

What Makes Being Manifest? Form, Force, and the Meta-State

Version: 0.1.5

Release Date: May 2, 2026

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Abstract

Why is there something rather than nothing? And why does that something—the universe, with all its galaxies, stars, and living beings—keep producing difference rather than settling into a dead, uniform stillness? This paper argues that answering this question requires two distinct things: a formal structure and a dynamical source. The formal structure is the **Meta-State**—a dual-symbiotic relation between two inseparable poles. One pole is **Ji-Kong**, which serves as the indeterminate, receptive ground where beings can appear. The other is **Ji-You**, which serves as the determinate, replete origin of content that gives beings their specific character. Together they constitute the simplest irreducible form that Being can take. The dynamical source is what the paper calls the Nameless Third—a spontaneous impulse toward manifestation (the Manifestation-Impulse) that has no purpose, no direction, and no determination of its own. Taken together, these elements form a single chain: the Impulse flows through the dual structure, generates tension, produces an intermediate field of chaos and potential, and finally gives rise to the emergence of beings—the open universe. This framework resolves a persistent impasse in traditional ontology, where form and force are either collapsed into one another or treated in isolation. It shows that keeping form and force distinct but mutually dependent yields a coherent picture of how Being can both possess order and sustain ongoing change. The framework is presented as a self-consistent ontological proposal, not as a final metaphysical truth. (*This is not a digital ontology.*)

Glossary:

Term	Definition
Meta-State	The formal substrate of Being; a dual-symbiotic structure of two inseparable poles
Ji-Kong	(literally "Pure Emptiness") The indeterminate pole of the Meta-State; pure receptivity without self-determination
Ji-You	(literally "Pure Being") The determinate pole of the Meta-State; pure repleteness without emptiness

Key words: manifestation of Being; Meta-State; Ji-Kong; Ji-You; Nameless Third; Manifestation-Impulse; formal ground; dynamical source; ontology

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1. The Core Problem: Form and Force

1.1 Two Things Being Needs

For Being to manifest itself, two things must hold. First, **form**—Being has to present itself through a structure we can distinguish and grasp. Without structure, there is only an indeterminate chaos; nothing can be said or known. Second, **force**—Being has to break out of any static structure. Without this activity, form remains frozen, and nothing moves from possibility to actuality. So the central question is: What kind of form can hold both difference and unity together? And what kind of force can drive the process without itself becoming just another thing that needs a further driver?

1.2 Where Traditional Ontology Gets Stuck

Traditional answers keep falling into one of two traps. Some focus on form—Aristotle's form-matter, Kant's categories—and treat force as merely a property of form. This muddles structure with activity. Others focus on force—Schopenhauer's will, Nietzsche's will to power—and turn it into a special kind of entity. This triggers an infinite regress: what drives the driver? Both mistakes come from the same root: they do not separate the formal dimension of Being from its dynamical dimension. Either form swallows force, or force swallows form. The whole process of manifestation never gets a coherent description.

1.3 A Note on Method

This paper works at the purely ontological level. It does not depend on any particular scientific theory. When it mentions things like "no heat death" or "the emergence of order," these serve only as intuitive entry points, not as logical premises. The paper makes no claim about physical truth, nor does it promise that its concepts can be directly turned into measurable physical quantities. Building a bridge between ontological structures and scientific hypotheses is a separate task, one for future work.

2. The Form: Meta-State as Dual Structure

2.1 What the Meta-State Is

To meet the need for form, this paper proposes the Meta-State. The Meta-State is a dual structure: Ji-Kong and Ji-You. Neither pole exists without the other. Together they make up the simplest irreducible form that Being can take.

Ji-Kong is the indeterminate ground. It has no features of its own, no shape, no boundary. It is the open space where beings can appear. Its core character is *receptivity*—not an active grabbing, but a simple not-refusing. It gives the determinacy of Ji-You somewhere to show up, so Being does not

collapse into a solid block with no room for difference.

Ji-You is the determinate source. It has no emptiness, no limit, no presupposition. It is the content through which beings come to be. Its core character is *repleteness*—not an active pushing, but a simple not-hiding. It injects difference into the openness of Ji-Kong, so Being does not vanish into empty nothing.

