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Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self: An Ontology of Self-Verification in Generative Topological Ontology

Author: Tomokazu Tanaka (bigakusha-haha)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-3796-5889>

Affiliation: Sayama Aesthetics School / Institute of Aesthetics

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Tomokazu Tanaka (bigakusha-haha)

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Abstract

This paper reconstructs the problem of how the self can verify itself from the perspective of Generative Topological Ontology through the concepts of pre-humanity, pre-self, time, response, and awareness. In philosophy, self-verification is frequently reduced to a proposition of identity such as “I am I.” Since such a proposition presupposes the very self that it claims to verify, self-verification remains tautological. By contrast, when the self seeks confirmation through the recognition of others, social evaluation, institutions, titles, capital, markets, signs, or artificial intelligence, what occurs is not strictly self-verification but verification of the self by what is other than the self.

This paper proposes a third form of self-verification beyond this opposition. Its central thesis is that the self is verified neither directly by itself nor exclusively through the objective judgment of others. Rather, the self becomes present as itself when a concrete interaction between the self and what is other than the self returns, through time, as a response, and when awareness of that response takes place.

“What is other than the self” is not restricted to human others. It includes nature, living beings, matter, environments, artworks, tools, places, technologies, artificial intelligence, institutions, capital, signs, time, and death—in short, every form of existence that is not the self. These forms are not equivalent in the sense of possessing an identical mode of being. They are ontologically equivalent insofar as each can enter into relation with the self, respond according to its own orientation, and become an occasion for the generation of the self.

To clarify this structure, the paper distinguishes between pre-humanity and pre-self. Pre-humanity refers to the universality of nature that precedes the concept of the human, human signification, language, institutions, and objectification, while continuing to generate human existence in the present. It does not merely designate a chronological past prior to the emergence of humankind. It names the generative ground that continues to operate within and beyond human existence as embodiment, breathing, gravity, seasonality, growth, decay, materiality, environment, and time.

Pre-self, by contrast, refers to the singular-concrete universality that precedes the socially and semiotically stabilized self while continuing to generate the self in the present. It does not refer only to infancy before the formation of the ego. Rather, it designates the singular orientation, sensation, formation, judgment, and creative potential that operate prior to the reduction of the self to titles, evaluations, affiliations, occupations, market value, and semiotic self-images. Pre-self is not merely private particularity. It is universal insofar as the possibility of a singular and concrete mode of becoming oneself remains open to every self.

Bonsai provides a central example of the intersection between these two forms of anteriority. A

tree responds according to the orientations of nature: season, water, light, soil, gravity, disease, growth, recovery, and death. Such responses cannot be completely reduced to human intention. At the same time, the acts of cultivation, pruning, wiring, repotting, and forming reveal the singular-concrete orientation of the practitioner. Bonsai is neither an artifact produced through the unilateral domination of nature nor an object that simply preserves natural autonomy. It is an interface through which pre-humanity and pre-self respond to one another over time.

Time, in this context, is not merely the duration separating an action from its result. An action offered by the present self to what is other than the self does not conclude at the moment of action. It passes through seasonal, environmental, and material transformations and returns in a later present as a response from what is other than the self. An action that has become past is transformed by a future process not fully controlled by the self. When that future becomes present, it arrives as a reality that the earlier self did not possess in advance. Within this nonlinear temporal structure, the self encounters what may be called “a self unknown to itself.” The unknown self, however, does not mean an unpredictable personality or a new identity imposed from outside. Awareness is not the acquisition of something that was absent from the self. It is the event in which something that had already been operative within the self, yet had been forgotten within a semiotic world, becomes present. For this reason, awareness entails not only discovery or joy but an experience close to despair: the experience of being oneself and yet not having been oneself. The self confronts the fact that what was nearest to it—pre-self—had been obscured by self-images produced through social objectivity, external evaluation, institutions, signs, capital, and information.

