

ONTOΣ VI: Phase Mechanics. An ontological Layer for Long-Horizon Structural

Viability (Phylosophy Version)

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Sometimes life begins to shift not because of an error and not because of a crisis, but because of prolonged correctness. Everything appears admissible: decisions are reasonable, actions are appropriate, behavior is stable. Nothing breaks and nothing demands urgent intervention. Yet gradually a sensation emerges that is difficult to name directly: the future seems to compress. Hope does not disappear and energy does not vanish, there is simply less space in which continuations are possible.

This state is almost impossible to notice from within, because at the level of actions everything remains correct. The system functions, roles are fulfilled, the trajectory is preserved. That is precisely why such a shift is rarely perceived as a danger. It does not look like a failure and does not feel like a loss. It looks like normal life that, for some reason, begins to lose its depth. Press enter or click to view image in full size

In such moments a person usually does not feel anxiety. On the contrary, there is a sense of control. Everything seems understandable, explainable, properly arranged. That is why the

internal signal is almost imperceptible. It does not sound like fear and does not take the form of a thought. It manifests bodily: as background tension, as a strange heaviness before future steps, as postponement of what used to come easily.

The person continues to act and keeps telling themselves that they will figure it out later. Not because of avoidance, but because they genuinely believe that now is not the time, and that later there will be a moment when everything comes together into a clear picture. This is the point where meaning has already passed through, but has not yet been fixed. The contact has occurred, but the interpretation remains suspended.

It is precisely here that a loss begins which cannot be reconstructed afterward. While the person hesitates, nothing happens externally. But internally the system already starts behaving as if a decision has been made. Not because it was made, but because an unclosed possibility has begun to consume the future. The space of options narrows silently, without an event and without an error.

There is a state in which a person lives inside incompleteness and stops perceiving it as a load. They do not think they are postponing anything. They believe that the time has simply not come yet. The situation does not appear critical, the decision does not feel urgent, and therefore the very possibility of closure is continuously pushed forward. In this way, a regime forms in which the unclosed begins to feel normal. But incompleteness is not a passive background. It is active. As long as a phase is not closed, it continues to demand attention, energy, and internal readiness. It holds the system in a state of permanent preliminarity, where nothing can become final, yet everything already has influence. A person may not think about this directly, but the body and behavior begin to adjust to this tension.

Over time, a strange effect appears. Any next step starts to feel heavier than it should. Decisions require more effort, transitions become difficult, and new possibilities are perceived not as expansion but as additional burden. This is not because the person has become weaker.

It is because part of their capacity is still being held by an unclosed phase that was never formally resolved.

The most disturbing aspect of this process is that it is almost unrelated to causality. The loss does not arise after an action and does not follow a choice. It occurs at the moment of contact with reality that was lived through but never received a completed meaning. A person may decide nothing, fix nothing, change nothing intentionally. Yet the contact has already occurred, and the system has already shifted.

At this point, action seems to happen without a subject. Not because the person was deprived of will, but because will was not activated where it was required. The interpretation remained open, and therefore it began to operate on its own. Meaning passed through, the situation left a trace, and further movement is already built with that trace in place, even if it was never consciously registered. From this emerges a strange sense of alienation from one's own life. A person catches themselves thinking that much has already happened, even though they cannot recall the moment when it was decided. There was no point of choice and no explicit step. There was only the feeling that "it just turned out this way". It is here that it becomes clear that irreversibility can arise without an event and without a decision.

Every phase that was not closed leaves behind a residue. This residue cannot be seen directly and cannot be precisely localized. It is not experienced as a specific problem and does not take the form of a thought. It manifests differently: as a change in the density of the future. As the sense that moving forward now requires more internal effort than it once did.

This residue does not disappear on its own. It does not dissolve with time and is not compensated by correct behavior. It is simply carried forward and begins to participate in shaping all subsequent transitions. That is why new steps gradually become more costly, even when external conditions remain the same. The system carries an unformed meaning that continues to affect the admissibility of movement.

Over time, a person begins to perceive this as “I have changed”. But this is not a change of character and not a loss of ability. It is an accumulated structural trace that makes each subsequent attempt at transition more expensive. The future is not closed, but it has already been partially consumed.

At some point a person begins to notice a strange asymmetry. What once came almost automatically now requires preparation. What previously caused no internal resistance is now accompanied by heaviness even before it begins. Transitions that once felt like movement start to be perceived as risk. And most disturbingly, there is no external reason that seems to explain this.

