# Ambiguity as Structural Law
## Living in Pre-Contact Under Finite Horizons

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December 2025

### Abstract

Ambiguity is often treated in phenomenological and therapeutic traditions as confusion to be resolved or tension to be overcome through contact. This paper proposes a different reading: ambiguity as a lawful structural condition of finite-horizon existence.

Building on the Synkyrian framework of viability and pre-contact admissibility (Kalomoirakis, 2025b,a), we argue that ambiguity names a regime of non-closure that preserves future form rather than obstructing it. Ambiguity, on this view, is neither deficit nor indecision, but a condition under which form remains suspended because premature closure would accelerate collapse.

## 1 Introduction

What we will call *non-closure* is often framed, in phenomenological and clinical discourse, as a transitional difficulty to be resolved through contact, dialogue, or interpretive completion. In many therapeutic cultures, prolonged indeterminacy is implicitly read as confusion, blockage, or insufficient integration. In Gestalt-oriented writing, a closely related clinical stance is explicitly discussed as the capacity to *remain with uncertainty* rather than force premature determination (Mann, 2010; Staemmler, 1997).

Within the Synkyrian framework, this assumption is challenged at a more fundamental level. Instead, the Synkyrian framework describes the field (formalised as a system for viability analysis) as inhabiting sets of simultaneously admissible states under finite temporal and capacity constraints (Kalomoirakis, 2025b). Before any form survives, multiple trajectories coexist as viable possibilities.

Ontologically, this implies structural multiplicity rather than indeterminacy. Experiential ambiguity is the lived registration of this multiplicity when closure is not yet admissible.

Recent Synkyrian work has shown that contact and interpretation are not always admissible operations. Under finite horizons, premature closure may function not as resolution but as destabilisation, accelerating collapse rather than supporting form (Kalomoirakis, 2025a). The question is therefore not only how ambiguity is experienced, but whether closure itself is structurally permissible at a given moment.

The present paper extends this line of thought by proposing that experiential ambiguity can be read as a lived correlate of this underlying structural multiplicity. Ambiguity, on this view, is not a

temporary lack to be overcome, but a lawful regime of non-closure under finite horizon constraints. It names the simultaneous presence of multiple admissible forms when premature determination would foreclose future viability. To live in ambiguity is thus not to remain confused, but to inhabit a structural condition in which form is held in suspension so that it may later survive.

## 2 Finite Horizons and the Logic of Non-Closure

The introduction of a finite horizon imposes a decisive asymmetry on processes of form, meaning, and decision. Under finite temporal and capacity constraints, not all transitions are admissible at all times (Kalomoirakis, 2025b). Certain moves may be meaningful in principle, yet destabilising if enacted prematurely. Throughout, *field* names the organism–environment configuration, while *system* is used only as a formal placeholder in the finite-horizon viability vocabulary.

Within this setting, closure is not a neutral operation. It carries load, cost, and risk. The Synkyrian notion of pre-contact admissibility formalises this by showing that transitions toward form, contact, or interpretation can accelerate collapse when the field lacks sufficient capacity to bear them (Kalomoirakis, 2025a).

Finite-horizon constraints therefore introduce an ordering that is structural rather than normative. Viability is not one consideration among others; it is the condition under which any consideration can arise. Admissibility follows as a second-order constraint, determining whether a given transition can occur without eroding future viability. Meaning, interpretation, and decision are downstream of these conditions. When viability or admissibility is compromised, the suspension of meaning is not a failure but a structural necessity.

Ambiguity emerges in this context not as epistemic uncertainty or conceptual indecision, but as a lawful response to constraint. It marks a regime of non-closure in which form is deliberately suspended in order to preserve the conditions under which form can later emerge. Under finite horizons, ambiguity functions as a holding configuration: it prevents premature determination from exhausting the field's remaining capacity.

Reframing ambiguity as non-closure under constraint alters its clinical and conceptual status. What is preserved is not uncertainty but future admissibility.

## 3 Ambiguity as Structural Law

Within phenomenological and clinical traditions, states of indeterminacy are typically framed as transitional: moments of suspension to be resolved through dialogue, insight, or completed contact. In Gestalt-oriented writing, the nearest canonical vocabulary is more often *uncertainty* and the clinical task of remaining with not-knowing, rather than a technical doctrine of "ambiguity" (Mann, 2010; Staemmler, 1997). Accordingly, prolonged indeterminacy is easily interpreted as blockage, deficit, or incomplete integration.

The Synkyrian framework challenges this interpretation at a structural level. Under finite-horizon constraints, ambiguity need not signal a lack to be overcome. It can instead constitute a lawful regime of the field: a mode of non-closure required to preserve viability and admissibility

when premature determination would accelerate collapse.