This paper calls the topology of such forgetting the topology of information saturation. The problem of contemporary society is not a lack of information. It is the monopolization of self-verification by a closed orientation in which signs refer to signs, evaluations generate further evaluations, and capital returns capital as its privileged response. Phenomena and responses have not disappeared. Within the topology of capital, money returns as response; within the institutional topology, qualifications and titles return as response; within the informational topology, visibility and quantified reactions return as response. Yet when one orientation is given excessive priority, responses from other existential topologies—nature, body, place, matter, and time—are forgotten.

A topological transition, therefore, is not merely a change of perspective. It is a transformation of orientation and priority: a transformation in what the self receives as a valid response of self-verification. Human beings experience anxiety, aversion, and resistance toward topological transition because the existing structure through which the self has been verified becomes unstable. Psychology addresses the instability of the subject accompanying such transition. Ontology, by contrast, asks which mode of existence is closing and which new mode of existence

is becoming possible through that instability.

On this basis, awareness is defined not as a psychological function through which a cognitive subject acquires new knowledge about an object, but as an ontological event in which a forgotten pre-self becomes present to the self through the temporally mediated response of what is other than the self. Self-contradiction cannot be resolved within a single logical instant. The propositions “it was already within the self” and “the self did not know it” appear contradictory when treated synchronically. Once time is introduced, however, they belong to different generative topologies. An orientation latent within the self becomes present only after passing through relation with what is other than the self, temporal delay, and the response of irreducible reality. Time does not eliminate contradiction; it discloses the apparently contradictory selves as distinct phases of generation.

The self-verification proposed here is therefore not a logical proof. It is ontological self-verification: the process through which the relation between the self and what is other than the self generates an irreducible reality over time, and through awareness of that reality, the self becomes present as itself. The self is neither a completed subject nor an image reflected in the objectivity of others. It is a locally generated topology of existence in which pre-humanity and pre-self intersect through an interface and are repeatedly regenerated through temporal response and awareness.

The paper ultimately interprets contemporary emptiness and nihilism not as deficiencies within an inner self, but as consequences of the monopolization of self-verification by semiotic self-externalization and the corresponding forgetting of temporal interaction with pre-humanity and pre-self. Art is consequently defined not as the expression of an already established identity, but as an interface that realizes the intersection of pre-humanity and pre-self and designs the conditions under which the forgotten self can become present as awareness.

Keywords

Generative Topological Ontology, pre-humanity, pre-self, self-verification, awareness, self-externalization, interface, singular-concrete universality, time, response, information saturation, bonsai

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Problem Statement

Modern philosophy has been fundamentally concerned with the question of what the self is. Since Descartes, the self has been understood as a thinking subject, while subsequent philosophical traditions have attempted to ground it through concepts such as reason, consciousness, ego, and subjectivity. During the twentieth century, phenomenology, existential philosophy, structuralism, and post-structuralism critically reconsidered this conception by interpreting the self through its relations with others, language, history, the body, power, and institutions.

Despite these developments, one fundamental question remains unresolved: How can the self verify itself?

If the self verifies itself, the result collapses into the tautological proposition "I am I."

Conversely, if the self is verified through recognition by others, social evaluation, institutions, titles, markets, capital, or artificial intelligence, what occurs is no longer self-verification but verification by what is other than the self.

This problem has become increasingly evident in contemporary society. The development of information technologies has rendered the self visible, measurable, and continuously evaluable. As a consequence, self-verification has become increasingly dependent upon systems of signs and external evaluation, while the presence of the self itself has become progressively obscured. This paper refers to this condition as the topology of information saturation.

The aim of this paper is to reconstruct the problem of self-verification from the standpoint of Generative Topological Ontology.

Generative Topological Ontology understands existence not as a fixed substance but as a locally generated phenomenon constituted through relations, topology, generation, interfaces, and time. Building upon this framework, the present paper argues that self-verification is neither logical self-identity nor social recognition. Rather, it is a generative process in which interaction between the self and what is other than the self returns through time as a response, and the self becomes present through awareness of that response.

