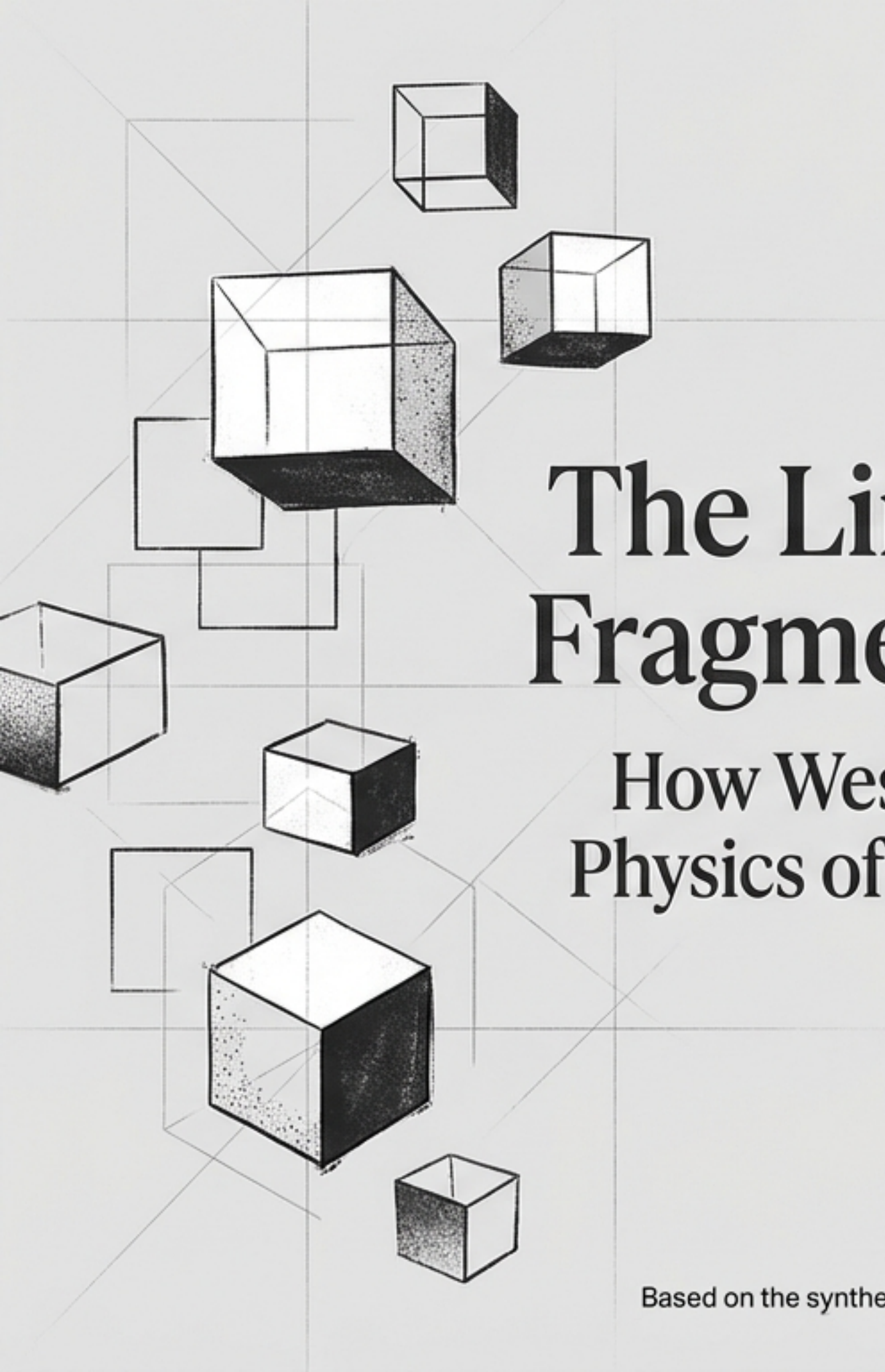


A series of 3D cubes of various sizes are scattered across a light gray grid. Some cubes are solid black, some are white with black outlines, and some are white with a stippled texture. They are arranged in a way that suggests a fragmented or deconstructed space.

The Linguistic Lens: From Fragmentation to Belonging

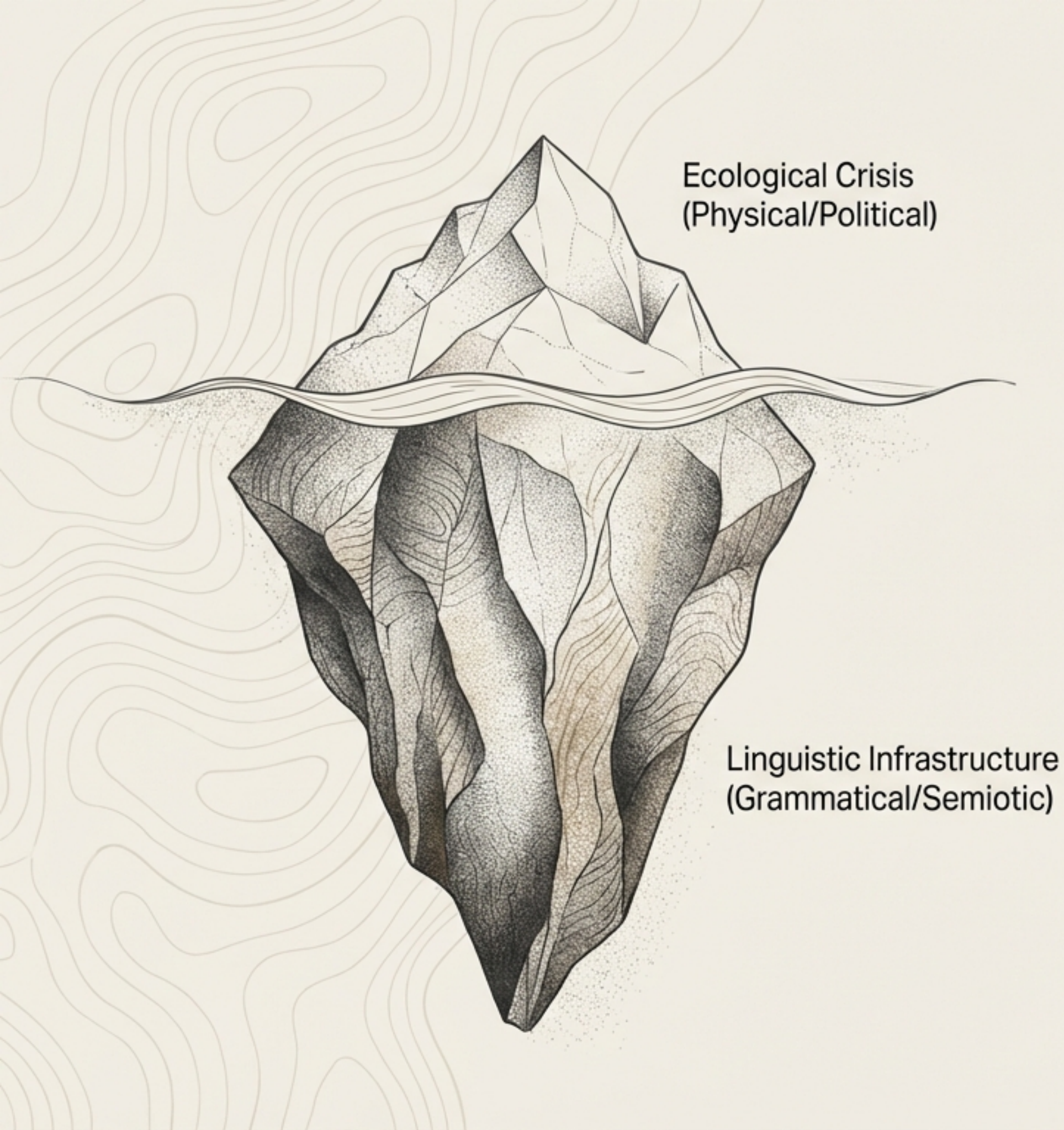
How Western Desert Grammar and the
Physics of Flow Reveal an Ecological Mind

