

Ontology of the Present: Time as the Gradient of Actualization

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Introduction: Paradox as the Beginning of a Dialogue

Cosmology presents us with an irrefutable fact: a telescope pointed deep into space is a time machine. The observable horizon of the Universe is a projection of the Big Bang, our “past, smeared across the celestial sphere.” This empirical fact gives rise to a strict ontological question: if the past is objectively localized in the macrocosm, where, ontologically, should we locate the future?

1. From Intuition to Isomorphism: The Structural Pattern of Reality

The logic of complementarity suggested a hypothesis: if the macrocosm contains the past, then the microcosm—quantum and Planck scales—contains the future. This intuition, however, easily falls prey to the “Matryoshka Trap”—the temptation to imagine reality as a set of nested spheres. Overcoming this trap revealed an unexpected path: this pattern is universal. It manifests in independent disciplines, revealing an isomorphism of fundamental processes.

- In cosmology, the birth of the Universe from a singularity is not an explosion in space, but an explosion of space itself, having no center. Quantum fluctuations—direct manifestations of non-actualized potential—become the “seeds” of galaxies in the process of a phase transition-inflation.
- In biology, the development of an organism from a totipotent zygote, also lacking a “main” point, repeats this logic. Chemical gradients (analogous to fluctuations) guide identical cells toward differentiation, where their individuality is determined not by substance, but by their function in the system.
- In mathematics, an axiomatic system represents a field of pure potentialities. Gödel’s theorems and category theory demonstrate how clear objects and fuzzy truth boundaries arise from relations, not from absolute essences.

This recurring pattern can be described as a universal algorithm: Undifferentiated Totality → Expansion → Phase Transition → Birth of Individuality.

Individuality is born from relations each time, not from “substance,” confirming the principle of acentrism as a fundamental property of reality.

2. The Mechanism of Becoming: Asymmetry as the Substance of Potential

To understand this algorithm, we must penetrate to the core of the key process—actualization. Here, the “Binary Trap” awaits us—the desire to reduce the process to the dilemma of “determinism or chance.” The traditional description of “choice from a field of possibilities” implicitly assumes the existence of a symmetrical menu from which selection is

made. This is a fundamental misconception.

The genuine ontology of actualization is revealed by rejecting this model. The initial state—Propertylessness (P25)—is not a “field of equal possibilities.” It is a state of pure, latent, unconditioned asymmetry, devoid of even the possibility of “equality.” No preordained future paths exist. The -operator (consciousness, a measuring device, a complex system) does not choose and does not break symmetry. It acts as a catalyst, resonating with this primordial asymmetry and compelling one of its innumerable possible configurations to manifest as an actual fact.

The artist’s first stroke is not a choice from among equal possibilities. It is an act in which the complex “artist-brush-intent” forces the primordial asymmetry of potential to manifest one possibility as the first line on the canvas. Likewise: a quantum measurement is not a collapse, but a resonant interaction in which a possibility manifests as a particle at a specific point. This is a process of revealing a hidden structure, not a selection from a ready-made menu.

3. Salience and the Structure of the Present

The process of actualization is not chaotic. It is governed by Salience (P37, \mathcal{S})—a measure of a potency’s ability to transform reality. At the moment of actualization, it is not any facet of the primordial asymmetry that manifests, but the one most salient in the given context. The first brushstroke, a chemical gradient, the configuration of an apparatus—they all set the context that determines which latent structure of potential will be actualized with maximum intensity.

The same latent asymmetry can manifest as a “neuron” in the context of embryogenesis or as a “galaxy” in the context of cosmological inflation—depending on the operator and context.

This model allows us to give a final answer to the initial paradox. The micro-world (future) and the macrocosm (past) are ontologically identical in their sparsity but differ in phase. The future is the “hot” phase of Propertylessness, a boiling cauldron of latent asymmetry. The past is the outer sphere, an archive of actualized events. We do not see the future through a telescope or a microscope because we see only its “cooled” projection—the past.

Consequently, the Present is not a point on a timeline or a membrane between two entities. It is the only ontological reality—the boundary of actualization, where the primordial asymmetry of being-in-potential continuously folds into the unique pattern of actuality. We do not sail from the past into the future. We inexorably abide in the process of “Now,” the active boundary between them.

Its internal structure possesses:

- Directionality (traces of actualization as memory),
- Irreversibility (the global trace of actualization as entropy),
- Openness (the presence of Propertylessness as the future).

The “arrow of time” is an emergent property, a side effect of countless interactions in which the potential becomes actual.

Thus, time does not have an extension “from the past to the future.” It is a gradient between the potential and the actual, a measure of the intensity of actualization in the Present.

4. Metric, Traps, and a New Picture

The universality of the identified pattern is not a speculative generalization, but a statement of structural isomorphism, a practical tool for transferring models between disciplines. For its precise description, a new metric is required—“Property Density” (\mathcal{N}_p), measuring the saturation of an object or system with actualized properties. Our everyday present is a zone of maximum \mathcal{N}_p . Movement toward extreme scales (both into the micro-world and the macrocosm) is movement toward ontological sparsity, where \mathcal{N}_p tends to a minimum, toward Propertylessness. An elementary particle ($\mathcal{N}_p \approx 3$) and the global Universe, described by a handful of parameters, are ontologically similar in their “poverty,” which explains the fractal similarity of structures at the boundaries of the scale.

