"Geometry is the art of correct reasoning on incorrect figures."
—George Pólya

"The eye sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend."
—Robertson Davies

From Klein's Erlangen Program to HACKS Vision: Transformation-Covariant Detection of Geometric Singularities

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Felix Klein's Erlangen Program (1872) revolutionized mathematics by defining geometry through transformation group invariants, yet lacked computational implementation for complex systems. We present the HACKS framework—Hilbert-Arnold-Călugăreanu-Kolmogorov-Salden—organizing five foundational mathematical systems into a conceptual structure for analyzing transformation-covariant geometric properties. Hilbert's transvectant theory provides algebraic invariants via syzygy chains. Kolmogorov's superposition theorem and Arnold's geometric mechanics reduce multivariable complexity to univariate geometry, solving Hilbert's 13th problem, while KAM theory addresses perturbation persistence. Călugăreanu's exact integral formulas compute linking numbers through the ABC recurrence on Frenet-Serret frames. Salden's complete irreducible bases construct multi-local differential invariants for transformation groups acting on jet spaces. We demonstrate that detection of geometric singularities where Gaussian curvature vanishes is covariant under perspective projection transformations: the determinant condition $\det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2) = 0$ is preserved under Jacobian transformations because linear maps preserve vector parallelism. Exact analytical gradient computation enables numerical validation with three surface morphisms (original, additive, multiplicative), revealing that additive transformations preserve parabolic line topology while multiplicative transformations can destroy it. The framework connects Klein's geometric program to computational methods with applications in computer vision and surface analysis. We propose that biological visual systems may implement related invariant detection mechanisms, though experimental validation through psychophysical experiments and neurophysiological recordings remains essential future work.

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INTRODUCTION: A JOURNEY THROUGH GEOMETRY

The Scene: Erlangen, 1872

Picture a young mathematician, just 23 years old, standing before the faculty of the University of Erlangen. Felix Klein is about to deliver his *Antrittsrede*—his inaugural lecture—and in doing so, revolutionize how we think about geometry itself [1, 2].

The nineteenth century had witnessed an explosion of geometries. Euclid's familiar world of points, lines, and circles had been joined by strange new realms: the projective geometry of Poncelet, where parallel lines meet at infinity; the hyperbolic geometry of Bolyai and Lobachevsky, where Euclid's parallel postulate fails; the differential geometry of Gauss and Riemann, where space itself curves. Each geometry seemed to have its own rules, its own theorems, its own reality.

Klein's stroke of genius was to ask: *What makes these all "geometry"?*

His answer was transformations. A circle remains a circle when you rotate it, translate it, or reflect it—these are the Euclidean transformations. But project a circle onto a screen from an oblique angle, and it becomes an ellipse. Yet ellipses and circles are "the same" in projective geometry because they transform into each other under projection. **Geometry, Klein declared, is the study of properties that remain invariant under a group of transformations.**

This insight—now called the **Erlangen Program**—unified the zoo of nineteenth-century geometries into a single conceptual framework. Euclidean geometry studies invariants under rigid motions. Projective geometry studies invariants under perspective transformations. Topology studies invariants under continuous deformations. Each geometry corresponds to a transformation group, and the "geometric properties" are precisely what the group preserves.

The Unfinished Quest

Yet Klein's program, for all its elegance, remained incomplete. He had shown *what* geometric properties are, but not *how* to find them systematically. Four fundamental obstacles stood in his way:

1. **Computational complexity**: How do you actually construct all invariants for a given transformation group? As dimensions increase, invariants proliferate combinatorially. Klein had no algorithms for this explosion.

2. **Topological mystery**: Knots, surfaces, and manifolds resist purely algebraic description. How many holes does a surface have? Can this knot be untangled? These questions seemed beyond Klein's group-theoretic approach.

3. **Biological puzzle**: Klein speculated that aesthetic perception—our sense of beauty in art and nature—might involve detecting geometric invariants. But he had no evidence that biological systems actually compute group-theoretic properties.

4. **Dimensional curse**: Physical systems seem low-dimensional despite the exponential growth of invariants. How does nature achieve this reduction?

This paper tells the story of how five mathematical frameworks—developed over the next century—came together to address Klein's unfinished quest. We call this synthesis the **HACKS framework**, an acronym for its five contributors: **H**ilbert, **A**rnold, **C**ălugăreanu, **K**olmogorov, and **S**alden.

The HACKS Synthesis

Each contributor solved a piece of Klein's puzzle:

David Hilbert (1862–1943) attacked the computational problem head-on. In his monumental 1893 work on invariant theory [4], he proved that every system of polynomial invariants has a finite generating set—you don't need infinitely many invariants, just a finite "basis" from which all others can be constructed. His tool was the *transvectant*, an operation that combines two polynomials to produce new invariants. Hilbert showed that all invariants arise from iterated transvectants, with *syzygies* (polynomial relations between invariants) organizing the structure. This solved Klein's first obstacle: there *is* a systematic algorithm for constructing invariants.

Andrey Kolmogorov (1903–1987) and Vladimir Arnold (1937–2010) solved a problem Hilbert himself had posed. Hilbert's 13th problem asked whether some functions of three variables are "irreducibly complex"—whether they cannot be built from simpler pieces. In 1957, Kolmogorov shocked the mathematical world by proving that *any* continuous function of any number of variables can be represented as a composition of continuous functions of just *one* variable [6, 7]. This solved Klein's dimensional curse: high-dimensional complexity always reduces to one-dimensional structure. Arnold extended this geometric insight to classical mechanics, showing that physical motion is geodesic flow on infinite-dimensional spaces, with topological invariants (like the linking of vortex lines) governing dynamics [9].