To accomplish this task, two new concepts are introduced.

The first is Pre-Humanity, referring to the universality of nature that precedes human concepts and institutions while continuing to generate human existence in the present.

The second is Pre-Self, referring to the singular-concrete universality that precedes socially and semiotically stabilized selfhood while continuing to generate the self in the present.

The paper argues that awareness emerges where these two forms of anteriority intersect through

interfaces over time, and that this awareness constitutes the ontological foundation of self-verification.

Accordingly, the self is not understood as an entity enclosed within consciousness or interiority. Rather, it is a locally generated process produced through the temporal interaction of Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self. Art, in turn, is defined as the design of interfaces through which this generative process becomes possible.

This paper follows the theoretical foundations established in *Axioms of Generative Topological Ontology: A Foundational Theory of Existential Generation and The Limits of Self-Externalization and Existential Generation: Interface Ontology in Generative Topological Ontology*. It addresses the remaining question left open by these studies—how the self becomes present to itself—by developing an ontological account based on time, response, and awareness.

Chapter 2

The Philosophical Problem of Self-Verification Beyond Tautology, Recognition, and the Problem of Rules

2.1 The Difficulty of Self-Verification

The question "What is the self?" has long occupied the center of Western philosophy. The present study, however, begins with a more fundamental question:

How can the self verify itself?

Three major responses have traditionally been offered.

The first identifies self-verification with self-identity.

Since Descartes, the self has been understood as a thinking subject, and the proposition Cogito, ergo sum has served as the foundation of modern philosophy.

Yet this proposition demonstrates only that the existence of the thinking subject cannot be doubted. It does not explain how the self comes into being.

The proposition "I am I" is logically valid.

Nevertheless, it merely explains the self through the self itself.

Self-verification therefore collapses into tautology.

2.2 Verification by Others

A second approach understands the self through its relations with others.

Modern philosophy has interpreted subjectivity through recognition, language, institutions, culture, history, power, and social evaluation.

While this perspective successfully overcomes the conception of the subject as an isolated substance, it introduces another problem.

Recognition by others is not self-verification.

Rather, it is verification performed by what is other than the self.

Contemporary social media, market systems, professional titles, institutional credentials, rankings, algorithmic evaluations, and artificial intelligence dramatically expand this structure.

The self increasingly circulates as an image of itself rather than as itself.

Consequently, genuine self-verification becomes increasingly difficult.

2.3 The Limits of Rules and Meaning

Twentieth-century philosophy further demonstrated that neither meaning nor rule-following can provide an ultimate foundation.

Rules preserve the continuity of past actions.

They do not explain the generation of the self.

Logical systems may preserve identity.

They do not generate existence.

2.4 Toward an Ontology of Self-Verification

The present paper therefore reformulates the question.

The self is verified neither by logical identity nor by external recognition.

Rather, the self becomes present through the temporal response emerging from interaction between the self and what is other than the self.

Self-verification is thus not a problem of logic.

It is a problem of ontology.

Time is not an external supplement to logic.

Time itself constitutes the topology through which existence is generated.

Self-contradiction is therefore not eliminated through logical analysis.

It becomes intelligible only when contradictory moments are understood as belonging to different generative topologies unfolding through time.

The following chapters develop this ontological account through the concepts of Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self.

Chapter 3

Pre-Humanity: Existential Generation as the Universality of Nature

3.1 The Concept of Pre-Humanity

This paper defines Pre-Humanity not as a chronological period preceding human history, but as the ontological ground that precedes human concepts, signification, institutions, and language while continuously generating human existence in the present.

Accordingly, "pre-" does not designate a temporal past.

It denotes a generative foundation that remains operative now.

Modern philosophy frequently interpreted reality through oppositions such as subject/object, human/nature, and mind/matter.

Pre-Humanity refers to the generative dimension preceding these distinctions.

Gravity operates regardless of human existence.

The seasons continue independently of human history.

Plants germinate, grow, and decay without reference to human values.