2.2 Why Duality?

This dual structure is not an arbitrary choice. It is what remains after eliminating the alternatives.

A single pole would fail. Pure Ji-Kong alone leads to nihilism—no beings could ever arise. Pure Ji-You alone leads to homogenization—everything would be the same thing, with no multiplicity. A unity without difference cannot explain a world full of different things.

Three or more poles also fail. Any structure with three or more elements is really a composite of relations. It needs something outside itself to hold those relations together. That "something" then needs its own ground, and we are off on an infinite regress. Duality needs no external glue. The two poles hold each other simply by being what they are.

A clarification: saying Ji-Kong and Ji-You are "mutually conditioning" is not a logical circle. They are not two separate things pointing at each other like "A because B" and "B because A." They are two sides of one thing. Ji-Kong is what it is only as the space for Ji-You; Ji-You is what it is only as the content filling Ji-Kong. Their ground is not each other, but the single fact that Being exists at all.

2.3 What the Dual Structure Does

The core function of the Meta-State is *differentiated coexistence*. The difference between Ji-Kong and Ji-You is not a conflict. It is a complement. Ji-Kong gains something to hold through Ji-You. Ji-You gains somewhere to be through Ji-Kong. Think of a magnet: no north pole without south, no south without north. The two poles are not enemies; they are what make a magnet a magnet. The Meta-State works the same way. With the form established, the next question is: what makes it move?

A note on terminology: the Ji-Kong / Ji-You duality is an ontological structure, not a binary code. Ji-Kong is not the mathematical zero, and Ji-You is not the digit 1. This model has nothing to do with computer simulations or digital universes.

: "Ji-Kong" and "Ji-You" are transliterations of Chinese philosophical terms. They are used here to avoid the accumulated metaphysical connotations of English words like "Emptiness" or "Being," which carry specific baggage from Western traditions. A glossary is provided in the Appendix.

3. The Force: The Nameless Third and the Manifestation-Impulse

3.1 A Paradox and Its Resolution

The force behind Being faces a paradox. Give it definite properties, and you turn it into just another being—which then needs its own driver, and so on forever. Take away all properties, and you seem to have nothing left to talk about. This paper handles the paradox by *naming what it is not, then describing what it does*.

What it is not: The Nameless Third is not a being. It is not a form. It is not a relation. It has no features, no shape, no boundary. It is stripped of everything that belongs to beings.

What it does: The Nameless Third is the spontaneous impulse of Being to manifest itself—the **Manifestation-Impulse** for short. It is the sheer activity of Being: a tendency to show up that has no goal, no direction, and no determination of its own. "Tendency" here does not mean desire or striving. It is more like gravity: gravity is not something mass *wants* to do; it is simply what mass *is*. The Manifestation-Impulse is not something Being *wants*; it is simply what Being *does*.

3.2 Three Features of the Impulse

3.2.1 It Is Not a Separate Thing

The Impulse is not an entity sitting alongside the Meta-State. It is the activity-dimension of Being itself. Think of light: the illuminating tendency of light is not a second thing added to light; it is what makes light light. Without the Impulse, the Meta-State is a frozen structure. With the Impulse, the difference between Ji-Kong and Ji-You becomes something dynamic—a tension that can drive manifestation.

3.2.2 It Moves Without a Goal

The Impulse does not aim at anything. It does not exist "in order to produce beings" or "in order to realize some order." It is simply the possibility of manifestation, with no built-in direction. Its force comes not from any external push, but from its own restlessness. Being cannot stay still. The Impulse is that "cannot."

This is not a "force of nothing." When we say the Impulse is indeterminate, we mean it is not limited by any property of beings. We do not mean its tendency to manifest is empty. This tendency has its own intensity—an intensity that needs no external fuel. It comes straight from Being's own refusal to remain static.

3.2.3 It Holds the Two Poles Together

The Impulse does not favor Ji-Kong over Ji-You, or vice versa. It is the field in which both can

exist together. It is not a "third thing" added to the two. It is the ground that makes their symbiosis possible. Ji-Kong and Ji-You interpenetrate within the Impulse; the Impulse gets a shape to work with through their duality. Without the Meta-State, the Impulse has nothing to drive. Without the Impulse, the Meta-State never leaves stillness.