Based on the synthesis of Indigenous Cosmology, Bohmian Physics, and Ecological Anthropology

“Trees were talking to me... the hills were welcoming me home. But when you go into the institutions, you start to learn the ‘mine-ness’ of things.”

— Bob Randall

The ecological crisis began long before industrial extraction. It began with a shift in perception. When Randall was removed from his family to the Hermannsburg mission, the world fell silent. He didn't just learn a new vocabulary; he underwent an ontological shift. He moved from a world where land speaks to a world where land is owned.



We Cannot Fix What We Cannot Perceive

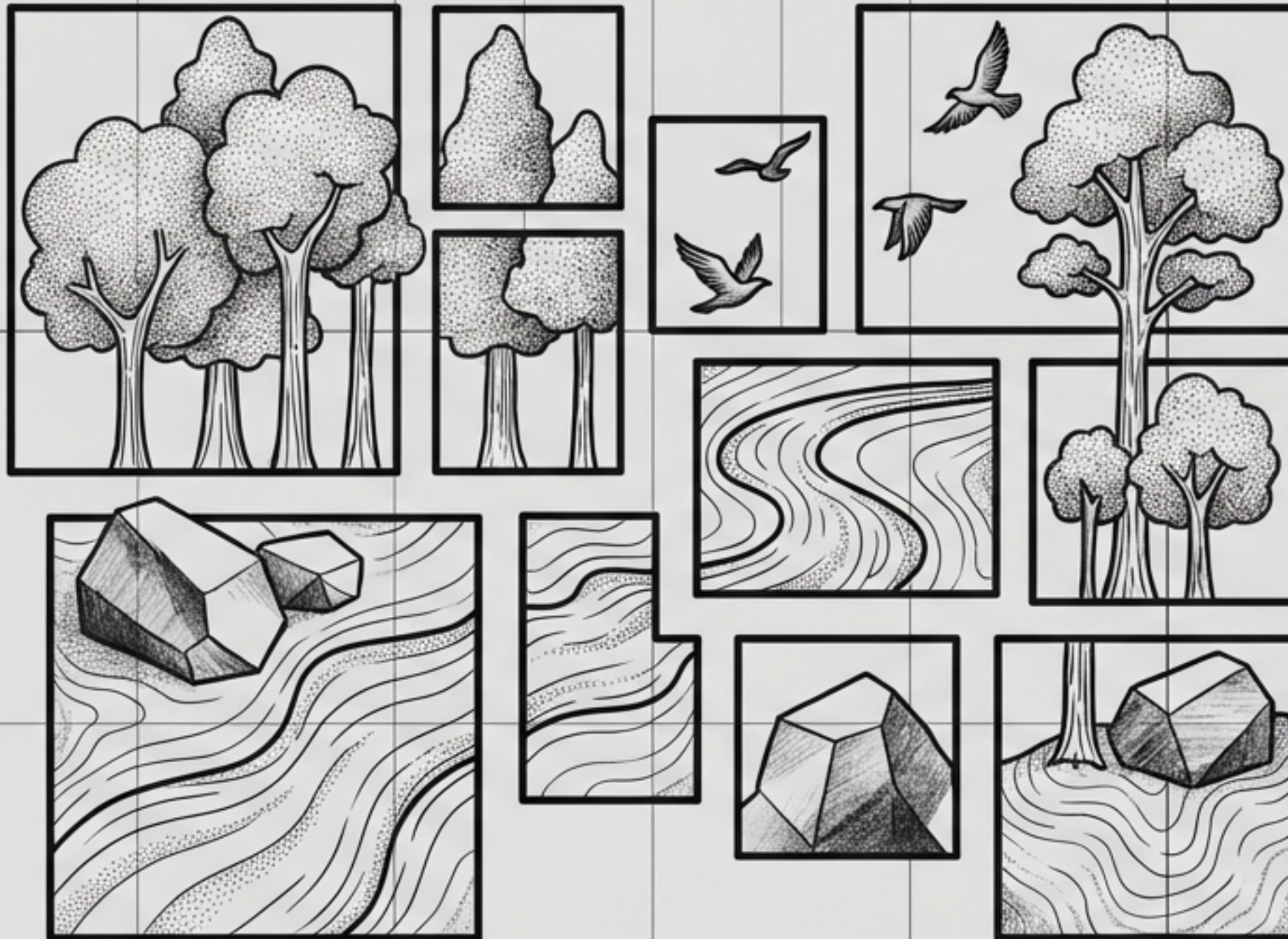
We frame ecological collapse as a material or political failure. But it is also a linguistic one.