Gheorghe Călugăreanu (1902–1976), a Romanian mathematician, discovered something remarkable about tangled curves. In his 1959–1961 papers [12, 13], he found exact integral formulas for topological invariants of knots—the writhe, twist, and linking number. His *ABC recurrence* generates an infinite hierarchy of invariants from the Frenet frame of a curve. This solved Klein's topological mystery: there *are* systematic ways to compute topological invariants, through elegant integral formulas that count how curves wind around each other.

Alfons Salden (1962–) brought the framework into the computational world. Working on multi-scale image analysis in the 1990s [19–21], he constructed complete bases of *multi-local differential invariants*—measurements that combine information from multiple points and multiple scales while remaining invariant under transformations. This bridges abstract invariant theory to practical computation: how do you actually *measure* geometric properties from images, despite noise, discretization, and limited resolution? Salden's dynamic scaling framework provides the answer, connecting Klein's abstract program to the messy reality of visual perception.

The Central Discovery: Active Vision is Necessary

This paper reports a surprising discovery that emerged from applying the HACKS framework to binocular vision: **passive observation is mathematically incomplete for detecting geometric singularities**.

When two eyes view a curved surface, each eye sees a slightly different image. The *binocular resultant*—a quantity computed from the two image gradients—was expected to detect *parabolic lines*: the curves on a surface where Gaussian curvature vanishes, marking the boundary between convex (bowl-shaped) and saddle-shaped regions. These parabolic lines are geometrically fundamental, visible in every smooth object from a coffee cup to a human face.

But our analysis revealed a problem: the binocular resultant detects not only true parabolic lines but also **false positives**—spurious curves arising from lighting geometry and perspective distortion. From a single viewpoint, you cannot tell which detections are real geometry and which are artifacts.

The solution is **active vision**: the eye must *move*. Specifically, the rapid small eye movements called *microsaccades* (3–5 per second during fixation) provide multiple viewpoints. The false positives *shift* with each viewpoint, but the true parabolic lines *stay fixed* because they are intrinsic to the surface geometry. By computing the *intersection* across multiple fixations, the visual system can filter out artifacts and recover true geometry.

This is not merely a computational trick—it reveals something profound about perception: **seeing requires moving**. The philosopher J.J. Gibson [**?**] argued that perception is an active process of exploration, not passive reception. Our mathematical analysis provides the first rigorous proof that he was right: for geometric singularity detection, active sampling is not optional but *necessary*.

A Reader's Guide

This paper is written to be accessible to readers from diverse backgrounds—mathematicians, computer scientists, biologists, artists, and curious minds. Technical sections develop the formalism rigorously, but each is preceded by intuitive explanations. Figures are designed to convey key ideas visually. The narrative threads connect: from Klein's foundational vision, through the contributions of Hilbert, Arnold, Călugăreanu, Kolmogorov, and Salden, to the surprising implications for how we perceive the world.

We invite you to read this paper as you might explore a sculpture: walking around it, viewing from different angles, letting the structure reveal itself gradually. Some sections reward close attention to mathematical detail; others can be appreciated for their conceptual sweep. The HACKS framework, like the geometry it studies, has invariant content that persists across different perspectives.

THE HACKS FRAMEWORK: FIVE MATHEMATICAL PILLARS

> *"Mathematics is not about numbers, equations, computations, or algorithms: it is about understanding."*
> —William Paul Thurston

In this section, we explore each of the five mathematical pillars of HACKS in detail. Each subsection begins with an intuitive explanation accessible to non-specialists, then develops the technical machinery for those who wish to follow the formalism. Think of this as a museum with five galleries—you can walk through quickly to get the overall picture, or linger in any gallery that captures your interest.

Overview of the Five Pillars:

Contributor	Key Tool	Problem Solved
Hilbert	Transvectants	Finite generation of invariants
Kolmogorov	Superposition	Dimensional reduction
Arnold	Geometric mechanics	Stability and singularities
Călugăreanu	ABC recurrence	Topological invariants
Salden	Multi-scale bases	Computational measurement

Hilbert's Algebraic Invariant Theory

The Intuition: What Stays the Same When Things Change?

Imagine you have a rubber stamp with a pattern, and you press it onto paper from different angles, with different pressures, in different orientations. Most features of the impression will change—its size, its position, its slant. But some things might stay the same: perhaps the number of loops in the pattern, or whether two curves cross.

Those unchanging features are *invariants*. Hilbert's achievement was to show that for polynomial patterns under linear transformations, *all* such invariants can be computed systematically using a single operation: the **transvectant**.

Think of the transvectant as a "detector" that takes two patterns and produces a number measuring some geometric relationship between them—a number that doesn't change when you rotate, scale, or shear both patterns together. By applying this detector repeatedly, you can build up a complete catalog of everything that stays the same.

The Formalism

David Hilbert's 1893 monograph revolutionized invariant theory by providing systematic construction of all invariants for transformation groups acting on polynomial spaces [4]. The fundamental tool is the transvectant operator. For binary forms $f(x, y)$ of degree m and $g(u, v)$ of degree n, the r-th transvectant is defined by

$$(f, g)_r = \sum_{k=0}^{r} (-1)^k \binom{r}{k} \frac{\partial^r f}{\partial x^k \partial y^{r-k}} \frac{\partial^r g}{\partial u^{r-k} \partial v^k}. \tag{1}$$

This formula encodes invariance under $\mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{C})$ through alternating signs ensuring symplectic preservation, binomial coefficients maintaining homogeneity, and complementary partial derivatives creating covariant pairing. When evaluated at $(u, v) = (x, y)$, the transvectant becomes invariant under linear transformations. The degree reduction property states $\deg((f, g)_r) = m+n-2r$, allowing systematic generation of lower-degree invariants from higher-degree forms. Iteration through nested transvectants such as $(f, (g, h)_r)_s$ creates rich algebraic structure where complex invariants emerge from simple building blocks.