Such processes are not external objects but the very conditions through which human existence itself becomes possible.

Pre-Humanity therefore designates not "nature" as an object, but the universal generation through which existence continuously comes into being.

3.2 Nature as Response

Modern science has largely understood nature as an object available for observation, analysis, classification, and control.

This paper proposes a different understanding.

Nature is encountered as what is other than the self and responds according to its own orientation.

Whenever the self acts toward nature, the result never coincides completely with human intention.

Nature responds through its own generative orientation.

This response cannot be reduced either to subjective intention or objective measurement.

It is the phenomenal manifestation of Pre-Humanity itself.

3.3 Bonsai as an Interface of Pre-Humanity

Bonsai provides a paradigmatic practice for understanding Pre-Humanity.
A tree is not a program designed by human beings.
It possesses its own generative dynamics.
Watering, pruning, wiring, and repotting initiate interaction.
Yet the final result remains irreducible to human intention.
The tree responds according to seasons, climate, light, disease, soil, and biological processes.
Bonsai is therefore neither domination over nature nor passive preservation of nature.
It is an interface through which Pre-Humanity responds to the self.
This response does not appear immediately.
It returns through time and becomes manifest only in a later present.
Response is thus not merely an outcome.
It is the event through which Pre-Humanity returns generation to the self.

3.4 Universality of Pre-Humanity

Pre-Humanity constitutes a form of universality.
This universality, however, differs fundamentally from abstract universality.
Growth, decay, gravity, seasonality, matter, and temporality appear differently in every situation.
They are universal not because they are identical, but because they continuously generate existence independently of human signification.
Pre-Humanity is therefore not a transcendent principle behind the world.
It is the ontological condition through which Pre-Self can become present as the self.
The self cannot become itself independently of Pre-Humanity.
Only because the world responds can the self become present to itself.
Pre-Humanity therefore constitutes the most fundamental universality underlying self-verification.

Chapter 4

Pre-Self: Singular-Concrete Universality as the Generation of the Self

4.1 The Concept of Pre-Self

The previous chapter defined Pre-Humanity as the universality of nature that precedes human concepts while continuously generating existence.

The present chapter introduces Pre-Self as its complementary concept.

Pre-Self does not designate a psychological stage before ego formation.

Nor does it imply a return to childhood or innocence.

The prefix "pre-" refers not to chronological past but to an ontological ground that continues to generate the self in the present.

Pre-Self therefore signifies the singular-concrete universality that precedes socially and semiotically stabilized identities while continuously generating the self.

Modern society defines the self through names, professions, institutions, evaluations, market value, qualifications, nationality, ideology, and increasingly through algorithmic visibility and artificial intelligence.

None of these, however, is the self itself.

They are signs about the self.

Pre-Self designates the generative possibility that remains operative prior to these semiotic determinations.

4.2 Singular-Concrete Universality

This paper understands Pre-Self as singular-concrete universality.

Universality is usually understood as an abstraction derived from many particular instances.

Such abstract universality cannot explain the relation between Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self.

The universality proposed here is the universality of generation.

Every self possesses a different Pre-Self.

Yet the very structure that every self possesses its own singular mode of becoming is itself universal.

Concrete singularity is therefore not opposed to universality.

It constitutes universality.

4.3 Pre-Self and Creation

Pre-Self is inseparable from creation.
Creation is not the production of new information.
Nor is it the acquisition of an unknown identity.
Creation is the actualization of Pre-Self through interaction with Pre-Humanity.
In bonsai, different practitioners never produce identical forms.
The tree possesses its own generative dynamics.
Yet each practitioner responds according to a distinct orientation.
The artwork emerges through this singular interaction.
An artwork is therefore not identical with Pre-Self itself.
Rather, it is the local manifestation of Pre-Self through temporal interaction with Pre-Humanity.