## 3.1   Non-closure under constraint

Finite horizons imply that not all potential forms can be realised simultaneously or immediately. Under bounded capacity, every act of closure carries cost. Selecting one form forecloses others and commits the field to a trajectory that may not be reversible (Kalomoirakis, 2025b).

Ambiguity arises in this context as a structural response to constraint. Rather than reflecting indecision or epistemic uncertainty, it marks a field configuration in which multiple potential forms remain co-present, precisely because their forced resolution would exceed current admissibility. Non-closure, here, is not the absence of order but a way of holding order in suspension.

This reframes ambiguity as a lawful multiplicity: several configurations are simultaneously sustained within the field, not because they are conceptually confused, but because the field cannot yet afford their separation into determinate form.

## 3.2   Ambiguity is not confusion

It is crucial to distinguish structural ambiguity from confusion. Confusion reflects loss of coherence, breakdown of orientation, or collapse of discriminability. Structural ambiguity, by contrast, presupposes coherence. What is suspended is not differentiation itself, but commitment to a single irreversible trajectory.

In Synkyrian terms, ambiguity corresponds to a regime in which the field preserves admissibility by refusing premature form. The field remains organized, but non-closed. Multiple possibilities coexist without being forced into resolution, allowing future morphogenesis to occur when capacity permits.

This distinction explains why ambiguity can feel tense, effortful, or unsettling without being pathological. The tension does not arise from disorder, but from the energetic and temporal cost of holding open what cannot yet be decided.

## 3.3   Ambiguity and pre-contact holding

The link between ambiguity and pre-contact holding is structural rather than experiential. Pre-contact holding suspends engagement in order to protect viability. Structural ambiguity suspends form in order to protect admissibility. In both cases, suspension is not avoidance but a viability-preserving operation.

From this perspective, ambiguity belongs to the same family of phenomena as refusal and restraint. All are modes through which the field resists overload by delaying irreversible commitments. What is preserved is not comfort or certainty, but the possibility of future contact, meaning, and form.

## 3.4   Failure Modes of Premature Closure under Finite Horizons

The mathematical structure underlying finite-horizon viability makes the cost of premature closure explicit. When determination is forced while admissibility is compromised, the probability of

crossing a collapse set within the horizon increases, thereby reducing the field's viability gauge (Kalomoirakis, 2025b,a).

*Formal aside.* Formally, let $q_T(x)$ denote the probability that the field, starting from configuration $x$, enters a collapse regime before horizon $T$. Forced closure under insufficient admissibility induces an effective increase in hazard, yielding

$$q_T(x_{\text{closed}}) > q_T(x_{\text{open}}),$$

and consequently

$$H_{\text{rig}}(x_{\text{closed}}; T) < H_{\text{rig}}(x_{\text{open}}; T),$$

where

$$H_{\text{rig}}(x; T) = -\frac{1}{T} \log(q_T(x)).$$

The loss here is not merely experiential openness, but degrees of freedom: the field becomes locked into a trajectory whose commitments are costly or irreversible.

Within the Synkyrian P→L→F perspective, premature closure converts unresolved pressure into unsustainable load rather than allowing it to reorganize into viable form (Kalomoirakis, 2025d). Instead of morphogenesis, the result is forced crystallization: a brittle form that exhausts remaining capacity and forecloses future morphogenetic options.

In such regimes, suspension or inaction is not passivity. It is a protective structural operation that preserves admissibility and keeps future form possible (Kalomoirakis, 2025c). The mathematical consequence is clear: under finite horizons, doing nothing can be strictly less destructive than forcing determination.

## 3.5  Implications for phenomenology and clinical thought

This reframing marks a limit of phenomenological interpretation. Phenomenology excels at describing how meaning appears once form has emerged. Structural ambiguity, however, operates prior to appearance. It concerns the conditions under which appearance can safely occur at all.

Recognising ambiguity as structural law therefore requires a shift in discernment. The task is no longer to resolve ambiguity as quickly as possible, but to ask whether resolution is currently admissible. Where finite-horizon constraints dominate, maintaining ambiguity may be the only way the field can remain open to future transformation without sacrificing viability.

In this sense, ambiguity is neither a problem to be solved nor a virtue to be cultivated. It is a lawful regime of persistence under constraint, indispensable wherever form must wait in order to survive.

# 4  Ambiguity, Gestalt, and Phenomenology

Gestalt theory has long worked with *indeterminacy* within contact and dialogue—including figure–ground fluctuation and the clinical task of remaining with uncertainty without forcing interpretation. In contemporary Gestalt-oriented writing this stance is named explicitly as "cultivating

uncertainty" (Mann, 2010; Staemmler, 1997). However, in most clinical framings such indeterminacy is still treated as transitional: a phase expected to move toward differentiation, figure formation, and completion.

The Synkyrian reading introduces a boundary condition to this view. Under finite-horizon constraints, ambiguity does not necessarily mark an incomplete contact process. When admissibility is compromised, sustained ambiguity may stabilise rather than obstruct the field. In such regimes, non-closure is not a failure of contact, but a requirement for preserving the conditions under which contact can later remain possible (Kalomoirakis, 2025a).