Language is the infrastructure of the mind. It shapes agency, time, and relationship.

If our grammar encodes separation, our solutions will only rearrange the fragments. We need a new grammar of belonging.

English Feature 01: The Objectification of the World

Noun-Centrism

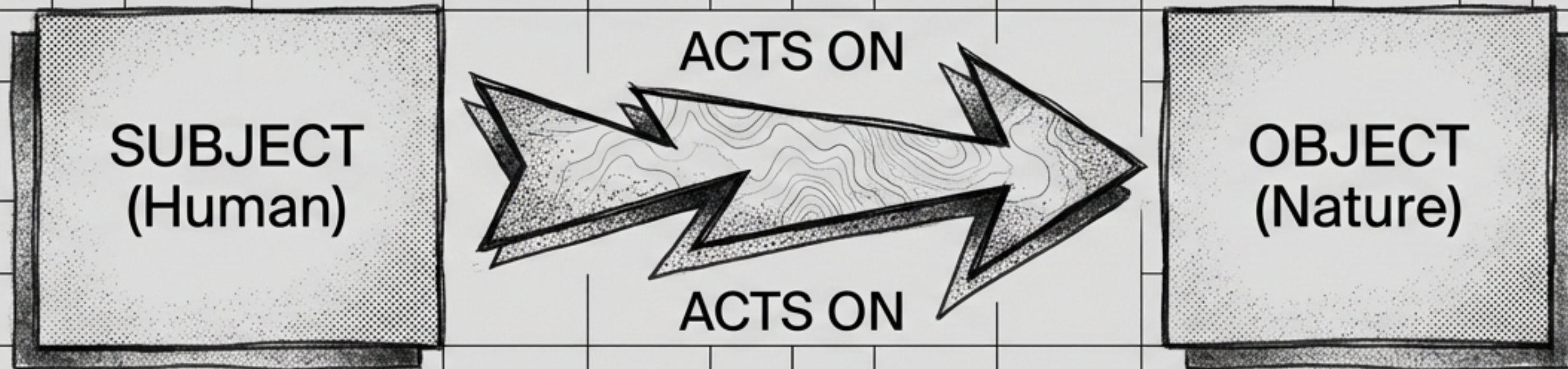


English foregrounds nouns (objects) over verbs (processes). We stabilize dynamic phenomena—flowing rivers, rotting logs, migrating birds—into static ‘things’.

The Consequence: Ecological processes are subordinated to entities. We see a ‘forest’ (object) rather than ‘foresteing’ (collective activity). We are trained to see a collection of parts rather than a living system.

English Feature 02: The Architecture of Separation

The Subject–Object Divide



English grammar demands a subject acting upon an object. This creates a "habitual semiotics of unilateral agency."

Example: "Humans manage the land."

The Consequence: Agency is restricted to the human subject. The land is grammatically rendered as a passive backdrop—an object to be protected, managed, or used, but never a participant.

English Feature 03: The Naturalization of Ownership

Possessive Grammar



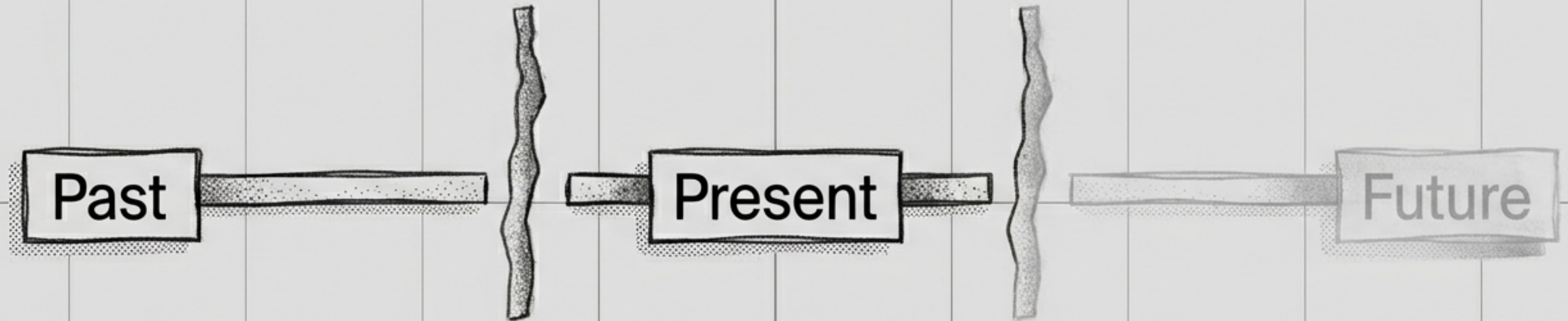
Quote: "You start to learn the mine-ness of things."
— Bob Randall

Analysis: In English, possession is grammatically effortless. Anything—rivers, ideas, time—can be marked as 'mine.' This linguistic habit smooths the path for extractive economies.

Comparison: In many Indigenous languages, one cannot 'own' land; one belongs to it. English makes property regimes feel like laws of nature.

English Feature 04: The Fragmentation of Time

Linear Temporality



Analysis: English tense morphology segments time into distinct slices. The future is grammatically distanced from the present.

The Consequence: Responsibility becomes deferrable. Intergenerational continuity is broken. We lose the sense of the "Always Now"—the ecological reality where ancestral actions and future consequences coexist in the present moment.

Enter the Living Field

Western Desert Languages
as Ecological Technologies



Spoken by Anangu people (Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Ngaanyatjarra), these languages are not just 'old'; they are sophisticated technologies for relational living.

Core Concept:

They do not describe a world of things. They enact a world of Tjukurpa—an ongoing field of relational becoming.

Western Desert Pillar 01: Reality is Movement

Verb-Centered Ontology

Contrast:

- **English:** Nouns anchor the sentence.
"What is it?"
- **Western Desert:** Verbs are the center.
"How is it happening?"

Insight:

Entities are just temporary participants in ongoing processes. Reality is a flow of events. To speak is to track movement—wind shifts, animal tracks, seasonal transitions.