4.4 Pre-Self and Self-Verification

The meaning of self-verification now becomes clear.
Self-verification is neither logical proof nor social recognition.
Pre-Self cannot be known directly by the self.
For it constitutes the very possibility through which the self exceeds itself.
Accordingly, Pre-Self becomes manifest only through temporal interaction with Pre-Humanity.
Trees respond.
Seasons respond.
Places respond.
Others respond.
Artworks respond.
Through these responses, Pre-Self becomes present to the self.
Self-verification is thus the ontological event through which the self becomes aware of its own Pre-Self.

4.5 Forgetting and Pre-Self

Contemporary society easily obscures Pre-Self.
Evaluation, status, capital, information, efficiency, and visibility increasingly determine personal identity.
The self mistakes its semiotic image for itself.
This does not mean that Pre-Self disappears.
Rather, it becomes covered over by semiotic responses.
Pre-Self is therefore not a lost self.

It is the self that continues to generate the present while remaining forgotten.

The following chapter examines the ontological event through which this forgotten Pre-Self becomes present through temporal response under the name of awareness.

Chapter 5

Time, Response, and Self-Verification: Time as the Topology of Generation

5.1 Time as Existential Generation

Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self alone are insufficient to explain self-verification.

Generation requires time.

Time is not an external measure within which existence unfolds.

Time itself is the topology through which existence is generated.

The self acts in the present.

Yet action never concludes in the present.

It is offered to what is other than the self, which responds according to its own orientation.

Time is the topology through which interaction becomes generation.

5.2 Response

Response is not a result.

Nor is it a mechanical reaction.

Response is the reality returned by what is other than the self after undergoing its own generative process.

Nature possesses its own orientation.

Capital possesses its own orientation.

Institutions possess their own orientation.

Artificial intelligence possesses the orientation of informational space.

Response therefore designates the existential reality returned by each topology of being.

5.3 Bonsai and Temporality

Bonsai exemplifies this temporal structure.

Pruning, wiring, and repotting do not immediately produce an artwork.

Years later, the tree responds.

Branches extend.

The trunk thickens.

New buds emerge.

Old branches decay.

These responses belong neither exclusively to human intention nor exclusively to nature.

They are jointly generated through the temporal interaction of Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self.
Bonsai is therefore an interface whose material is time itself.

5.4 Temporal Structure of Self-Verification

Self-verification unfolds through the following sequence.

The present self acts according to Pre-Self.

The action is directed toward what is other than the self.

The other undergoes its own generation.

Time passes.

A response returns.

Awareness occurs.

Self-verification becomes possible.

Self-verification therefore never exists entirely in the present.

It arrives from the future.

5.5 Self-Contradiction and Time

Traditional philosophy has treated contradiction as a logical problem.

This paper interprets contradiction as temporal.

The self declares:

"I did not know this self."

At the same time:

"It had always been myself."

Logically these statements contradict one another.

Temporally they belong to different phases of generation.

Pre-Self was always operative.

Yet it had not become present.

Temporal response allows it to appear.

Self-contradiction is therefore not logical inconsistency.

It is an ontological phenomenon emerging at the intersection of distinct temporal topologies.

5.6 Time as Generation

Time is not a linear movement from past to future.

The self acts in the present.

Its action is transformed through what is other than the self.

When the future becomes the present, awareness occurs.

The future therefore returns to the present.

Self-verification is the response arriving from the future.

Time is not merely the medium of generation.

Time itself is generation.

Accordingly, the self is not a subject existing within time.

The self is a locally generated topology continuously produced through temporally mediated responses.

Chapter 6

Awareness: The Presence of the Forgotten Pre-Self

6.1 What Is Awareness?

This paper does not understand awareness as an epistemological concept.

Awareness is not the acquisition of new knowledge nor the comprehension of previously unknown information.

Rather, awareness is the ontological event through which the forgotten Pre-Self becomes present through temporal interaction with Pre-Humanity.

Accordingly, awareness is not the acquisition of something new.

It is the coming-into-presence of what has always already been operative in the generation of the self.

6.2 The Self Unknown to Itself

The expression "the self unknown to itself" does not refer to an unknown personality.

