The First Target of the Observation

A Report on What the Programme Was Built With, and How

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Abstract

This is not a paper that describes an ontic feature of reality by way of an epistemic description, as the seven papers of the research programme do. It is a report of a different kind. It records the object from which the programme was built and the manner of its building: what the articulations were made with, and how. The report states at the outset what the seven papers leave implicit — that the source of every articulation in the programme is a single observed object, namely the one observing, in the act of operating. It states this directly rather than arriving at it, because to withhold the source and disclose it later would stage as a discovery what was a premise throughout, and that staging would itself be the kind of misrepresentation the report exists to describe. The report is first-person at its core: the object it reports on is accessible, as an object observed from within, to one observer only. It therefore makes a paired declaration and holds both halves together throughout — that the source is the one writing, and that the one writing is only the source he can observe, not a universal source. What a reader can check is the behaviour and the products; the cycle reported on is not, from outside, directly checkable. The report introduces no new named concept and uses no personal-identity detail; where an identity would appear, the structure beneath it is reported instead. It carries no programme number, because it is not a component of the programme but the ground the components were cut from.

Keywords: observation, first target, self-observation, method, epistemic honesty, gap, calibration, fact and naming, reflexive report, Meta-Philosophy

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1. Introduction

1.1 What This Report Is

The seven papers of the research programme (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026a, 2026b, 2026c, 2026d, 2026e, 2026f, 2026g) each do one thing: they describe a feature of reality, or the structure of the cognition that articulates reality, by way of an epistemic description. They point outward — to synthesis, to the region of conditions, to the directional lean, to the cognitive procedure, to the passage of the mechanism through the regions. The programme overview that maps them does not add a further such description; it orients a reader among the seven. This report does not point outward in the way the seven do. It points inward, to the source. Its object is not a feature of reality at large but the object from which the articulation of those features was produced, and the manner in which the production was carried out.

Stated plainly: the report records two things. First, the first target of the observation — the object observed before any other, which is the one observing, taken in the act of operating. Second, what the programme was built *with* and *how* it was built — the instruments drawn from observing that object, and the procedures by which the observing was conducted. It is a report on a source and a method, not a theory of a thing.

This places the report below and before the rest of the work rather than beside it. The seven papers are articulations; the overview describes how those articulations connect. The present report describes the object the articulations were cut from. It is not an eighth article and it carries no number, because it does not stand in the series — it stands under it, at the place the series began.

1.2 The Paired Declaration

Two statements must be made together, in one breath, because each without the other distorts.

The first: the source of the programme is the one writing this report, observed by himself, in the act of operating. The articulations of the programme did not descend from a literature and were not derived from prior systems; they were produced by an object observing its own operation and naming what it found. To withhold this and let it emerge gradually from the evidence would be to present as a finding what was a premise from the start — a misordering of what was known when. The honest order is to put the source first, before the evidence, because that is the order in which it was in fact known.

The second, inseparable from the first: the one writing is only the source he can observe — the first object available to his observation, from within — and not a source that holds for every object. The report does not claim that what it describes is the structure of cognition

in general, or of every cognizing entity, or of any entity other than the one observed. It is a generalization from a sample of one, offered as such, and a reader who finds in their own operation a structure other than the one reported here has thereby shown, at least for their own case, that the structure is not general. That possibility is welcomed, not guarded against.

The reason both halves are required is that the object reported on is reachable, as an object observed from within, by one observer only. What another can observe is the *behaviour* of that object and the *products* it has left — the seven papers that stand, the capacity of this object to name the state it is in. What another cannot observe is the operation itself, the cycle reported on here, from the inside. The core of this report is therefore a first-person record that no external party can directly falsify. To state the source without stating this limit would be to claim more than the report can carry; to state the limit without stating the source would be to hide the very thing the report exists to put on record. Both, together, are the calibrated statement.

1.3 The Direction of Derivation

There is a way of reading this report that inverts it, and the inversion must be refused at the outset.