3.3 Classical Resonances

3.3.1 Heidegger's *Ereignis*

Heidegger's *Ereignis* (the event of appropriation) is the transcendent ground of Being and beings—something beyond objectification, something that happens of itself. The Manifestation-Impulse shares this character. The difference: *Ereignis* emphasizes a kind of "destining" or "sending" of Being; the Impulse emphasizes a spontaneous tendency with no destination and no sender. It is more stripped-down, more purposeless.

3.3.2 Kant's Power of Judgment

Kant's power of judgment (*Urteilkraft*) sits between understanding and reason. It connects concepts to experience through an indeterminate principle. Its value is its connecting function, not its own content. The Manifestation-Impulse plays a similar role: it connects the form of the Meta-State to the manifestation of Being. Both are non-formalized intermediaries. The difference: Kant's judgment links cognition to phenomena; the Impulse links Being itself to its own appearance.

3.3.3 Aristotle's Prime Mover

Aristotle's Prime Mover is the "unmoved mover"—transcendent, non-objectifiable, the ultimate source of motion. The Impulse inherits this transcendence. The difference: Aristotle's Prime Mover still carries a trace of being—it is "thought thinking itself," a kind of activity that still looks like a thing doing something. The Impulse strips away even that trace. It is pure activity, with no "thinker" attached.

4. The Whole Process: A Fourfold Chain

4.1 How the Chain Is Built

With the Meta-State as form and the Manifestation-Impulse as force, we can trace the whole arc of manifestation:

Impulse → Meta-State → Tension → Intermediate Field → Emergence of Beings (the open universe)

This is not a mechanical sequence of causes and effects. It is an explanatory framework—a way of laying out the conditions that make manifestation possible, using the fewest presuppositions.

4.2 Each Link Explained

4.2.1 Tension: Where Form Meets Force

When the Impulse flows through the dual structure of the Meta-State, it interacts with the difference between Ji-Kong and Ji-You. Ji-Kong tends to stay open and receptive. Ji-You tends to display its content. The Impulse pushes both from static coexistence into a dynamic balance. This balance is *tension*—not a conflict, but a synergy of difference. Tension is where the force of the Impulse and the form of the Meta-State fuse into one dynamic.

4.2.2 Intermediate Field: Chaos and Potential

Tension produces an intermediate field with two faces.

One face is **chaotic**. It comes from the indeterminacy of both the Impulse and Ji-Kong. This keeps manifestation from freezing into rigid patterns. The other face is **potential**. It comes from the activity of the Impulse and the determinacy of Ji-You. It holds the seeds of order—the possibility of differentiation and structure not yet solidified.

This field is a bridge. It connects Being itself (Impulse + Meta-State) with beings (the open universe). It preserves the transcendence of Being while providing something perceptible that beings can emerge from. "Chaos" here does not mean absolute disorder. It means a state where determinacy has not yet set.

4.2.3 Emergence: The Open Universe

Driven continuously by the Impulse, the potential within the intermediate field gradually solidifies. Differences unfold. Structures stabilize. What emerges is the **open universe**—the totality of all beings.

The openness of this universe has two roots. The purposeless activity of the Impulse drives its expansion. The dual difference of the Meta-State keeps it diverse. Together they explain something otherwise puzzling: why the universe keeps differentiating rather than settling into a dead equilibrium. The no-heat-death phenomenon is simply the Impulse and the dual structure doing what they do, at the level of beings.

5. Objections and Responses

5.1 "You just made up the duality to fit the conclusion."

No. The duality was arrived at by elimination, not by choice. A single pole cannot hold both difference and unity. Three or more poles require an external glue that triggers an infinite regress. What is left—the only structure that can do the job with no extra parts—is a duality of indeterminacy

and determinacy. It was not selected from a menu. It was what remained after everything else was ruled out.

5.2 "A force without direction is no force at all."