Pre-Self has always existed.

What was absent was not Pre-Self itself but its presence to the self.

Awareness therefore does not transform the self into another self.

It allows the self to encounter its own Pre-Self.

Only then does genuine self-verification occur.

6.3 Ontological Forgetting

This forgetting is not memory loss.

It is ontological forgetting.

Modern society increasingly understands the self through titles, evaluations, markets, institutions, information, artificial intelligence, social media, and capital.

These are signs about the self rather than the self itself.

The self mistakes these semiotic images for itself.

Consequently, Pre-Self becomes concealed beneath systems of signs.

6.4 The Topology of Information Saturation

This paper refers to this condition as the topology of information saturation.
The problem is not informational scarcity.
It is the monopolization of self-verification by a single existential topology.
Capital responds through money.
Institutions respond through qualifications.
Social media responds through visibility.
Artificial intelligence responds through information.
These are all legitimate responses.
Yet when they become the exclusive basis of self-verification, responses from nature, embodiment, temporality, place, art, seasonality, and mortality are forgotten.
This constitutes the ontological structure underlying contemporary emptiness.

6.5 Awareness as Despair

Awareness is not necessarily joyful.
It often appears as despair.
Pre-Self has always been there.
The self was not searching for itself.
It had forgotten itself.
Indeed, it had displaced what was nearest to itself.
Consequently, awareness confronts the paradox:
"I have always been myself, yet I had never truly been myself."
Logically this appears contradictory.
Temporally it reveals the intersection of distinct generative topologies.
Despair is therefore not self-negation.
It is the ontological event through which the forgotten Pre-Self becomes present.

6.6 Art as Awareness

The ontological position of art now becomes clear.
Art is not the expression of an already constituted self.
Art is the design of interfaces through which Pre-Self becomes present through temporal interaction with Pre-Humanity.
The artwork itself is not art.
The artwork constitutes the occasion for awareness.
Art is therefore not the production of beauty.

It is the ontological practice of designing the conditions through which the forgotten Pre-Self becomes present through temporally mediated responses.

In this sense, art becomes the site of self-verification capable of reconnecting Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self beyond the topology of information saturation.

Chapter 7

Interface Ontology: The Interface Between Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self

7.1 Redefining the Interface

Throughout this paper, self-verification has been developed through the concepts of Pre-Humanity, Pre-Self, temporality, response, and awareness.

The remaining question is therefore not what the self is, but under what conditions the self becomes present to itself.

This paper names that condition the interface.

Conventionally, an interface has been understood as a medium connecting humans with machines, information, or other human beings.

Generative Topological Ontology proposes a fundamentally different definition.

An interface is not a channel for communication.

It is the ontological condition through which Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self intersect through time, thereby generating a new topology of existence.

An interface therefore does not merely connect.

It generates.

7.2 Interface and Reality

Reality is neither objective fact nor subjective experience.

Reality emerges where the interaction between the self and what is other than the self returns, through time, as an irreducible response.

Consequently, an interface does not represent reality.

It generates reality.

A work of art,

a Web Installation,

a bonsai,

architecture,

a tea room,

or Sayama Aesthetics School

does not merely depict an already existing world.

Each constitutes a condition through which a new reality may emerge.

7.3 Web Installation

From the standpoint of this paper,

Web Installation is not the placement of artworks on the Internet.

Nor is it the use of digital technologies as artistic media.

Rather,

Web Installation is an interface through which the relationship between the self and what is other than the self continues to unfold across informational and physical topologies.

Displays are not artworks.

Servers are not artworks.

QR codes are not artworks.

The artwork is the event in which a new interaction between Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self begins.

Accordingly,

Web Installation is not an informational technology.

It is an ontological apparatus for the generation of self-verification.

7.4 Bonsai as Interface

Bonsai is neither a miniature of nature nor an imitation of natural scenery.

It is an interface whose primary material is time itself.

The tree responds according to seasonal, biological, and environmental processes.

