

The Constructed Observer

World-Formation Beyond Representation

Why Perception Is Not Representation, but a Structural Achievement

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Abstract

This paper develops an ontological theory of the observer that does not understand the observer as a given subject, measurement point, or cognitive instance, but as a structurally produced form of world-formation. The point of departure is the observation that, both in physics and in the philosophy of mind, the observer is mostly implicitly presupposed, even though observer-dependence generates central problems such as measurement, perspective conflicts, and reality splits.

With the concept of the constructed observer and the reality eye, it is shown that perception is not the representation of a given world, but an operative stabilization of reality itself. The observer is thus not a point, but an emergent structure that arises from specific feedback conditions.

This perspective allows for a new reading of observer-dependence in quantum mechanics (including Wigner's Friend), a precise delimitation from representationalist and purely enactive approaches, as well as an ontological grounding of political and medial reality: power does not act only on contents, but on the conditions under which observer structures can emerge at all.

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1. Introduction – The Problem of the Implicit Observer

The observer is among the most frequently used yet least explained concepts of modern science. In physics, it functions as a measuring instance; in cognitive science, as a subject or system; in philosophy, as an epistemic standpoint. In all of these cases, the observer is presupposed rather than derived.

This implicit presupposition becomes problematic where observer-dependence itself becomes the object of inquiry: in quantum mechanics, in perspective conflicts, and in political and medial realities. When different observers arrive at incompatible descriptions of reality, it is no longer sufficient to refer to different information or measuring devices.

This paper therefore poses a prior question:

Under which ontological conditions does an observer arise at all?

2. The Observer Is Not a Point

In many theories, the observer appears as a localizable point: a subject, a brain, a measuring device, an information node. This point-like character, however, is itself already a theoretical decision, not an ontological necessity.

The approach proposed here proceeds from a different assumption:

An observer is not an elementary unit, but an emergent structure.

It arises where reality is not only stabilized, but simultaneously enters into relation with itself. Observation is not an external access to the world, but an internal process of world-formation. The observer is thus not the origin of perspective, but its product.

3. The Reality Eye

In order to specify this structure, this paper introduces the concept of the reality eye. What is meant by this is neither an organ, nor a metaphor, nor a center of consciousness, but a structural interface in which openness and stabilization of reality interlock.

The reality eye designates the condition under which reality becomes visible to itself. It is neither purely subjective nor objective, but an operative zone in which world takes form. Perception, in this sense, is not representation, but a stabilizing performance through which reality becomes temporarily consistent.

The reality eye is not an object with identifiable properties, but a structural condition that can only be recognized indirectly through its effects: the stabilization of perspective, the coherence of world, and the possibility of coordinated reality.

4. Delimitation from Representationalism

Representationalist models assume that an already existing world is internally mapped, modeled, or represented. Perception appears here as a secondary access to a primary reality.

The approach of the constructed observer reverses this relation:

It is not the world that is perceived; rather, perception brings world into being.

This does not deny that there are physical or material conditions. It does, however, deny that these conditions already exist as “world” prior to being stabilized through observer structures.

5. Connection and Difference to Enactive Approaches

Enactive and relational approaches—such as those of Francisco Varela or Karen Barad—have decisively contributed to thinking perception as an active enactment of world.

The approach developed here shares this departure from representationalism, but goes one step further: it does not only ask how world is enacted, but under which ontological conditions an observer can arise at all who enacts.

The observer is not anthropologically privileged, but structurally contingent. This makes the transition from ontology to society possible.

Whereas enactive approaches explain how cognitive systems enact world, the approach presented here asks for the ontological conditions under which an observer can arise at all as a world-forming structure. The observer is not the starting problem, but the result to be explained.

6. Observer-Dependence and Wigner’s Friend

In thought experiments such as Wigner’s Friend, it becomes visible that different observers can arrive at incompatible descriptions of reality. Classical interpretations attempt to resolve this conflict through differences in information or epistemic limitations.

The approach of the constructed observer allows for a different reading:

The conflict does not arise between descriptions, but between different structures of world-formation. Observers do not share the same reality because they do not possess the same ontological observer form.

7. Political and Medial Reality

If observers are structurally produced, reality itself is political. Power then does not operate only through contents, discourses, or narratives, but through the conditions under which observer forms can emerge, remain stable, or be excluded.

Poverty, medial marginalization, or institutional violence can thus be understood as interventions into world-forming capacity. Those who are not stabilized as observers lose not only voice, but world.

8. Conclusion

The observer is not a neutral point, but a fragile form that is historically and structurally produced. The concept of the constructed observer and the reality eye makes visible that perception is not representation, but an ontological achievement.

In this way, a bridge is drawn between physics, epistemology, and political reality. World is not simply given. It is made—or withheld.

Figure 1 illustrates the reality eye as a structural coupling zone between ontological openness (ANP), stabilization (MNO), and the formation of individual, biological, and political realities. The representation is not to be understood metaphorically, but as a schematic depiction of ontological transitions.

The theory developed here does not present itself as a complete theory of coordination between observers, but as an ontological clarification of the conditions under which such coordination becomes possible at all.

REALITY EYE

