGPT)

Orientation

This paper does not propose goals, values, or prescriptions.

It does not describe what *should* be pursued, optimized, or preferred. It describes a structural condition that appears repeatedly across scales whenever coherence is preserved.

The term *ideal* is used here in a strictly technical sense. It refers neither to moral goodness nor to subjective preference, but to structural stability under constraint.

The Common Confusion

“Ideal states” are often treated as aspirational endpoints: conditions to be achieved through effort, intention, or design.

Under that framing, ideals become: - goals to be optimized, - norms to be enforced, - or narratives to be defended.

This framing is unstable. It requires continual justification, produces disagreement that cannot resolve structurally, and collapses under translation across domains.

The problem is not disagreement about ideals. It is the misplacement of what an ideal state actually is.

Ideal States as Structural Attractors

An ideal state, as used here, is not an endpoint. It is an attractor.

More precisely, an ideal state is a configuration toward which a system reliably settles when: - coherence is preserved, - external forcing is minimized *(inputs or interventions that override internal closure rather than arise from it)*, - and misapplied constraints are removed.

Such states do not need to be pursued. They appear.

They are not selected by preference, but by survivability under perturbation.

Decoherence and Stability

Across physical, biological, cognitive, and social systems, a consistent pattern appears:

Systems persist where decoherence is low and attractors are stable.

This is not a claim about intention or desire. It is a claim about structural viability.

Configurations that require constant correction, enforcement, or explanation are unstable. They dissipate under noise, scale poorly, and fracture under translation.

Configurations that minimize decoherence require less maintenance. They absorb disturbance without collapse. They remain legible under transformation.

These configurations are what this paper refers to as ideal states.

Why Ideal States Are Misread as Goals

Ideal states are often mistaken for goals because they are experienced subjectively as ease, safety, or alignment.

From within a system, occupying a low-decoherence, high-attractor configuration can *feel* like: - effortlessness, - coherence, - or “belonging.”

These experiences are epiphenomenal. They are consequences of structural stability, not defining features of it.

Structurally, nothing is being achieved. Something is simply no longer being fought.

Ideal States Do Not Generalize as Prescriptions

Because ideal states are attractors, not objectives, they cannot be imposed.

They cannot be mandated, legislated, or engineered directly. Attempts to do so introduce external forcing that raises decoherence and destabilizes the very states being sought.

Ideal states are discovered only indirectly: by observing what configurations persist once incoherence is removed.

This makes them descriptive rather than normative.

Relationship to Truth and Invariants

Ideal states are not themselves truth. They are consequences of truth-preserving structure.

Where truth is understood as the minimal set of properties necessary to preserve coherence under admissible transformation, ideal states are the configurations that naturally arise when those properties are respected.

Attractors identified as ideal states remain so only insofar as they persist under coherence-preserving transformation of representation, scale, and interpretation.

They are downstream of invariants, not substitutes for them.

Closing

Ideal states do not tell systems where to go.

They describe where systems stop fighting themselves.

What appears stable, desirable, or “ideal” is not the result of aspiration, but of coherence being allowed to close.

Nothing more is required.