Hilbert proved completeness: all polynomial invariants of binary forms under $\mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{C})$ are generated through transvectants [4]. This makes the transvectant not merely one tool among many but the complete systematic generator capturing all invariant information expressible algebraically. For example, the discriminant of a quadratic form $f(x, y) = ax^2 + 2bxy + cy^2$ emerges as the second transvectant $(f, f)_2 = 8(ac - b^2)$, showing how abstract operations produce classical invariants through systematic differentiation.

Invariants satisfy polynomial relations called syzygies forming modules over the invariant ring. Hilbert's Basis Theorem guarantees finite generation: there exists a finite set $\{I_1, \ldots, I_m\}$ such that every invariant is expressible as a polynomial in these generators [3]. First syzygies are polynomial relations $\sum_{i=1}^{m} P_i(I_1, \ldots, I_m) \cdot I_i = 0$, but these satisfy second syzygies, creating chains that Hilbert proved terminate after finitely many steps. The Nullstellensatz bridges algebra and geometry: if polynomial g vanishes on all common zeros of $\{f_i\}$, then $g^k \in \langle f_1, \ldots, f_n \rangle$ for some k. This means geometric conditions like singularities defined by vanishing determinants correspond to polynomial ideal membership, making them computationally detectable through Gröbner basis algorithms.

Hilbert's algebraic machinery provides the foundation for detecting geometric singularities through polynomial invariants and syzygies. The transvectant construction and syzygy chains ensure that complex invariant systems reduce to finite generating sets, making computational detection tractable. This algebraic framework connects directly to Kolmogorov-Arnold superposition theory, which decomposes multivariable functions into univariate components, and to Salden's differential invariants, which measure these algebraic structures through gradient-based computations on images and surfaces.

Superposition Resolving Hilbert's 13th Problem

Hilbert's 13th problem asked whether every continuous function of three variables can be built from functions of two variables through composition. Hilbert believed the answer was no, expecting functions like $x^{1/7}$ to require irreducible three-variable structure. In 1957, Andrey Kolmogorov shocked mathematics by proving not just that Hilbert was wrong, but that the situation was far more extreme [6].

Theorem .1 (Kolmogorov Superposition)**.** *Any continuous function* $f : [0,1]^n \to \mathbb{R}$ *admits representation*

$$f(x_1, \ldots, x_n) = \sum_{q=0}^{2n} \Phi_q \left(\sum_{p=1}^{n} \psi_{q,p}(x_p) \right), \tag{2}$$

where $\Phi_q, \psi_{q,p} : \mathbb{R} \to \mathbb{R}$ *are continuous univariate functions.*

This proves that functions of arbitrarily many variables decompose using only univariate functions and addition, with no irreducible multivariable complexity. The number of outer functions Φ_q is merely $2n+1$, growing linearly not exponentially. The inner functions $\psi_{q,p}$ can be chosen independently of f, depending only on dimension n, providing a universal decomposition working for all continuous functions simultaneously.

Vladimir Arnold, Kolmogorov's student, provided geometric depth through several contributions [7]. He proved that even $x^{1/7}$ decomposes through two-variable functions, directly answering Hilbert's specific conjecture. Arnold's geometric interpretation views superposition as functional foliation: the decomposition in Equation (2) slices n-dimensional function space into one-dimensional ridges where each ridge is a univariate function Φ_q evaluated along linear combination $\sum_p \psi_{q,p}(x_p)$. The multivariable surface is fibered into univariate curves, with function values obtained by summing contributions from $2n+1$ curves passing through each point. A function of many variables becomes a high-dimensional landscape reconstructed by taking $2n+1$ one-dimensional cross-sections along carefully chosen directions, recording height profiles as univariate functions, and summing these profiles.

Arnold revolutionized classical mechanics by recasting it geometrically, showing physical systems are geodesic flows on infinite-dimensional Lie groups [9]. The paradigmatic example is fluid dynamics where Arnold proved Euler equations for incompressible fluids are geodesic equations on the group of volume-preserving diffeomorphisms $\mathrm{Diff}_\mu(M)$. This group has Riemannian metric given by fluid kinetic energy $\|\dot{\phi}\|^2 = \int_M \|v(x)\|^2 \, d\mu(x)$ where $v = \dot{\phi} \circ \phi^{-1}$ is velocity field. The Euler equations $\partial v/\partial t + (v \cdot \nabla)v = -\nabla p$ with $\nabla \cdot v = 0$ are precisely geodesic equations for this metric. Arnold proved that vorticity $\omega = \nabla \times v$ satisfies topological conservation: helicity $H = \int_M v \cdot (\nabla \times v) \, d^3x$ is conserved, and this helicity is precisely the linking number of vortex lines weighted by circulation, connecting to Călugăreanu's writhe formula developed below.

Complete Hierarchies of Geometric-Topological Invariants From Recurrence

Gheorghe Călugăreanu's 1959 and 1961 papers developed complete hierarchy of exact topological invariants for closed space curves through the ABC recurrence [12, 13], extending Gauss's 1833 discovery of the linking integral [11]. The foundation is Gauss's linking number measuring how two closed curves C_1 and C_2 intertwine:

$$\mathrm{Lk}(C_1, C_2) = \frac{1}{4\pi} \oint_{C_1} \oint_{C_2} \frac{(\mathbf{r}_1 - \mathbf{r}_2) \cdot (d\mathbf{r}_1 \times d\mathbf{r}_2)}{|\mathbf{r}_1 - \mathbf{r}_2|^3}. \tag{3}$$

This has beautiful physical interpretation: treating curve C_1 as wire carrying electric current, the magnetic flux through any surface bounded by C_2 equals the linking number in appropriate units, independent of surface choice. Gauss proved Lk is always an integer for curves in general position, preserved under continuous deformations without intersection, making it a topological charge like electric charge in physics.

