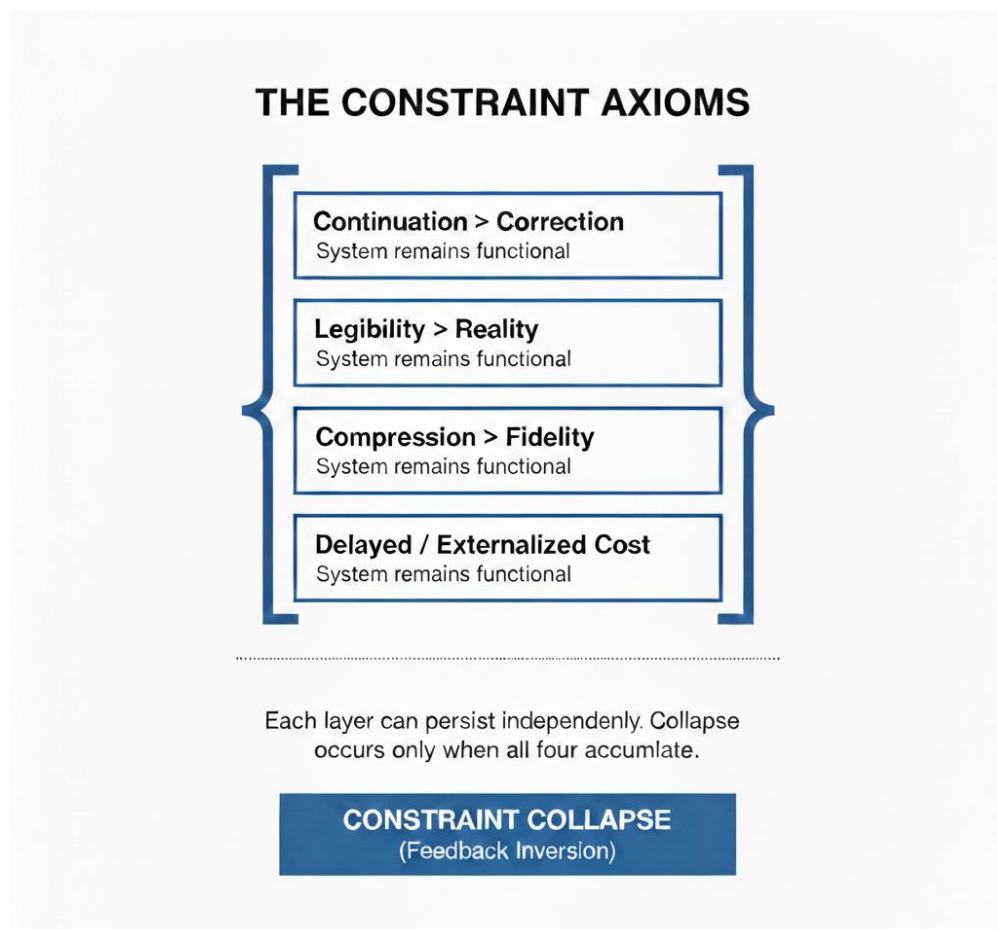# The Constraint Axioms

Why systems continue functioning after meaning breaks

Many modern systems do not fail because they stop working. They fail because they continue operating after the constraints that once anchored judgment, feedback, and meaning have been removed. Performance remains legible. Metrics remain stable. Coordination continues.

Each of the following conditions can persist independently without triggering visible collapse: continuation outpacing correction, legibility outrunning reality, compression without fidelity, and delayed or externalized cost. Individually, these appear manageable. Collectively, they alter the system's feedback structure.

When all four accumulate, the system enters constraint collapse, producing feedback inversion. Feedback no longer corrects behavior; it reinforces it. Errors stop generating learning. The system becomes technically correct, experientially hollow—functional in output, unstable in meaning.

THE CONSTRAINT AXIOMS

Continuation > Correction
System remains functional

Legibility > Reality
System remains functional

Compression > Fidelity
System remains functional

Delayed / Externalized Cost
System remains functional

Each layer can persist independenly. Collapse occurs only when all four accumlate.

CONSTRAINT COLLAPSE
(Feedback Inversion)

Part of a broader framework examining how modern systems degrade meaning before they visibly fail. Further material on this framework exists in long-form writing on Github.