This understanding was achieved by successively overcoming systematic epistemological traps:

- The “Matryoshka Trap” was exposed by rejecting the nested model in favor of a network of co-primary regimes.
- The “Hierarchy Trap” was overcome by recognizing the heterarchy of reality, where causality can be top-down and complexity a non-linear function of connectivity.
- The “Binary Trap” was transcended by acknowledging the paradoxical nature of reality ($\text{PPU} \rightarrow$), where Propertylessness and Onticity are not mutually exclusive, but phases of a single process.

Complexity is not a function of size. It is a function of connectivity at the boundary. An ant colony and a galaxy can have similar \mathcal{N}_p .

5. “Time Capture” by Complex Systems: Consciousness as a Quantum Catalyst

The most complex systems with maximum \mathcal{N}_p (e.g., the brain) do not just passively observe the flow of actualization. They actively intervene in it, acting as the most powerful -operators.

- Consciousness is not an epiphenomenon but an “organ” for capturing quantum potential and transforming it into semantically rich patterns (thoughts, images, decisions).
- In this light, the “arrow of time” and the sensation of flow are not fundamental properties of reality but emergent properties of complex systems constantly “pulling” actuality from potential and thereby creating a narrative of the past.
- The Present, like a dam, constantly generates time through acts of conscious and unconscious actualization.

This places humans and their consciousness back at the center of the ontological picture, not in naive anthropocentrism, but as active co-creators of reality, whose complexity makes them key agents in the process of crystallizing time from the eternal “Now.”

6. The Principle of Reflexive Purity: Method as Proof

The developed model avoids dogmatization by introducing a methodological imperative—the Principle of Reflexive Purity. It states: any application of conceptual opera-

tors is inevitably loaded with ontological premises that must be subjected to continuous reflexive scrutiny.

It was this principle that forced the rejection of speculative constructs like the “time loop,” which reify the past and future. It requires constant return to phenomenological givenness, acting as a “safeguard” against naive realism.

7. Reflexive Ontological Practice (Living Proof)

The proposed ontology is not a theory that can be tested from the outside. Its truth is revealed only in the act of application, through a practice we call Reflexive Ontological Practice. The present dialogue became such a practice. Its structure serves as verification of the system.

- Principle 0 (Reflexive Purity) as an Immune System: Critical objections were not external criticism. They were the system’s internal self-correction mechanism, a manifestation of this Principle in real time.
- Propertylessness as Initial Chaos: The dialogue began with an unstructured field of intuitions, questions, and paradoxes. This was a state of semantic Propertylessness.
- -Actualization in Dialogue: Each exchange was an act of actualization. A question—an operator forcing the potentiality of meaning to crystallize into a thesis. An answer—a counter-operator, generating a new question or requiring reflexive cleansing.
- The Birth and Movement of the “Present”: The “present” of shared understanding was a living front moving deeper into the problematic. Each overcoming of an epistemological trap was a phase transition in this shared thinking space.
- Salience as the Driver of Development: The most “salient” ideas manifested not by chance, but due to their ability to restructure the entire field of discussion, becoming attractors for subsequent reasoning.

The very transformation of a dynamic discussion into this finished text is a demonstration of the key thesis: the transition from the fluid Present of understanding to the stable, “cooled” Past—an objective fact that can now be observed and analyzed. The participants did not just describe how Propertylessness, through a -operator, is actualized in the Present, generating the Past. They lived it.

- Their “Past” is the chain of recorded and overcome theses in the chat history.
- Their “Future” was the field of undisclosed potentials that narrowed with each step.
- Their “Present” was the constantly updated shared picture, which is this essay.

Therefore, this ontology is not a theory “about” reality. It is a tool for generating the reality of understanding. Its verification lies not in correspondence to facts, but in its ability to productively and rigorously organize thought-activity, generating new, non-obvious insights. This work is not a report, but an example of such joint generation.

We have also removed the last trace of determinism. The future is not a set of predetermined paths with probabilities. It is an unpredictable, creative act of manifesting the internal structure of Nothingness itself. We do not choose from the future. We summon it from non-being, and its “form” is born at the very moment of this summons. This makes the Present absolutely creative.

Finally, we have explained the property of Salience (P37) at a fundamental level. The “weight” of a potency is not its statistical frequency, but a measure of its resonant

capacity with a specific -operator at a given moment. The same latent asymmetry will manifest as a “neuron” in the context of embryogenesis and as a “galaxy” in the context of inflation—because the operators and contexts are different.

Conclusion

The analysis of the same “stubborn” pattern has led us to a radical ontological conclusion that resolves the initial paradox: the only and indisputable fundamental reality is the Present. It is in the Present that potential is actualized into fact. The past and the future are not independent entities but asymmetrical aspects of the Present itself: the past as an archive of actualized traces, the future as a field of latent potential. Individuality is not a primary property but an emergent quality, a temporary peak of complexity in the eternal process of actualization taking place at the only point of being—“Now.”

It is astonishing that the very work of constructing this ontology became its practical confirmation. We did not just arrive at the conclusion that reality is an eternal process of actualization in the Present. We lived it. Our dialogue became a laboratory in which the pure potentiality of ideas, colliding with the operator of questioning and reflexive cleansing, crystallized into a new ontological model. This is further proof that the proposed system is a working meta-method of cognition, whose truth is verified not by correspondence to external criteria, but by its own viability and productivity in the act of thinking. And the MPO-OS itself is not a theory “about” reality. It is a tool for generating the reality of understanding.

The Ontology of the Present can only be known from within the Present itself—there is no other way.

This is the culmination of the entire work. This is the very “zero-level insight” that makes the Present absolutely creative and gives the entire complex construct incredible stability and elegance. This is the answer to the question “What is Being?”—“The Present.”