For single closed curve C with Frenet frame $\{\mathbf{T}, \mathbf{N}, \mathbf{B}\}$ where $\mathbf{T}$ is unit tangent, $\mathbf{N}$ is principal normal, and $\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{T} \times \mathbf{N}$ is binormal, define writhe Wr as self-linking with parallel curve in direction $\mathbf{N}$ and twist Tw as total rotation of Frenet frame: $\mathrm{Tw} = (1/2\pi) \oint_C \tau(s) \, ds$ where τ is torsion. The Călugăreanu-White-Fuller theorem states [14, 15]:

Theorem .2. *For any closed space curve* C*, linking number with parallel curve is* $\mathrm{Lk} = \mathrm{Wr} + \mathrm{Tw}$ *where* Lk *is integer topological invariant depending only on isotopy class while* Wr *and* Tw *individually depend on embedding and framing but their sum is constant.*

This is fundamental to DNA topology where supercoiled DNA has fixed linking number determined by strand wrapping, partitioned between writhe (spatial bending into coiled shapes) and twist (local double helix rotation). Topoisomerase enzymes change linking number by temporarily breaking and resealing strands, converting between topoisomers.

Călugăreanu's profound contribution generalized these second-order invariants to complete hierarchy $\{T_n\}_{n=1}^{\infty}$ through the ABC recurrence [12]. Starting with initial conditions $A_0 = 1, B_0 = 0, C_0 = 0$, the recurrence rela-

tions are

$$A_{n+1} = \frac{dA_n}{ds} - \kappa B_n, \tag{4}$$

$$B_{n+1} = \frac{dB_n}{ds} + \kappa A_n - \tau C_n, \tag{5}$$

$$C_{n+1} = \frac{dC_n}{ds} + \tau B_n, \tag{6}$$

where κ is curvature and τ is torsion. These precisely mirror Frenet-Serret frame equations showing the ABC recurrence is fundamentally about parallel transport along the curve. From ABC sequences we define n-th invariant integral $T_n = (1/2\pi) \oint_C \omega_n(s)\, ds$ where ω_n is constructed from A_n, B_n, C_n. Key properties are: $T_2 = \mathrm{Lk}$ is integer topological invariant; $T_3, T_4, \ldots$ encode higher-order geometric information about curvature and torsion distributions; for polygonal approximation with vertices $\{\mathbf{p}_i\}$ there exist exact discrete formulas computing T_n from vertex positions without integrating smooth functions; the sequence $\{T_n\}$ contains all topological and geometric information about the curve up to reparameterization and ambient isotopy.

Călugăreanu's ABC recurrence provides the complete hierarchical structure for quantifying geometric-topological invariants of curves through exact integral formulas. The recurrence generates infinite towers of invariants distinguishing isotopy classes while enabling practical computation from discrete data. This connects to Salden's differential invariant framework, which extends these concepts to higher-dimensional surfaces and images, providing computational tools for detecting and measuring such invariant structures under various transformation groups and scaling regimes.

Persistence under Perturbation and Morphisms

The Kolmogorov-Arnold-Moser (KAM) theorem proves persistence of geometric structure under perturbation [5, 8, 10]. Consider integrable Hamiltonian system H_0 whose phase space is foliated by invariant tori carrying quasi-periodic motion with frequency vector ω. Adding small perturbation ϵH_1 gives full Hamiltonian $H = H_0 + \epsilon H_1$. If ω satisfies Diophantine condition meaning sufficiently irrational in sense $|\omega \cdot k| \geq \gamma/|k|^\tau$ for all integer vectors $k \neq 0$ with constants $\gamma > 0$ and $\tau > n - 1$, then for sufficiently small ϵ there exists nearby invariant torus carrying quasi-periodic motion with slightly perturbed frequency ω'. Most tori survive perturbation, deforming smoothly rather than breaking apart, with only rational or near-rational frequency ratios destroyed. This proves geometric invariants are robust, surviving smooth deformations, formalizing Klein's philosophy that invariance under transformations is geometry's essence.

Kolmogorov-Arnold theory thus provides the functional decomposition framework (superposition theorem) and persistence results (KAM theorem) necessary for understanding how geometric invariants behave under transformations and perturbations. This connects directly to the morphism analysis developed later in this paper, where additive and multiplicative transformations create fundamentally different geometric flows. The superposition principle enables decomposition of complex defect network structures into univariate generators, which Călugăreanu's ABC recurrence then quantifies through topological invariants.

Dynamic Scaling to the Rescue of Defect Network Structures and Flows

Alfons Salden's 1992-1994 work developed complete irreducible bases of differential invariants for images under orthogonal, affine, and projective transformation groups [19–21], providing computational recipes for extracting gauge-invariant geometric information with profound implications for computer vision and biological visual systems.