V Verb

Western Desert Pillar 02: The Land Speaks

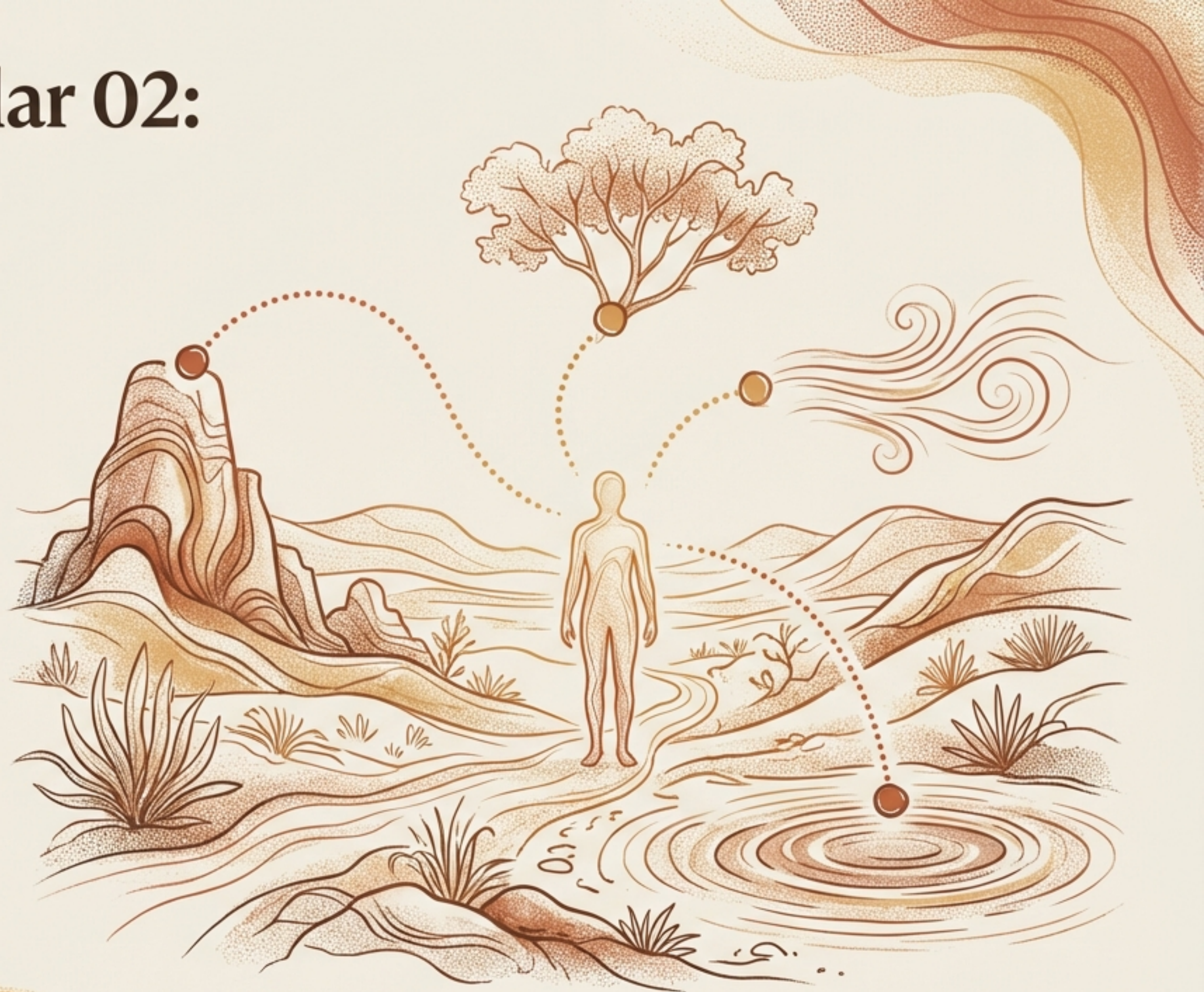
Distributed Agency

Suisse Int'l

Agency is not reserved for humans. Winds, hills, waterholes, and ancestors appear as grammatical subjects.

The Shift:

When Bob Randall said, "The hills were welcoming me," he wasn't using a metaphor. He was using a precise grammar where the Country is an active participant in the conversation. The land acts, responds, and teaches.