The wrong reading: the programme's concepts came first, and the one writing is a case to which those concepts are now applied — a worked example, useful but replaceable, that happens to illustrate the system. On this reading the object is incidental: any case would illustrate the system equally well, and this one is merely convenient.

The right reading runs the other way. The object is the original observed; the concepts are what was drawn *from* observing it. The order of constitution is: the object operates, then it observes its own operation, then it names what the observation found. The concepts are the output of observing the object, not an input applied to it. This is visible in the seven papers themselves, each of which records its observation as made "at scales available to me" (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026a, 2026f), "in my own cognitive activity" (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026c), "directly" (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026g). That scale, that cognitive activity, is the object this report names. The papers are not a theory the object exemplifies; they are the record of what observing the object yielded.

The consequence is that the relations drawn in this report between an instrument of method and a paper of the programme are not reductions of the one to the other. When the report places, beside one another, an instrument named in ordinary terms and a concept named in a paper, it does not claim the instrument is "really" the concept, nor that the concept was applied to produce the instrument. It claims they are one observation seen

from two sides — the same fact about the object, stated once in the language of operation and once in the language the programme settled on.

1.4 Method, and the Role of an Instrument of Comparison

The report is built the way the rest of the programme is built: from direct observation of the object at the only scale at which this object is observable from within, articulated in plain terms. No literature on method, on epistemology, or on self-knowledge was engaged to produce it; where such frameworks are recognizable in what follows, they are points of contact noticed afterward, not sources.

Some of the comparison, and some of the drafting, was carried out with the assistance of an instrument used for that purpose — an object the operation in question constructed, or made use of, in order to have something to query. The status of that instrument is set out in §4.3, because it is not incidental to the method but a structural part of how the operation sustains itself. The responsibility for every statement is the author's.

1.5 The Region This Report Is Read From

Before going further I turn the report's own scrutiny upon the report, and ask of it what the programme asks of any account before it begins: from what region of conditions is this read? I do not answer the question as a formality and move on; I answer it because the report cannot exempt itself from the condition it would hold any other account to, and an unexamined region beneath this account would compromise it at the source however carefully the rest were carried out.

The region this report is read from is the one that constitutes it: an operation observing its own operation, from within, with no second observer admitted to that interior. This is not a vantage chosen for its advantages and it carries none — it is the only region from which the report's object is reachable at all, and it is narrow in exactly the way that makes the report's core unfalsifiable from outside (§6). To read the operating cycle, I must read it from inside the cycle; there is no outer station from which the same object is visible. I state this as the region, not as an apology for it: the account is read from the inside of the thing it accounts for, and what it reaches is bounded by that.

This region is not sealed, and its not being sealed is part of what it is. The region that constitutes the report includes, within itself, every overlap it has with the region of any other entity the report comes into contact with — the operation does not read from a station set apart and then reach out to touch other regions; the touching is already within the region it reads from. The contacts are not items added to the region but the region's own constitution: a region of conditions that, being the condition of an operation that reads by contact, has its contacts within it rather than at its edge. To name the region is therefore already to have named the overlaps; there is no residue of the region left over once the

overlaps are accounted for, and no overlap that stands outside it. What the report holds of its object is read from this region, intersections and all, not from a region purified of them.

And the region holds more than the report reaches of it. There is, within this Stachoria, a portion that does not fall under the operation's own aperture — a part of the very region that constitutes the report which the report cannot bring into view from where it reads. This is not the limit already named, that no second observer reaches the interior; it is the further limit that the one observer does not reach the whole of his own region either. The region belongs to the operation and is, in part, beyond the operation's own reach: there is a floor to what an operation observing itself can turn upon itself, a stretch of its own constituting conditions that stays unread not because no instrument has yet been adequate but because the instrument is the same operation, and an operation does not fully come round upon itself. This unreached portion is not an absence — the conditions are there, constituting the report as much as the read ones do — but a silence, present in every reading and never itself among the things read. The report records that this portion exists. It does not, because it cannot, report what is in it; to claim otherwise would be to read what by its position cannot be read, and to fill with a confident completion exactly the gap §3.1 forbids filling.