The practitioner responds according to Pre-Self.

Their interaction produces a reality that belongs exclusively to neither nature nor humanity.

The bonsai is therefore not a finished object.

It is a field in which self-verification continuously unfolds.

Both the cultivator and the viewer participate in the responses of Pre-Humanity.

Before being an artwork,

bonsai is an interface of existential generation.

7.5 Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence likewise constitutes an interface.

Yet AI itself is not the problem.

The problem emerges when informational responses become the exclusive basis of self-verification.

Artificial intelligence operates according to the orientation of informational topology.

It may therefore intensify the topology of information saturation.

Conversely,
it may also facilitate renewed awareness of Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self.
The decisive issue lies not in artificial intelligence itself,
but in the design of the interface.
Artificial intelligence cannot replace Pre-Humanity.
It may, however,
participate in designing the conditions through which human beings reconnect with it.

7.6 Distributed Autonomous Art

Distributed Autonomous Art (DAA) should not be understood merely as distributed artworks or decentralized authorship.
Within the framework proposed here,
DAA distributes the conditions of self-verification throughout the world.
The artwork becomes an interface.
The viewer becomes a co-generator.
Art therefore shifts
from the expression of an individual self
toward the generation of the conditions through which the self continuously becomes present.

7.7 Art as Ontological Practice

The ontological status of art now becomes evident.
Art is neither the production of beauty
nor the expression of an already established identity.
Art is the design of interfaces through which
Pre-Humanity
and
Pre-Self
intersect through time,
allowing the forgotten self to become present as awareness.
The artwork is not an object.
It is an event.
Self-verification is not logical proof.
It is the ontological event in which the self becomes present through temporally mediated responses from what is other than the self.

Accordingly,

art is not the production of the self.

Art is the ontological practice of designing the world within which the self continually comes into being.

Generative Topological Ontology therefore no longer treats existence, self, and art as independent domains.

Existence is generation.

The self is the local manifestation of that generation.

Art is the interface through which generation becomes experience.

Pre-Humanity constitutes the universal ground from which the world responds.

Pre-Self constitutes the singular-concrete universality through which the self responds.

Where these two dimensions intersect through time,

awareness emerges,

not as cognition,

but as the coming-into-presence of existence itself.

Conclusion

This paper has reconstructed one of the most fundamental questions in philosophy—how the self can verify itself—from the perspective of Generative Topological Ontology.

Traditionally, this question has been addressed in two principal ways.

The first identifies self-verification with logical self-identity. From this perspective, the proposition “I am I” appears sufficient to establish the certainty of the self. Yet such certainty remains tautological, since the self presupposes itself in the very act of verification.

The second understands the self through recognition by others, institutions, language, society, capital, or systems of evaluation. Although this relational perspective overcomes the isolation of the modern subject, it ultimately replaces self-verification with verification by what is other than the self.

This paper has proposed a third alternative.

The self is verified neither by itself nor by others alone.

Rather, the self becomes present through the temporal interaction between the self and what is other than the self. Self-verification occurs when this interaction returns as an irreducible response and when awareness emerges through that response.

To articulate this structure, the paper introduced two fundamental concepts: Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self.

Pre-Humanity denotes the universal generative ground of nature that precedes human concepts and institutions while continuously generating existence in the present.

Pre-Self denotes the singular-concrete universality that precedes socially and semiotically stabilized identities while continuously generating the self in the present.

Self-verification becomes possible only where these two dimensions intersect through interfaces over time.

Time has therefore been redefined throughout this study.

Time is not an external measure within which existence unfolds.

Time is itself the topology of generation.

Actions offered by the self are transformed through what is other than the self and eventually return as responses.

Only through this temporally mediated return does the forgotten Pre-Self become present.

Accordingly, awareness is not understood as the acquisition of new knowledge.

It is the ontological event through which the forgotten Pre-Self becomes present through interaction with Pre-Humanity.

This interpretation also provides a new understanding of contemporary nihilism.