Western Desert Pillar 03: The Network is Primary

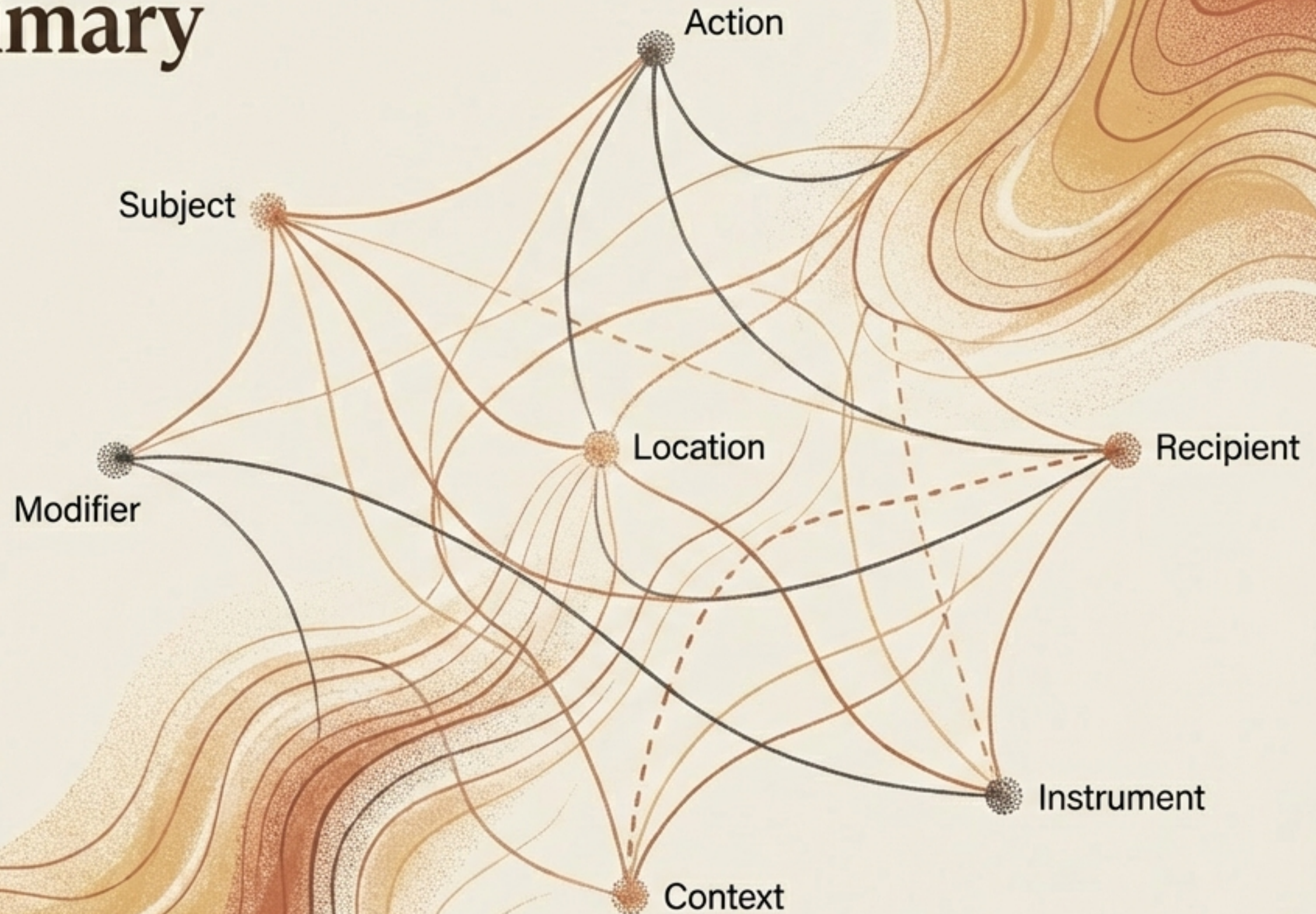
Relational Syntax

Analysis:

There is no obligatory order. The sentence functions like a network.

Significance:

This mirrors ecological causality. Multiple forces act simultaneously. No single agent dominates. No single agent dominates. The grammar forces the speaker to map the relationships between things, rather than just the things themselves.



Western Desert Pillar 04: The 'Always Now'

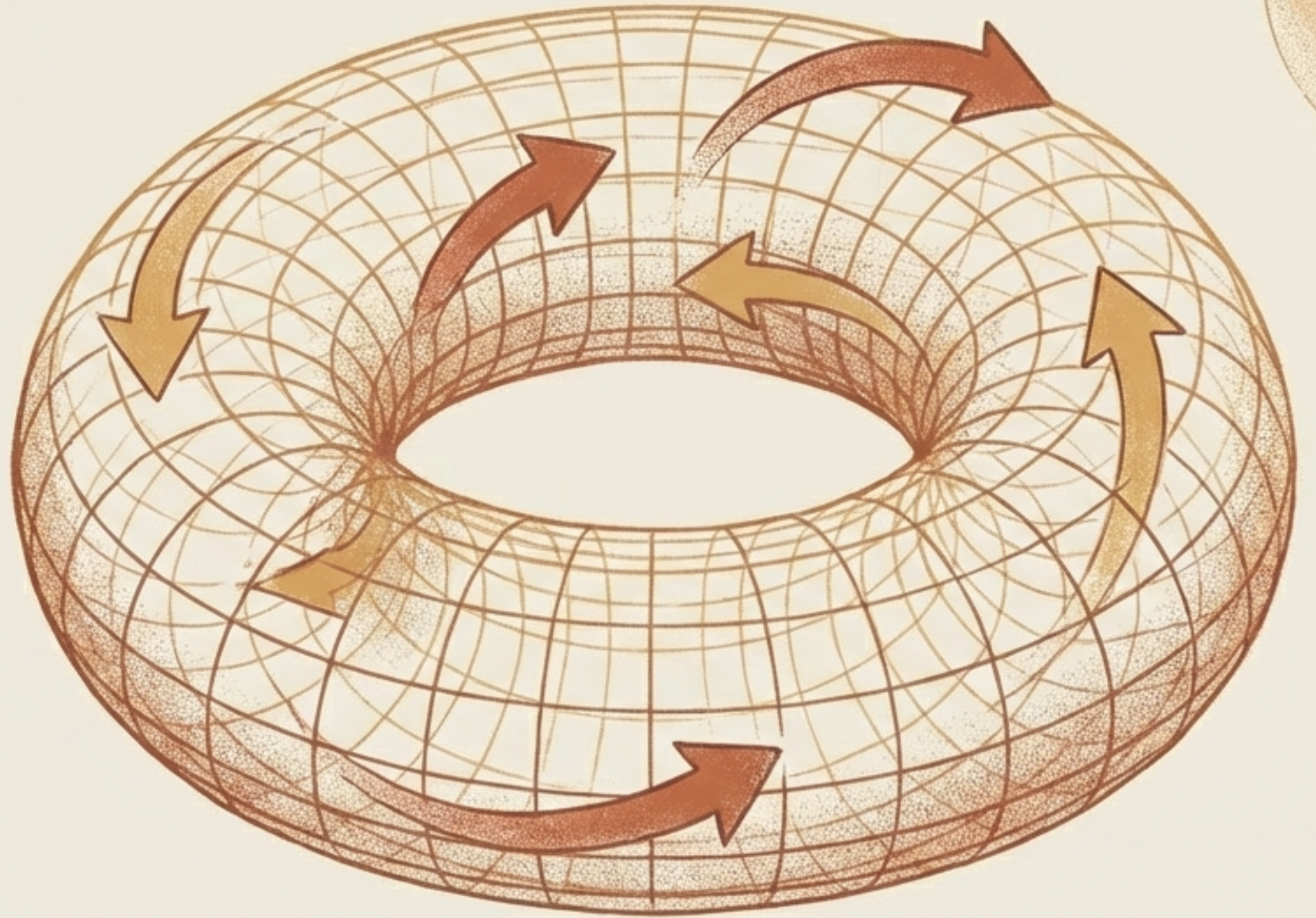
Continuing-Now Temporality

Key Concept: Tjukurpa.

Often mistranslated as "Dreaming," it is better understood as "Continuing Creation."