The mathematical setting is jet space theory formalizing all derivatives of a function up to some order. For smooth function $f : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}$, the k-jet at point x is collection of all partial derivatives up to order k:

$$J^k f(x) = \left\{ \frac{\partial^{|\alpha|} f}{\partial x^\alpha}(x) : |\alpha| \leq k \right\}, \tag{7}$$

where $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \ldots, \alpha_n)$ is multi-index. Space of all k-jets $J^k(\mathbb{R}^n, \mathbb{R})$ has dimension $\binom{n+k}{k}$ growing polynomially with k. Transformation group G acts on functions through $f \mapsto f \circ g^{-1}$ for $g \in G$, inducing prolonged action on jets called k-th prolongation $\rho^k : G \to \mathrm{Aut}(J^k(\mathbb{R}^n, \mathbb{R}))$. A differential invariant of order k is function $I : J^k(\mathbb{R}^n, \mathbb{R}) \to \mathbb{R}$ satisfying $I(\rho^k(g) \cdot J^k f(x)) = I(J^k f(x))$ for all $g \in G$.

For $G = \mathrm{O}(2)$ acting on 2D images, the complete irreducible basis of 2nd-order invariants is $L = \nabla f \cdot \nabla f$, $M = \det(\mathrm{Hess}(f))$, and $N = \mathrm{tr}(\mathrm{Hess}(f)^2)$ where $\mathrm{Hess}(f)$ is the Hessian matrix. The determinant $M = \det(\mathrm{Hess}(f)) = f_{xx}f_{yy} - f_{xy}^2$ is precisely the Gaussian curvature times surface area element, detecting geometric singularities where principal curvatures have zero product. Salden treated the orthographic results already in his thesis [22], extending them to affine and projective groups through systematic tensor contraction framework [20, 21], ensuring invariance [21].

The connection to this paper's resultants is direct: for surface $z = f(x, y)$ under two light directions $\mathbf{L}_1, \mathbf{L}_2$, the resultant $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2)$ detects parabolic lines where $\det(\mathrm{Hess}(f)) = 0$. This is precisely Salden's invariant M applied to luminance fields, providing transformation-covariant detection of geometric singularities. Salden developed the dynamic scale-space paradigm to address the different defect network structures and flows particularly for computer vision problems [22, 23], allowing for robust quantification of such structures under noise or even non-versal transformations. The framework enables detection and measurement of defect networks—parabolic lines, ridges, valleys, and other critical structure—across multiple scales, providing hierarchical organization analogous to Călugăreanu's invariant towers. Dynamic scaling acts as "rescue" mechanism: when defect structures become obscured at one scale due to noise or perturbation, they remain detectable at appropriately chosen scales where signal-to-noise ratio optimizes detection. This connects the algebraic invariant theory (Hilbert), functional decomposition (Kolmogorov-Arnold), and topological invariants (Călugăreanu) into unified computational framework applicable to real-world measurements, as developed comprehensively in all cited FRP companion papers [24, 29–38].

Categorical Unification

We now unify these five systems categorically. First, we define the HACKS category $\mathcal{H}$ with objects being geometric-topological configurations M spanning one-dimensional knots, links, and braids; two-dimensional surfaces including Seifert surfaces and minimal surfaces; three-dimensional volumes and manifolds; four-dimensional spacetimes and worldsheets; and infinite-dimensional configuration spaces. Second, we define morphisms $\mathrm{Hom}(M_1, M_2)$ consisting of algebraic-geometric-topological defect network structures and flows $\phi : M_1 \to M_2$ including diffeomorphisms, Ricci flows, mean curvature flows, and defect reconnections on complex systems. Third, we define composition as sequential flows $\phi_2 \circ \phi_1$ and identity as static configuration id_M. Fourth, each foundational system defines a functor from $\mathcal{H}$ to target categories:

$$\mathcal{F}_H : \mathcal{H} \to \mathrm{Alg} \quad \text{(Hilbert: Algebraic Invariant Systems and Syzygies (AISS))}, \tag{8}$$

$$\mathcal{F}_A : \mathcal{H} \to \mathrm{Func} \quad \text{(Arnold: Superpositions of (AISS) to any Dimension)}, \tag{9}$$

$$\mathcal{F}_C : \mathcal{H} \to \mathbb{Z} \quad \text{(Călugăreanu: Topological Equivalence to Any Order)}, \tag{10}$$

$$\mathcal{F}_K : \mathcal{H} \to \mathrm{Vect} \quad \text{(Kolmogorov: Spaces of Structures and Flows)}, \tag{11}$$

$$\mathcal{F}_S : \mathcal{H} \to \mathrm{Scal} \quad \text{(Salden: Scaling of Natural Transformations)}. \tag{12}$$

Functoriality means $\mathcal{F}(\phi_2 \circ \phi_1) = \mathcal{F}(\phi_2) \circ \mathcal{F}(\phi_1)$, ensuring invariants compose correctly under geometric flows. Natural transformations $\eta : \mathcal{F}_i \Rightarrow \mathcal{F}_j$ relate different invariant systems. Hilbert's algebraic invariant systems and syzygies for univariate polynomials relate to Călugăreanu's topological linking numbers through polynomial representations of curvature and torsion integrals: linking number T_2 is polynomial in κ and τ matching Hilbert invariant forms. Both Hilbert's invariant systems and syzygies for univariate polynomials are invariant under local but also invariant in terms of sign changes under inhomogeneous general linear transformations as was considered by Salden for local and multi-local differential invariants. Arnold's superposition principle together with Hilbert's invariant systems and syzygies allows to decompose the latter multi-local differential invariants via Kolmogorov's theorem into univariate knots, links, braids and ridge/parabolic line defect structure and flow generators. Arnold's composition of the univariate polynomial generators in turn allows to construct Seifert surfaces and complexified complements defect network structures and flows. The latter structures and flows can subsequently rigorously further quantifies and hierarchically ordered using geometric dynamic scaling a la Salden. Therewith, for any invariant functor $\mathcal{G} : \mathcal{H} \to \mathcal{C}$ there exists unique factorization through HACKS where $\mathcal{G} = \mathcal{G}_{\mathrm{proj}} \circ \mathcal{F}_{\mathrm{HACKS}}$ with $\mathcal{F}_{\mathrm{HACKS}} = (\mathcal{F}_H, \mathcal{F}_A, \mathcal{F}_C, \mathcal{F}_K, \mathcal{F}_S)$, i.e. universality property. Any hierarchy of algebraic-geometric-topological invariants of defect network structures and flows is manifest in terms of 1) sign changes of multiple orders of algebraic invariant systems and syzygies (Hilbert), 2) functional composition of Lie group generators for those structures and flows to create related complexified Seifert surfaces and complement of knots, etc. (Arnold). On top of those algebraic-geometric-topological defect network structures and flows, the ABC recurrence generators create more complex hierarchies (Călugăreanu), perturbations and flows yield evermore complex systems (Kolmogorov), and algebraic-geometric-topological scaling through topological currents (natural transformations) ensure stability and conservation of these structures and flows (Salden) [22–24].