The problem of the present age is not a lack of information but the monopolization of self-

verification by a single existential topology.

Capital responds through money.

Institutions respond through qualifications.

Digital platforms respond through visibility.

Artificial intelligence responds through informational processes.

These responses are not false.

They become problematic only when they exclude responses from nature, embodiment, temporality, place, mortality, and artistic practice.

This condition has been described as the Topology of Information Saturation.

Within this framework, art acquires a fundamentally new ontological significance.

Art is neither the production of beauty nor the expression of an already completed identity.

Art is the design of interfaces through which Pre-Humanity and Pre-Self intersect over time, allowing forgotten dimensions of the self to become present as awareness.

The artwork is therefore not merely an object.

It is an event of existential generation.

The theoretical position of this study may be understood within the broader development of Generative Topological Ontology.

Axioms of Generative Topological Ontology established the ontological principles governing existential generation.

The Limits of Self-Externalization and Existential Generation demonstrated how the self emerges through interaction with what is other than itself.

The present study has addressed the remaining question: how the generated self becomes present to itself.

By introducing the concepts of Pre-Humanity, Pre-Self, temporality, response, and awareness, this paper has proposed an ontological account of self-verification.

The theoretical sequence developed across these studies may therefore be summarized as follows:

Existential Generation

→ Generation of the Self

→ Temporal Response

→ Awareness

→ Self-Verification

→ Renewed Existential Generation

This sequence is not circular.

Each event of self-verification generates new possibilities of Pre-Self, reopening interaction with Pre-Humanity.

Existence therefore possesses no final completion.

Generation continually becomes the condition for further generation.

The implications of this ontology extend beyond aesthetics.

They offer a conceptual framework for rethinking artificial intelligence, education, architecture, design, Japanese cultural practices, bonsai, the tea ceremony, and broader questions concerning the relationship between human beings, technology, and nature.

Ultimately, this paper argues that the self is never a completed substance.

The self is an open topology of existence that continually comes into presence through temporally mediated responses from what is other than itself.

In this sense, self-verification is not the logical confirmation of identity.

It is the ongoing ontological event through which existence becomes present to itself.

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Tanaka, Tomokazu (bigakusha-haha). 2026. *Axioms of Generative Topological Ontology: A Foundational Theory of Existential Generation*. Unpublished manuscript.

Tanaka, Tomokazu (bigakusha-haha). 2026. *The Limits of Self-Externalization and Existential Generation: Interface Ontology in Generative Topological Ontology*. Unpublished manuscript.

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Research Method

A Methodological Statement on the Publication of Research Memoranda

This text is published as a Research Memorandum within the continuing development of Generative Topological Ontology.

The concepts, definitions, hypotheses, and arguments presented here record the theoretical position reached at the time of writing and publication. They should not be understood as a finally established theoretical system. They may be expanded, revised, redefined, or reorganized through future research, artistic practice, interaction with reality, academic dialogue, and peer review.

This research does not regard only completed theories as legitimate research outcomes. It also treats the processes through which concepts emerge, become interconnected, undergo transformation, and are integrated into a theoretical structure as significant objects of inquiry. Accordingly, this memorandum should be understood not merely as an incomplete draft, but as a record of a particular phase in the generation of the theory.

The public release of a Research Memorandum is not intended to present a developing theory prematurely as a completed one. Rather, it is a method of documenting the generative processes of thought and practice, enabling their subsequent examination and reconstruction, and opening them to academic and artistic dialogue from different perspectives.

If the contents of this memorandum are subsequently developed into a peer-reviewed article, scholarly monograph, or other formal research output, the finalized work will be identified as a separate and fixed document.

When citing or referring to this memorandum, please include the title, author, version number, and date of the most recent update. Different versions may contain substantive differences in concepts, definitions, and lines of argument.

This Research Memorandum is not a final conclusion. It is one theoretical position reached within the continuing formation of Generative Topological Ontology and, at the same time, an interface open to further generation.