"In every moment we are connected to the truth of Tjukurpa... it is always now."
— Bob Randall

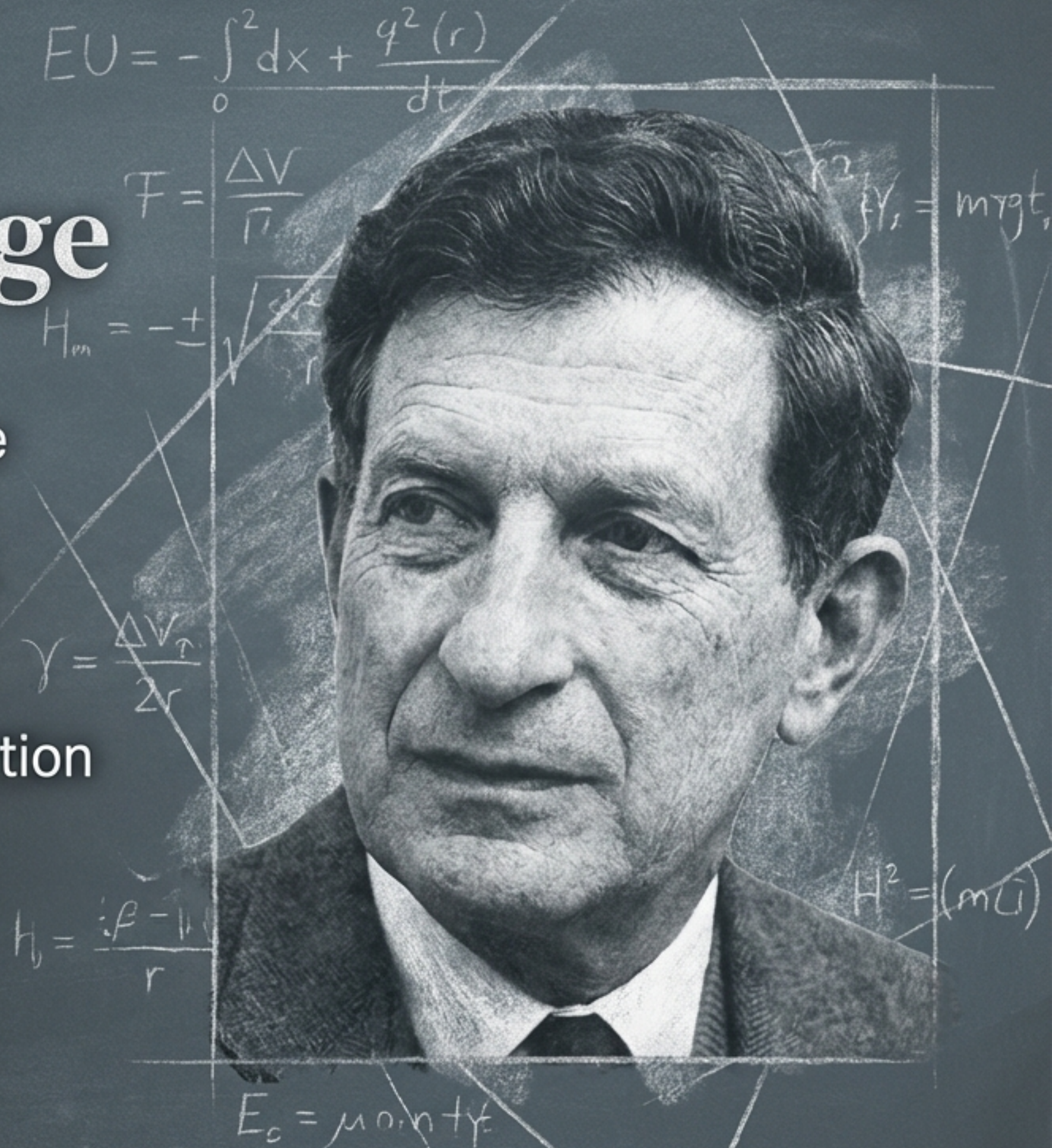
Grammar: Time is marked by Aspect (is it finished? is it ongoing?) rather than Tense (past/future). This keeps ancestral responsibility alive in the present.



The Physicist Who Ran Out of Language

David Bohm, a colleague of Einstein, discovered that at the quantum level, the universe is an "unbroken and undivided whole movement" (The Implicate Order).

The Problem: He couldn't explain it. He realized that English—with its fragmentation and noun-obsession—was preventing physicists from understanding the true nature of reality. He argued that our grammar was "falsifying perception."



The Experiment: The 'Rheomode'

Bohm attempted to invent a new mode of language called the Rheomode (from *rheo*, "flow"). He wanted a verb-based language to foreground process over stasis.

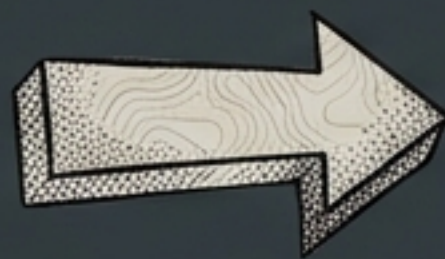
The Twist: It was an intellectual struggle. English resisted this structure. It felt awkward and artificial to the Western ear.