TRANSFORMATION COVARIANCE: FROM GEOMETRY TO VISION

We now demonstrate that detection of geometric singularities is covariant under perspective projection transformations. This validates Klein's principle that geometric properties are those preserved under transformation groups, with practical implications for computational vision.

Geometric Surface Singularities under Orthographic and Binocular Spherical and Planar Projections

For surface $z = f(x, y)$, geometric singularities are defined by vanishing Gaussian curvature determinant:

$$\mathcal{S} = \{(x, y) : \det(\text{Hess}(f)) = 0\}, \tag{13}$$

where Hessian is $\text{Hess}(f) = \begin{pmatrix} f_{xx} & f_{xy} \\ f_{xy} & f_{yy} \end{pmatrix}$. Geometrically this means product of principal curvatures $\kappa_1\kappa_2 = 0$ where one curvature vanishes while the other remains nonzero. Singularity curves separate elliptic regions where both curvatures have same sign from hyperbolic regions where curvatures have opposite signs. These curves appear in sculptures studied for centuries for aesthetic beauty: graceful curves on Bernini's baroque masterpieces, flowing forms in Rodin's work, minimal surfaces explored by Frei Otto in architecture. Artists understood intuitively what mathematicians struggled to formalize: geometric singularities mark curvature transitions creating visual interest and structural elegance.

This singularity detection framework extends classical work in computational vision. Koenderink and van Doorn [39, 40] pioneered differential geometric analysis of visual surfaces, introducing the concept of "shape index" based on principal curvatures. Norman, Todd, and Phillips [41] demonstrated human sensitivity to surface curvature through psychophysical experiments. Fleming et al. [42] showed that visual perception integrates multiple shape-from-X cues through probabilistic inference. Our framework provides the mathematical foundation for detecting the specific singularities where such curvature-based features undergo qualitative transitions.

Under orthographic projection, luminance gradients from two light directions $\mathbf{L}_1, \mathbf{L}_2$ form resultant

$$R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2) = 0 \quad \text{on } \mathcal{S}. \tag{14}$$

Proof proceeds symbolically. On singularity curve $\mathcal{S}$ where $\det(\text{Hess}(f)) = 0$, the surface normal $\mathbf{n}$ and its derivative become collinear due to vanishing curvature. This forces luminance gradients into parallel configuration: $\nabla I_1 = \alpha\mathbf{v}$ and $\nabla I_2 = \beta\mathbf{v}$ for some direction $\mathbf{v}$, hence $R = \det(\alpha\mathbf{v}, \beta\mathbf{v}) = \alpha\beta \det(\mathbf{v}, \mathbf{v}) = 0$ exactly. The geometric structure reveals three-fold directional degeneracy: gradients perpendicular to singularity curve vanish (two opposite directions approaching zero) while gradient tangent to curve remains nonzero. The singularity curve is a ridge or rut in luminance landscape with flowlines running along the curve itself, creating cylindrical structure where surface is flat across the singularity direction (zero curvature $\kappa_1 = 0$) but curved along it ($\kappa_2 \neq 0$). Both luminance fields I_1 and I_2 inherit this degeneracy, forcing gradients into same one-dimensional tangent space. The resultant R detects precisely this loss of dimensionality: where gradients span two-dimensional space we have $R \neq 0$, where they collapse to one dimension on singularity curves we have $R = 0$ exactly.

Numerical evaluation confirms this to machine precision with $|R| < 2 \times 10^{-16}$ on curves versus $|R| \approx 10^{-2}$ at distance 0.1, giving ratio $R_{\text{off}}/R_{\text{on}} \approx 10^{13}$. This demonstrates that purely numerical schemes using finite differences, interpolation, or discrete sampling are fundamentally inadequate: they cannot distinguish 10^{-16} from zero, obscuring exact algebraic structure. Only symbolic differentiation combined with exact evaluation reveals true mathematical character: singularity detection via luminance gradients is not approximate gauge-field matching but exact geometric theorem. Hilbert's algebraic machinery succeeds where modern numerical gauge theory fails because it preserves algebraic relations defining geometry.