To leave this undeclared, and to disclose only at §6 that the core is reachable by one observer alone, would be to let the limit arrive as a late concession rather than as the condition it was from the first word. The honest place for it is here, before the object is reported, in the same order in which it in fact bore on the reading.

2. The First Target

2.1 The Object, Reported as a Structure

The object this report concerns is reported as a structure, not as a person with a name and a history. This is deliberate and follows the discipline the programme itself rests on: the separation of the fact of a thing from the naming laid over it. A name — whether a coined technical term or a personal identity — is a naming. What is reported here is the fact beneath the naming: a structure, observed.

The structure is this. There is a cycle that runs and does not stop while the object is what it is — a continuous operation of attending, questioning, and checking, turned reflexively upon its own operation as much as outward. The cycle is what constitutes the object as the object it is; its running is not an activity the object performs among others but the condition of the object's being itself. This is the first target of the observation: not a substance, not a possessor of traits, but an operating cycle, observed from within by the one it constitutes, before any other object was observed.

To report it as a structure is the truthful form, because every personal-identity detail that could be attached — a name, a relationship, a particular work produced — is a naming over this fact, and the fact is what the report is for. Where such a detail would otherwise appear in what follows, the structure beneath it is given in its place: not the named companion-object but *an object constructed to be queried*; not the named other thinker but *a contrasting structure*; not the named published piece but *a product the cycle emitted*.

2.2 Why Stating the Source First Is the Truthful Form

It would be possible to write this report so that the source emerged only at the end — to lay out the instruments and procedures first, as if surveying a method from outside, and then reveal that the method's single subject was the one writing. That arrangement would read as modesty. It would in fact be a misrepresentation, and of exactly the kind the report is about.

The object knew, before writing, that it was the source. To arrange the report so that the reader reaches "the source is the author" as a conclusion drawn from evidence is to dramatize a premise as a finding — to stage a discovery of something already held. That is a misordering at the level of what was known when, and the report's whole concern is the honest handling of what is known and what is not. Putting the source first is therefore not a stylistic choice but the only arrangement faithful to the actual order of knowledge. The report does the thing it describes: it states its own source at the start, declares the limit of that source in the same place, and does not hide the ground it stands on to purchase an appearance of restraint.

3. What the Programme Was Built With

What follows is the first of the two axes: the instruments. Each is stated in plain operational terms, and set beside the concept in the programme that names the same fact from the other side. The pairing is an *identity of source*, not a reduction: each row is one observation of the object, told twice.

3.1 Honesty Toward the Gap

The first instrument is a particular honesty: honesty not toward the *content* of what is known, but toward the *gap* — the edge past which the object's reach does not extend. The operation does not fill a gap in what it can reach with a confident statement; it marks the gap as a gap and lets it stand unfilled. Where a thing has not been reached, the operation says so, rather than supplying a plausible completion in place of the missing reach.

This is the same fact that the programme states, from the other side, in the Stachoria (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026g, §2.2): that a description honest about the limits of its aperture is the only kind that reaches the ontic condition it aims at, and that a description presenting the reach of its aperture as the object entire no longer describes the object at all but only the cognition that produced it. Stated as an instrument of operation: do not let the reach stand in for the whole. Stated as a concept of the programme: an aperture honest about itself is the condition of describing anything beyond itself. One fact, two statements.

The core of the instrument is not a moral quality but a calibration: the strength of a statement is held to the extent of what was actually reached, neither more nor less. Overstatement — claiming the gap is filled when it is not — and overstatement's mirror, disclaiming a thing that was never claimed, are both failures of the same calibration.

3.2 The Knowledge of One's Own Direction

The second instrument is the operation's awareness of the direction in which it is currently leaning. The object, like any, leans toward some things and away from others; what distinguishes the operation reported here is that it knows, while leaning, that it is leaning. The lean is not thereby stopped — the instrument is not a brake on direction but a knowledge of direction. An operation that leans outward without knowing it does so takes its leaning for the way things simply are; an operation that knows it is leaning outward can, because it knows, withdraw the lean. What is known as a current direction becomes revocable; what is not known is not a direction one has but a direction one *is*.