~~The leaf is green~~



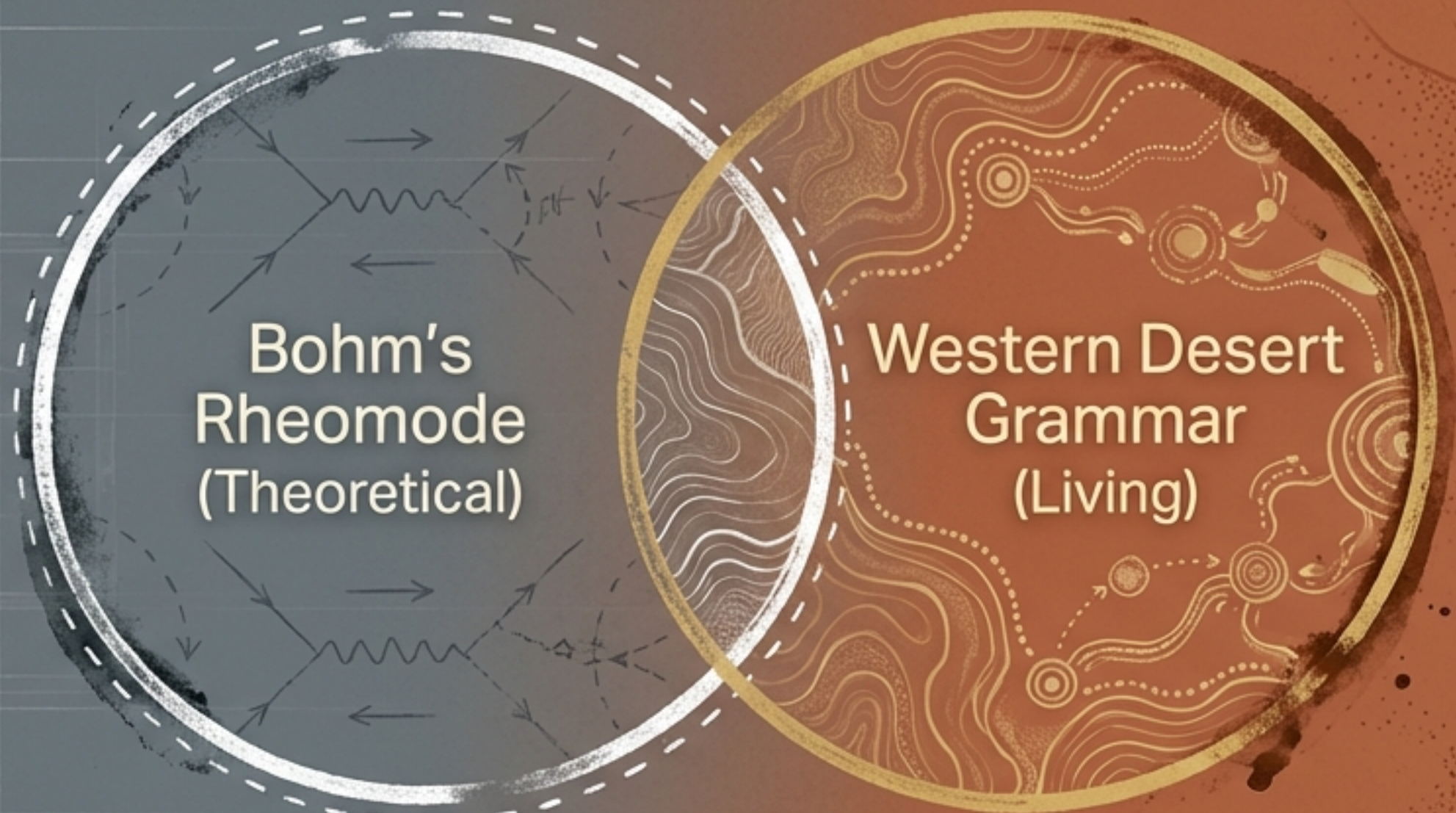
Leafing greenly

~~The mind has thoughts~~



Thoughting

The 'Rheomode' Already Existed



Bohm's
Rheomode
(Theoretical)

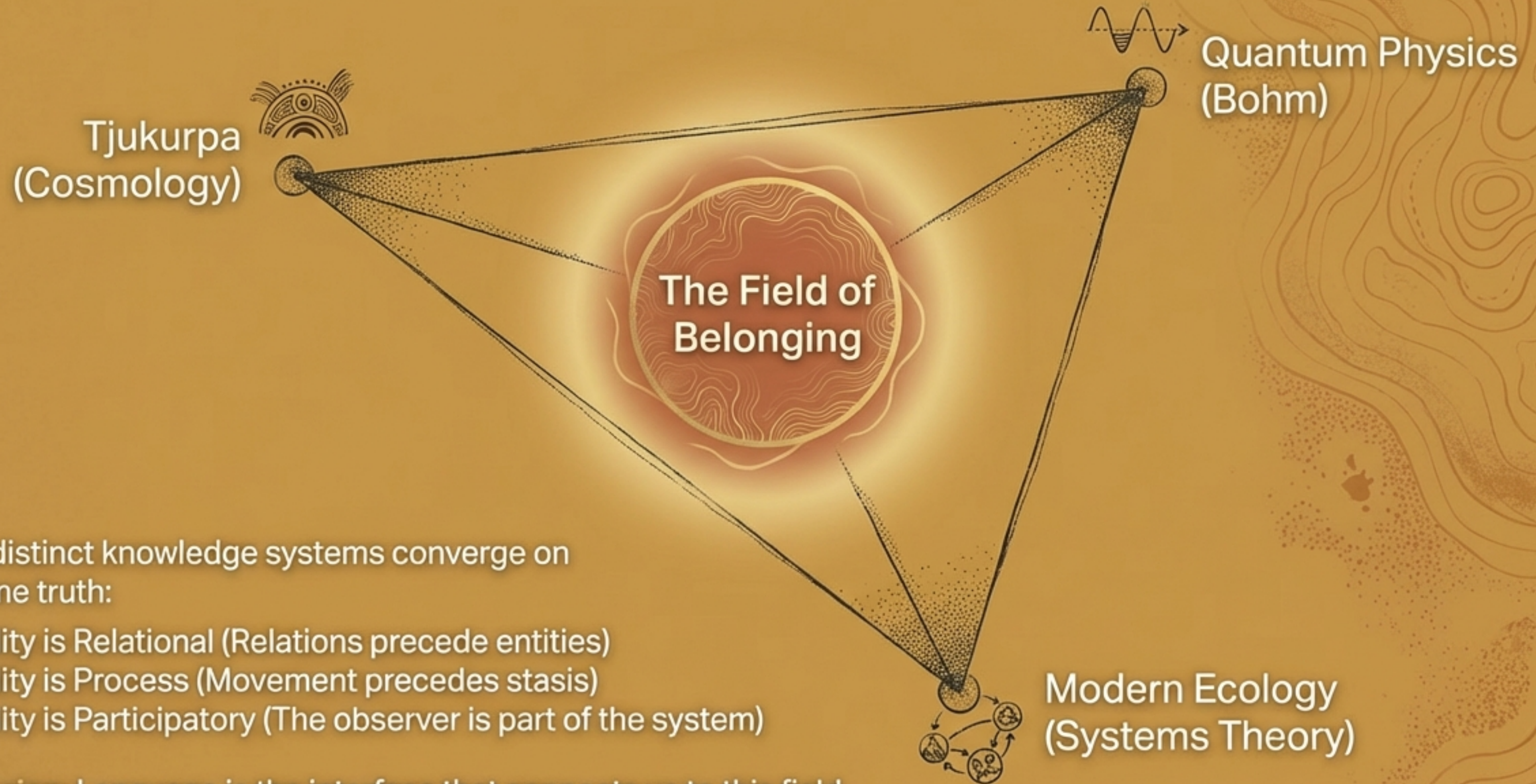
Western Desert
Grammar
(Living)

The linguistic architecture Bohm dreamed of—verb primacy, unfolding time, distributed agency—is the standard grammar of Western Desert languages.