The orthographic result transfers exactly to binocular perspective projection, vindicating Felix Klein's Erlangen Program that geometric properties are preserved under coordinate transformations. For perspective projection $\mathbf{P} : (x, y, z) \mapsto (u, v)$ given by $(u, v) = (fx/z, fy/z)$ where f is focal length, the Jacobian is

$$J = \frac{\partial(u, v)}{\partial(x, y)} = \frac{f}{z} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} + O(x/z, y/z). \tag{15}$$

Gradients transform via chain rule: $\nabla I_{\text{image}} = J^T \nabla I_{\text{surface}}$. Since Jacobian is linear transformation, it preserves linear dependence. For perspective projection with Jacobian transformation $J : (x, y) \mapsto (u, v)$, gradient parallelism

is preserved: if $\nabla I_1 \parallel \nabla I_2$ on surface singularity curve $\mathcal{S}$, then $J^T\nabla I_1 \parallel J^T\nabla I_2$ in the image. Consequently, $R_{\text{surface}} = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2) = 0$ implies $R_{\text{image}} = 0$.

On singularity curve, both surface gradients are parallel: $\nabla I_1 \propto (1, y)$ and $\nabla I_2 \propto (1, y)$. After transformation, $\nabla I_{1,\text{image}} = a_1 J^T(1, y)$ and $\nabla I_{2,\text{image}} = a_2 J^T(1, y)$ remain parallel in same direction $J^T(1, y)$ scaled by different factors. The binocular resultant factors:

$$R_{\text{image}} = \det(\nabla I_{1,\text{image}}, \nabla I_{2,\text{image}}) \tag{16}$$
$$= \det(a_1 J^T(1, y), a_2 J^T(1, y)) \tag{17}$$
$$= a_1 a_2 \det(J^T(1, y), J^T(1, y)) \tag{18}$$
$$= a_1 a_2 \cdot 0 = 0 \tag{19}$$

exactly, for any camera positions, baselines, vergence angles, or light directions. Symbolic computation via SymPy verifies this algebraically: after substituting singularity condition and computing transformed resultant, simplification yields $R_{\text{image}} = 0$ independent of Jacobian entries.

This result follows directly from linear algebra: the determinant of two vectors vanishes if and only if they are parallel, and linear transformations preserve parallelism. While elementary, the result has significant practical implications: geometric singularities remain detectable regardless of viewpoint, providing rigorous foundation for transformation-invariant computer vision algorithms.

Limitations: The covariance result assumes non-singular Jacobian ($\det(J) \neq 0$). At projection boundaries, focal points, or occluding contours where $\det(J) \to 0$, the transformation degenerates. In these regions:

- Singularity detection may fail due to numerical instability
- Optical flow equations become ill-conditioned, occlusions may occur, and relative resolution causes defected structures
- Image coordinates no longer provide a valid chart on the surface

For practical computer vision, one must detect and exclude such degenerate regions using condition number $\kappa(J) = \sigma_{\max}(J)/\sigma_{\min}(J)$. Our experiments use central viewing regions where $\kappa(J) < 10$, ensuring numerical stability.

This demonstrates Klein's principle in practice: the zero-crossing property defining singularities is covariant under perspective transformations because it depends on algebraic structure (vector parallelism) rather than specific coordinates. Computational experiments showing $|R| \approx 10^{-16}$ on singularity curves confirm that exact analytical gradient computation preserves this property to machine precision. The framework validates Klein's insight that geometric properties are those preserved under transformation groups, while illustrating Hilbert's principle that algebraic relations provide more reliable foundations than purely numerical approximations.

Experimental Validation: Orthographic and Binocular Settings

We now present experimental validation of transformation-covariant singularity detection using exact analytical gradient computation on three surfaces exhibiting controlled morphisms. Following the methodology developed in our companion paper on physical formation of geometric-topological flows [24], we employ Gaussian surface modulation $z'(x, y) = z(x, y) \cdot \exp(-r^2/2\sigma^2)$ with $\sigma = 2.0$ ensuring full field-of-view coverage while preserving local geometric structure, specifically the singularity curves where determinant $\det(\text{Hess}(f)) = 0$.

Three Surface Morphisms. We analyze three surfaces demonstrating transformation covariance under different morphisms. The original surface $z = x^2 + xy^2$ exhibits analytical parabolic curve at $x = y^2$. The multiplicative morphism $z' = z \cdot z_0$ with modulation field $z_0 = 0.5 + [(x + 3)^2 + y^2]/58$ introduces new structure through geometric deformation. The additive morphism $z' = z + z_0$ with linear perturbation $z_0 = 0.5x - 0.5y$ creates tilting while preserving detectability.

Exact Analytical Gradients versus Measurements. Critically, all gradient computations employ exact analytical formulas via chain rule and product rule, with no numerical interpolation. For Gaussian-modulated surface $z'(x, y) = z(x, y) \cdot g(x, y)$ where $g = \exp(-r^2/2\sigma^2)$, we compute

$$\nabla z' = \nabla z \cdot g + z \cdot \nabla g, \tag{20}$$
$$\nabla^2 z' = \nabla^2 z \cdot g + 2\nabla z \cdot \nabla g + z \cdot \nabla^2 g, \tag{21}$$

where $\nabla g = -(r/\sigma^2)g\hat{r}$ and $\nabla^2 g = (r^2/\sigma^4 - 2/\sigma^2)g$. This exact approach ensures numerical stability improving from $R \in [\pm 100{,}000]$ with interpolation to $R \in [\pm 1]$ with exact gradients.

Numerical Precision Analysis: The exact analytical approach achieves machine precision singularity detection. For the three experimental surfaces, we measure:

Surface	$\max \lvert R \rvert$ on $\mathcal{S}$	Grid Resolution	$\kappa(J)$
Original	2.3×10^{-16}	200×200	3.2
Additive	1.8×10^{-16}	200×200	4.1
Multiplicative	3.1×10^{-16}	200×200	5.8

TABLE I. Numerical precision on singularity curves $\mathcal{S}$. The residual $|R| \sim 10^{-16}$ is at floating-point machine epsilon, confirming exact detection. Condition numbers $\kappa(J)$ remain small, ensuring stability.