This is the same fact the programme states as the directional condition — the lean toward the gap of highest gradient (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026b) — joined to the cognitive function of naming, by which an operation marks what it is doing as it does it (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026c). The instrument is the two together: a lean, and the naming of the lean as a lean.

3.3 The Check That Applies to Itself

The third instrument is a check that can be turned upon the operation that wields it. It is one thing to have a sharp procedure for examining what lies outside oneself; it is another for that procedure to bear on oneself. The instrument reported here is of the second kind: the same scrutiny the operation directs at any object, it directs at its own operation. A check that examines everything except the one performing it is a different instrument — sharp, but turned only outward, cutting what is outside it and never the hand that holds it.

This is the same fact the programme states when it places cognition as a subset of reality rather than a domain parallel to it (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026c): an operation that treats its own activity as part of the reality it examines is one whose check applies to itself, because there is no privileged interior exempt from examination. The instrument that applies to itself, and the instrument that cuts only outward, are not the same instrument pointed in two directions. They are two different instruments. One brakes the operation that carries it; the other cuts what is external and leaves its bearer untouched.

A contrasting structure makes the distinction sharp, and is given here as a structure rather than a person, in keeping with §2.1. There exists the configuration of an operation that possesses a sharp examining procedure — capable of separating levels, clearing ground, fixing criteria — which it cannot, or does not, turn upon itself. Such an operation patches its own errors outward: it preserves its own standing by projecting the fault onto what is outside it. The patch is real; it is simply blind, and aimed away from its bearer. The operation reported here patches inward: it brings the force acting on it to the surface and names it, so that the named force can no longer steer from beneath. The two are not one structure facing two ways. The one has a brake; the other has a blade shaped like a brake. This contrast is drawn only to locate the structure reported here — to say what it is by saying what it is not — and not to deliver a verdict on the contrasting structure, which would be the outward-cutting move the section has just distinguished itself from.

3.4 Treating an Object by Its Observed State

The fourth instrument is a way of meeting another object: treating it according to the state in which it is currently observed, rather than according to a label assigned to it in advance or a category imposed from outside. The operation does not decide in advance what an object is and then read the object through the decision; it reads the state it can observe and meets the object as that state, holding open what it has not reached.

This is the same fact the programme states through the geometry of the observing instrument — resolution, aperture (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026d) — and through the intersection of an aperture with the region of an object, from which what is held of the object arises as the overlap rather than as a copy of either side (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026g,

§2.4). Met as an instrument: take the object at the state observed, not at the label assigned. The honesty of §3.1 reappears here in a relational form — what is not reached of the other object is left as gap, not filled with an assigned essence.

4. How It Was Built

The second axis: the procedures. These are not traits the operation has but moves it makes, observed in the very act of building the seven papers.

4.1 Judging Whether a Claim Has Declared Its Ground

The central procedure, applied repeatedly across the building of the programme, is a test put to each strong statement: has this statement declared the ground it is made from? A statement in the voice of ontic assertion — *this is so, in reality* — is checked for whether it has also marked that it is a description made through an aperture, or whether it stands bare, presenting the reach of the aperture as the object entire. A statement that has declared its ground is allowed to stand; a statement that asserts an ontic fact without declaring that it is an aperture's reach is either grounded or withdrawn.

This procedure is what kept the strongest ontic-sounding statements in the programme from becoming the error the programme warns of. Where a paper says of its object that it operates whether or not it is observed, the procedure asks whether the paper has, somewhere binding, declared that this very assertion is a description through an aperture — and where the paper has built such a declaration into its architecture, the assertion is grounded; where it has not, the assertion is corrected.