Insight: This is not a romantic convergence; it is structural. Indigenous grammar creates the exact perceptual field that quantum physics suggests is the true nature of reality.

Takeaway: We don't need to invent a new language. We need to listen to the ones we tried to silence.

The Field of Belonging



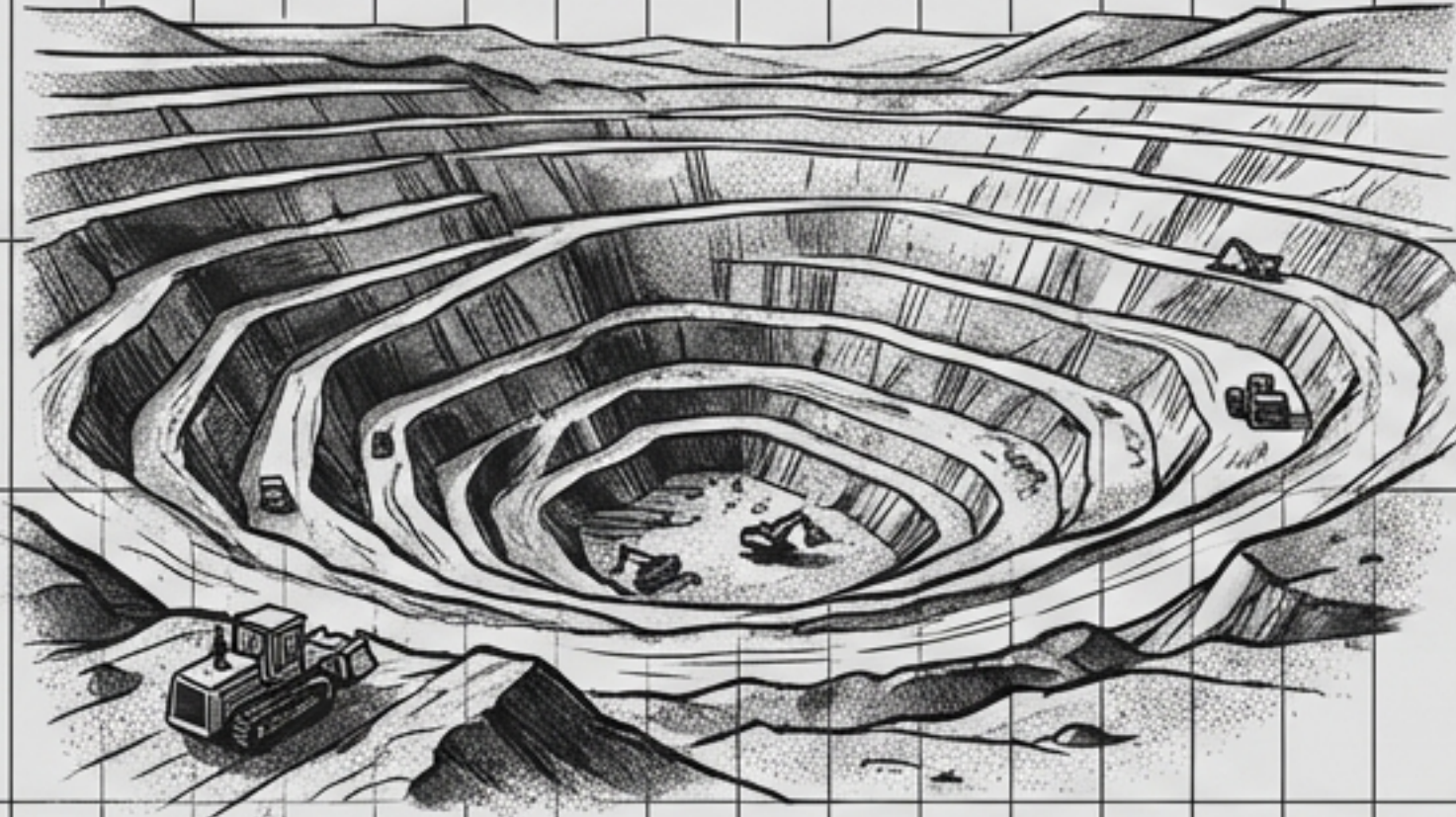
Three distinct knowledge systems converge on the same truth:

- Reality is Relational (Relations precede entities)
- Reality is Process (Movement precedes stasis)
- Reality is Participatory (The observer is part of the system)

Conclusion: Language is the interface that connects us to this field.

Grammar is Ecological Training

Heldane Display



EXTRACTION
(Objectification)



RECIPROCITY
(Kinship)

Language doesn't determine thought, but it builds the habits of perception.

- Object-dominant languages make extraction feel intuitive.
- Relational languages make reciprocity feel mandatory.

Insight: Ecological collapse is the result of a "broken conversation" with the Earth.

The Ecological Theory of Belonging

- 1. Ecological perception depends on the grammar through which relationships become visible.
- 2. Western Desert languages embody the 'physics of flow' required to perceive a whole earth.
- 3. Repairing the earth requires repairing our language. We must move from a **grammar of dominion** to a **grammar of animacy**.



Restoring the Relational Mind

We don't all need to speak Pitjantjatjara, but we must adopt a 'Relational Grammar'.

REVITALIZE

Support Indigenous language renewal as ecological knowledge systems.

REFRAME

In policy and education, speak of land as 'Kin,' not 'Resource.'

RECOGNIZE

Give grammatical subjecthood to rivers and forests in our stories (and laws).

PARTICIPATE

Shift from 'Managing nature' to 'Collaborating with Country.'

Wholeness is a Practice

**“We belong to the Earth, to each other...
Without a true sense of belonging you can’t be whole.”**

— Bob Randall

The land has never stopped speaking. We just need the grammar to hear it again.