This distinction does not contradict phenomenological or Gestalt descriptions of indeterminacy and uncertainty as lived experience. It specifies the conditions under which those descriptions remain valid. Where admissibility is preserved, ambiguity may function as a transitional moment within contact. Where it is not, ambiguity functions as a structural holding regime, prior to and protective of future contact.

# 5   Discussion

The present paper has argued for a shift in how non-closure is understood within phenomenological and clinical discourse. Rather than treating ambiguity as a transitional phase to be resolved through contact or interpretation, we have proposed that ambiguity can function as a lawful structural regime under finite-horizon constraints.

## 5.1   Where phenomenology reaches its limit

Phenomenological approaches excel at describing how ambiguity appears in experience: as hesitation, openness, tension, or indeterminacy prior to form. Such descriptions are indispensable for understanding the lived texture of ambiguity. However, phenomenology does not by itself specify when ambiguity must be maintained rather than resolved.

This limitation becomes decisive under finite-horizon conditions. When capacity is bounded and transitions are costly, the question is no longer only how ambiguity is experienced, but whether closure is admissible at all. The Synkyrian framework addresses this prior question by introducing viability and admissibility as structural constraints. In doing so, it marks a boundary of phenomenological interpretation: interpretation cannot legitimately proceed when it would accelerate collapse.

## 5.2   Ambiguity as preservation rather than deficit

Reframing ambiguity as non-closure under constraint alters its clinical and conceptual status. Ambiguity no longer signifies insufficient integration, weak contact, or unresolved meaning. Instead, ambiguity can signal a preservation strategy enacted at the level of the field.

This reframing explains a recurring but poorly theorized phenomenon: moments in which attempts at clarification, decision, or dialogue feel intrusive rather than helpful. In such cases, ambiguity functions as a protective configuration that maintains admissibility for future form. What

appears as stagnation from within a contact-centered logic may, from a viability-first perspective, be the only way the field remains open to transformation.

## 5.3 Implications for clinical discernment

Clinically, this framework does not prescribe techniques or interventions. It alters the order of questions. Rather than asking what ambiguity means or how it should be resolved, the clinician is invited to ask whether resolution is currently affordable.

This shift legitimizes restraint as a form of competence rather than passivity. Silence, hesitation, and non-decision can be read not as failures of engagement, but as indications that the field is operating near admissibility thresholds. In such regimes, forcing contact or closure risks converting ambiguity into collapse.

## 5.4 Human experience under finite horizons

Beyond clinical contexts, the analysis suggests a broader claim about human experience. Under finite horizons, openness cannot be indefinitely maintained through expansion or integration alone. Sometimes it must be preserved through suspension.

Ambiguity, on this reading, is not an exception to human sense-making but one of its structural conditions. The capacity to live with non-closure without confusion or collapse emerges as a fundamental mode of human viability. This does not elevate ambiguity to an ideal, but situates it as a lawful response to constraint wherever form must wait in order to survive.

## 5.5 Outlook

The implications of treating ambiguity as structural rather than transitional extend beyond the scope of the present paper. They point toward further work on lived pre-contact states, contemplative practices of suspension, and the ethics of non-intervention under constraint. Such directions, however, require separate development. The contribution here has been to establish the structural grounds on which such inquiries can proceed without conflating ambiguity with deficit.

# 6 Limits and Scope

The scope of this paper is deliberately restricted. It does not propose clinical prescriptions, therapeutic techniques, diagnostic categories, or outcome measures. Nor does it advance empirical claims or suggest operational metrics for ambiguity, embodiment, or viability.

The contribution is structural and phenomenological in a strict sense. It articulates the conditions under which ambiguity must be maintained in order for contact, form, and meaning to remain possible under finite-horizon constraints. Questions of intervention, practice, or method lie outside the present scope and require separate development.

By holding this boundary, the paper aims to clarify rather than expand the field of application. It provides a conceptual grammar for discernment, not a guide for action.

# 7 Conclusion

This paper has argued that ambiguity should not be understood solely as a transitional state to be resolved through contact or interpretation. Under finite-horizon constraints, ambiguity can function as a lawful structural regime: a mode of non-closure required to preserve viability and admissibility when premature determination would accelerate collapse.

Reframing ambiguity in this way shifts its status within phenomenological and clinical thought. What appears as delay, hesitation, or lack of resolution may instead mark the field's effort to remain open to future form. Inhabiting ambiguity, rather than resolving it, becomes a condition of persistence rather than a failure of meaning.

Seen in this light, ambiguity is not an exception to human experience but one of its structural conditions. Wherever horizons are finite and capacities bounded, the ability to remain within non-closure without confusion or collapse is integral to human viability.

# References

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