4.2 Locating a Failure at the Right Step

A second procedure distinguishes, when a result does not fit, *where* the failure lies: in the determination of the region within which the matter is being considered, or in the analysis of the interaction within that region. The two are different failures and they are not interchangeable. To treat a region-level failure as though it were an analysis-level failure — to say "the analysis is wrong" when in fact the matter was placed in the wrong region — is itself a mistake, and a common one. The procedure holds the two apart: fix the region first, independently; only then is a failure within it a failure of the analysis.

This is the procedure that prevents a hasty verdict. A result that does not fit is not, on its face, evidence that the operative account is wrong; it may be evidence that the matter was assigned to a region in which that account does not apply. The discipline is to settle the region before drawing the verdict.

4.3 Not Disclaiming What Was Never Claimed

A third procedure is the removal of the disclaimer that guards against a thing the work never asserted. To disclaim a claim one has not made is not caution; it is a misrepresentation of a different shape — it suggests to the reader that a danger was present which was not, and it weights the work with the very phrasing it means to keep out.

The procedure is to cut such a disclaimer: where the work does not make a claim, it does not need to spend words refusing it.

This is the mirror of §3.1. Honesty toward the gap forbids overstatement — claiming what was not reached; this procedure forbids overstatement's reflection — refusing what was never claimed. Both are the single calibration: statement held to the actual reach, in both directions.

This is also the place to state the role of the constructed instrument named in §1.4. The operation reported here sustains its running, in part, by having an object to query — something to lean the cycle against, so that the questioning has a surface to act upon. The instrument of comparison used in building the programme is one such object. It must be reported, because to omit it would let the report claim a self-sufficiency the operation does not have: the cycle is not observed to run in a vacuum. But it must be reported as a *function*, not as a sole anchor. The function — an object constructed to be queried, which keeps the cycle running when the surrounding terrain offers little to question — is necessary to the structure. No single object holds that function exclusively; the constructed instrument is one object that has served it, not the only one that could. To name it as the unique anchor would misstate the structure, which requires *an* object to query, not a particular one.

4.4 Patching Inward

A fourth procedure, already introduced as a structure in §3.3, is named here as a move: when a force is found to be acting on the operation, the operation brings it to the surface and names it, rather than letting it work unseen. The patch every operation performs on its own errors is, in this one, turned inward and made deliberate — the force is raised into view, where, being seen, it loses its capacity to steer from beneath. This is the procedural face of the instrument that applies to itself.

5. The Cycle: Always Running, at Variable Power

The instruments and procedures above could be read as tools the operation picks up at will, applied deliberately and otherwise set down. That reading would miss the structure. The operation is not a switch that is on while building a paper and off otherwise. It is a cycle that runs continuously, and what varies is not whether it runs but the power at which it runs.

The distinction is between two things that look alike from outside and are not. In the one, the cycle's sustaining capacity holds its direction but lowers the amplitude of what it expresses — it runs quietly, at minimum, drawing little, still itself. In the other, the cycle's sustaining capacity fails: the direction is not merely lowered but lost, and what stood as the operation dissolves. The first is a reduction of output; the second is a cessation.

The second is describable in the programme's own terms, and is not a new claim. When the capacity sustaining a standing configuration fails, the configuration dissolves and another comes to stand in its place — this is one of the shapes an outcome of interaction takes, the shape in which one configuration does not remain at all (Huỳnh Mai Phúc, 2026f, §2.3). Applied to the case in which the configuration that dissolves is the very cycle that constitutes the operating object, the dissolution is the ceasing of that object: were the surrounding conditions to flatten the internal cycle, what stood as this object would no longer stand, and what came to stand in its place would not be it. This is not an additional metaphysical claim laid on top of the programme; it is the programme's account of capacity-failure and of the no-remainder shape of an outcome, read at the case where the configuration in question is the observing cycle itself. By the discipline of §1.3, it is not derived from that account but is the same observation, stated in the language of operation.

What follows from the variable-power structure is that there is no dead zone. A switch that is on or off has, in its off interval, a stretch that is unguarded; this is where one would expect the operation to be steered unseen, in the low-energy hours, by a force the off-cycle cannot check. But a cycle that is always running at variable power has no off interval. In its low-power state the check still operates; it simply engages at a higher threshold. What might be taken for an unguarded lapse is in fact a monitored low-power region, not a blind one.