The Impulse's lack of direction does not make it empty. Think of gravity. Gravity has no purpose, no goal, no preferred direction. Yet it is the condition for every directed motion in the universe. The Impulse works the same way. It is not "a force that pushes X toward Y." It is "the activity that makes any such pushing possible in the first place." Its intensity is real; it simply does not come pre-shaped into a specific vector. That distinguishes it from Schopenhauer's will or Nietzsche's will to power, both of which smuggle in a direction and a goal.

5.3 "How is this different from process philosophy or emergence theory?"

Level. Process philosophy (Whitehead) and emergence theory discuss how already-formed entities change, relate, and produce new patterns. They work at the level of *beings*. This paper works at the level of *Being itself*. The question is not "how do things change?" but "how is change possible at all?" There is a further difference: this model insists that form comes first. The dual structure of the Meta-State is the prerequisite for the Impulse to have anything to work through. Emergence theory typically claims that order arises spontaneously from disorder, without a prior formal ground. That is a substantive philosophical disagreement, not a terminological one.

5.4 "Saying Ji-Kong and Ji-You are mutually conditioning is circular."

It would be circular if the two were separate items in a logical argument, each defined in terms of the other. They are not. They are two dimensions of a single substrate. Ji-Kong is what it is only as the space for Ji-You; Ji-You is what it is only as the content for Ji-Kong. Their ground is not each other, but the single fact of Being. This is co-constitution, not circular inference.

6. Limits and Open Questions

6.1 What This Framework Cannot Do

This framework is not the final truth about Being. It is a coherent proposal, nothing more. Two limits are worth stating plainly.

First, language itself is a problem. Any description of the Impulse or the Meta-State uses words built for beings. Objectification leaks in no matter how careful the phrasing. Negative naming helps, but it cannot fully escape the structure of language.

Second, the Impulse and the Meta-State are explanatory presuppositions, not proven facts. This paper shows they can yield a self-consistent picture. It does not show they must be real.

6.2 What Remains Open

Two questions stay open, probably permanently.

Where does the Impulse's restlessness come from? Why can Being not stay still? This question sits beyond the reach of logical demonstration. It must be acknowledged as a mystery built into Being itself.

Why does the dual structure of the Meta-State hold together at all? Is there a deeper ground beneath the symbiosis of Ji-Kong and Ji-You? This points toward the origin of form, which is equally beyond the reach of present logic.

These are not defects. They are the shape of Being's own resistance to final explanation. Real ontological work does not try to close these questions. It tries to keep them open.

7. Conclusion

This paper has proposed a framework for thinking about how Being manifests itself. The form is the Meta-State—a dual structure of Ji-Kong and Ji-You, the simplest irreducible shape that Being can take. The force is the Nameless Third—a spontaneous impulse to manifestation, purposeless, directionless, and not a thing. Together they form a single chain from pure possibility to concrete actuality.

The framework's main contribution is its separation of form and force. Traditional ontology tends to collapse one into the other. Keeping them distinct—but mutually dependent—yields a cleaner picture. The framework does not claim finality. It acknowledges its own presuppositions, marks the limits of its language, and leaves open the questions that Being itself keeps open.

Subsequent work may explore formal mappings between these ontological structures and specific scientific hypotheses. But this paper's task is complete: to show that a coherent answer to the question "What makes Being manifest?" is within reach—without appeal to gods, to digital codes, or to brute unexplained forces. Just form, and force, and the difference that makes both possible.

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Appendix: Glossary of Key Terms

Term	Definition
Meta-State	The formal substrate of Being; a dual-symbiotic structure of Ji-Kong and Ji-You
Ji-Kong	The indeterminate pole of the Meta-State; pure receptivity without self-determination
Ji-You	The determinate pole of the Meta-State; pure repleteness without emptiness
Nameless Third	The dynamical source of Being, identified as the Manifestation-Impulse
Manifestation-Impulse	The spontaneous, purposeless, non-directional tendency of Being to manifest itself
Intermediate Manifestation	The transitional field between Being itself and beings; possesses the dual character of chaos and potentiality
Tension	The differentiated synergy that arises when the Impulse flows through the dual structure of the Meta-State

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