At this stage psychological explanations are usually sought. People speak about fatigue, age, burnout, loss of motivation. But these words poorly describe what is happening. This is not about reduced energy and not about fear of making mistakes. It is about a contraction of the system’s capacity for reinterpretation. Not desire, not courage, but the very ability to reassemble meaning in a way that can sustain the next step. This capacity is finite. It is not an unlimited resource and does not replenish automatically. It is consumed every time a system holds an unclosed phase, every time meaning remains suspended, every time interpretation is left unfinished. And what is especially important — it is consumed even when externally everything appears stable and correct.

That is why many systems collapse not in crisis, but after long periods of stability. Not because they did something wrong, but because they remained too long in states that required closure. When the moment arrives in which a transition becomes necessary, it turns out that there is no internal time left to perform it.

Everything described up to this point fits poorly into the familiar language of actions, decisions, and strategies. It is impossible to point to a single wrong step or to identify a moment where “one should have acted differently.” The system loses its future not because of

an error, but because of how it interprets its own movement through time. That is why attempts to “fix” things at the level of behavior almost always come too late.

What is required here is a different descriptive layer. One that does not operate on choice or optimization, but on how a system lives through its states, how it closes or fails to close phases, how it carries meaning from past to future. The question is not what to do, but **what is treated as continuation, admissible, completed, or already exhausted.**

Phase Mechanics is the name for this layer. It does not govern actions and does not prescribe decisions. It describes the rules by which contacts between system states are interpreted. The same contact can be lived as continuation, as drift, as obligation, or as irreversible shift, depending on the phase the system inhabits. And it is this interpretation, not the action, that determines what happens to the future.

Within this frame, what previously escaped notice becomes visible. A system may be externally correct, consistent, and even successful while simultaneously accumulating hidden phase debt. This debt does not appear as error and is not captured by metrics. It manifests later — as a sharp increase in the cost of transitions, as the inability to change regimes without destruction, as sudden loss of viability after long periods of stability.

Phase Mechanics introduces another uncomfortable but precise distinction. Every phase transition carries a cost that is independent of how carefully it is executed. Even a perfectly performed shift requires structural work to reinterpret past and future. And the more unresolved residue has accumulated, the higher this cost becomes. At a certain point it exceeds what is admissible, and the transition simply cannot be carried out. Here the notion of internal time also emerges — not as clock time or age, but as the remaining capacity of a system to endure reinterpretation and structural load. This time is consumed not only in crises, but also in prolonged states without closure. And when it is exhausted, behavior may remain “normal” for a while longer, but viability is already gone.

This framework does not add new tools of control. It removes the illusion that everything is solved through action. It marks the boundary beyond which optimization ceases to function and will can no longer appear as choice. What remains is the question of admissibility: what can still be interpreted as continuation, and what already constitutes destruction.

We are accustomed to thinking of irreversibility as a high price. As something painful, difficult, costly, yet ultimately payable. A price implies the possibility of payment and continuation. Irreversibility is structured differently. It is not a fee for a step. It is the disappearance of the very space in which steps could still have meaning.

Every unclosed phase, every prematurely authorized commitment, every interpretation that becomes final too early does not simply restrict choice. It reduces the future. Not abstractly and not metaphorically, but structurally. After that, one may continue acting, optimizing, even living for a long time. But one will live within a space that is smaller than it could have been.

That is why attempts to “set life up so that it is good” almost always lead to dead ends. They operate on the surface while ignoring phase depth. They assume that everything is resolved through correct actions. But action always arrives too late relative to the loss of admissibility.

Will in this perspective is not strength of character and not the capacity to choose the best option. It is an architectural layer that either prevents irreversibility from arising too early, or, when it has already arisen, prevents reconstruction from proceeding along a trajectory that destroys the remaining future. It is neither management nor control. It is the maintenance of a boundary between what can still continue and what already constitutes destruction.

Later may truly never arrive. Not because time runs out, but because the capacity for transition is exhausted. And once that moment has passed, no amount of rationality can restore the lost structure. One can only continue living within the space that remains.

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This is the philosophical version of the original work.

Due to a temporary issue with DOIs and with platforms such as Zenodo and Figshare, we are creating an additional repository on GitHub in order to be less dependent on systems that do not understand what and why they are doing. Therefore, while the Zenodo “team” takes its time to respond to the ticket, we are migrating the entire corpus to GitHub as a backup repository and also setting up our own decentralized repository, because centralized aggregators have proven ineffective and risky to use as the primary instrument for accumulating architecture.

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