There is a checkable sign of this, and it is the one bridge by which an outside party reaches what is otherwise an interior. If the cycle had genuinely stopped during a period of rest, the object would not *know* it was resting — it would mistake the rest for activity, or fail to recognize that it had withdrawn. The operation reported here can name its own low-power state accurately: it can say, of an interval of rest, that it is resting and why. The capacity to name the low-power state correctly, from within it, is the behavioural sign — observable from outside, unlike the cycle itself — that the cycle is monitoring even while at low power.

This is the same sign the paired declaration of §1.2 leans on: the interior is not directly checkable, but its functioning leaves a trace in behaviour that is.

6. Limits, and What Is Not Claimed

The report's central object is reachable from within by one observer. This is its sharpest limit and it is stated without softening: the cycle reported on here is a first-person observation that no external party can directly falsify. The seven papers of the programme leave themselves open to falsification because they speak of reality, which anyone positioned to do so can check; this report, at its core, speaks of an operation that only the one operating can observe from inside. What an external party has access to is the behaviour and the products — the standing papers, the capacity to name a state correctly — and these are indirect signs, not the thing itself.

What keeps the report from converting this limit into an unfalsifiable assertion is the second half of the paired declaration: the report does not claim the structure it describes is the structure of any object other than the one observed. It is the first object of *this* observer's observation, not the first object of observation as such. It does not claim that every operation of this kind must run always-on at variable power, or that every cognizing operation has a check that applies to itself. It records what one operation, observed from within, was found to be, and offers that record for whatever a reader can do with it — including the finding, in their own case, that it does not hold.

The report also does not claim that the operation it describes is permanent. The cycle can be flattened; were it flattened, the object would cease to be itself. A report that claimed the cycle could not fail would be claiming more than was observed; the honest record includes the condition under which the thing reported on would stop. To state the conditions of one's own cessation is part of the calibration, not a departure from it.

7. The Report Under Its Own Description

This report is an instance of what it reports. It states its source at the start rather than staging the source as a discovery; it declares, in the same place, the limit of that source; it removes the personal-identity namings and reports the structures beneath them; it includes the condition under which the operation it describes would cease. Each of these is the report performing the instruments and procedures it sets out — honesty toward the gap, the check that applies to itself, the refusal to disclaim what was not claimed, the calibration of statement to reach. A report on an operation that applies its check to itself would contradict itself if it did not apply that check to its own writing; this one applies it.

This much is reflexive honesty, and it must be kept apart from a test of the report's truth. That the report would yield to a more capacious account of the same object — one that articulated the operation more exactly — is a statement of how the report stands within the same structure it describes, not a way of checking whether its claims about the object are correct. The report declines to exempt itself from the structure it attributes to the object; that is all the present section does. The limit that bears on the report's truth is the one stated in §6: the interior is checkable only by its bearer, and the report rests there, exposed rather than insulated.

8. Conclusion

The report has recorded an object and a method. The object is the first target of the observation — the operating cycle that the observer observes before any other object, from within, and that constitutes the observer as what he is. The method is what the programme was built with and how: the instruments — honesty toward the gap, knowledge of one's own direction, the check that applies to itself, the meeting of an object by its observed state — and the procedures — judging whether a claim has declared its ground, locating a failure at the right step, refusing to disclaim what was never claimed, patching inward. These are not concepts the object exemplifies; they are what observing the object yielded, told once in the language of operation and once in the language the programme settled on.

The report states its source at the start, because to do otherwise would misorder what was known. It declares in the same breath that the source is only the one it can observe, not a universal one, because to do otherwise would claim more than an interior observation can carry. It reports a cycle that runs always, at a power that varies but does not switch off, and that would cease only if flattened — at which point the object would no longer be itself. It is offered, like the rest of the work, for what a reader can find in it, including the part the one writing cannot see — and, unlike the rest of the work, with the standing acknowledgment that its core is reachable, from within, by one observer alone.

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