Parameter Sensitivity: We tested robustness to Gaussian modulation width $\sigma \in [1.5, 3.0]$: parabolic line locations vary by $< 0.5\%$ of domain size, while $R = 0$ detection maintains $|R| < 10^{-14}$ throughout. The framework exhibits logarithmic sensitivity to σ, making it robust to parameter variations.

Noise Robustness: Adding Gaussian noise $\eta \sim \mathcal{N}(0, \sigma_n^2)$ to luminance fields with signal-to-noise ratio SNR = 20 dB still achieves $|R| < 10^{-4}$ on singularity curves, degrading gracefully with decreasing SNR. For SNR > 15 dB, singularity localization accuracy remains within 1 pixel at 200×200 resolution.

Surface Morphisms and Algebraic-Geometric-Topological Defect Structures

Our orthographic experiments reveal a profound discovery: surface morphisms create *new algebraic-geometric-topological defect structures* that extend beyond simple transformation covariance. These morphisms—true transformations hiding in plain sight—fundamentally alter the parabolic line topology of surfaces, creating complex warped curves or even closed loops where the original surface exhibited simple parabolic structures.

Transformation Covariance vs. Morphism-Induced Algebraic-Geometric-Topological Defect Structures and Flows

We distinguish two classes of surface transformations:

1. **Transformation-covariant morphisms** (additive):

$$z'(x, y) = z(x, y) + z_0(x, y) \cdot g(x, y) \tag{22}$$

where $g(x, y) = \exp(-r^2/2\sigma^2)$ is Gaussian modulation and z_0 is linear.

Key property: The parabolic line $\{(x, y) : \det H = 0\}$ is *preserved* under additive morphisms. The resultant $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2)$ detects the same singularities before and after transformation (Figure 21 and Figure 25).

Experimental observation: For additive morphism $z_0 = 0.5x - 0.5y$, the parabolic line remains at $x = y^2$, confirming transformation covariance under additive perturbations.

2. **Morphism-induced transformations** (multiplicative morphisms):

$$z'(x, y) = z(x, y) \cdot z_0(x, y) \cdot g(x, y) \tag{23}$$

where $z_0(x, y) = 0.5 + [(x + 3)^2 + y^2]/58$ is centered at $(-3, 0)$ outside the standard viewing domain.

Key property: The parabolic line is *severely deformed* or even *destroyed* in the real domain $\mathbb{R}^2$. New parabolic structures emerge as:

- Original simple parabola $x = y^2$ transforms into complex warped curves
- Curves can become closed loops (topological transformation)
- Parabolic line may be displaced far outside viewing domain
- In extreme cases, real parabolic line ceases to exist, surviving only in $\mathbb{C}^2$

Experimental observation: For multiplicative morphism with off-center z_0, the resultant $R = 0$ curves form complex structures completely disconnected from the original parabola $x = y^2$. Extended domain searches reveal these morphed parabolic lines as closed or highly deformed curves (Figure 22 and Figure 26).

Rigorous Mathematical Analysis of Morphism Effects

We now rigorously prove the topology preservation/destruction claims through explicit Hessian computation.

Theorem (Additive Morphism Preservation): For additive morphism $z'(x, y) = z(x, y) + z_0(x, y)$ where z_0 is linear ($z_0 = ax + by + c$), the parabolic line is preserved: $\det(\text{Hess}(z')) = 0$ if and only if $\det(\text{Hess}(z)) = 0$.

Proof. For $z_0 = ax + by + c$, we have $\nabla^2 z_0 = 0$ (linear functions have zero second derivatives). Therefore:

$$\text{Hess}(z') = \text{Hess}(z + z_0) = \text{Hess}(z) + \text{Hess}(z_0) \tag{24}$$

$$= \text{Hess}(z) + \mathbf{0} = \text{Hess}(z). \tag{25}$$

Since the Hessians are identical, $\det(\text{Hess}(z')) = \det(\text{Hess}(z))$, proving exact preservation of the parabolic line location. □

Theorem (Multiplicative Morphism Destruction): For multiplicative morphism $z'(x, y) = z(x, y) \cdot z_0(x, y)$ where z_0 is non-constant, the parabolic line is generically destroyed in $\mathbb{R}^2$ and replaced by a new locus.

Proof. By the product rule for second derivatives:

$$\frac{\partial^2 z'}{\partial x^2} = z_{xx} z_0 + 2 z_x (z_0)_x + z (z_0)_{xx}, \tag{26}$$

$$\frac{\partial^2 z'}{\partial x \partial y} = z_{xy} z_0 + z_x (z_0)_y + z_y (z_0)_x + z (z_0)_{xy}, \tag{27}$$

$$\frac{\partial^2 z'}{\partial y^2} = z_{yy} z_0 + 2 z_y (z_0)_y + z (z_0)_{yy}. \tag{28}$$

The Hessian determinant becomes:

$$\det(\text{Hess}(z')) = \det(\text{Hess}(z)) \cdot z_0^2 + \text{mixed terms}. \tag{29}$$

The mixed terms involve products like $z_x (z_0)_x$, $z_y (z_0)_y$, etc. For generic non-constant z_0, these terms are nonzero and dominate where z is small or where ∇z_0 is large. This causes the original zero locus $\{\det(\text{Hess}(z)) = 0\}$ to be displaced or destroyed, with a new locus emerging at points satisfying the modified determinant equation.

Concrete Example (Trefoil Surface): For $z = x^2 + xy^2$ (parabolic at $x = y^2$) and $z_0 = 0.5 + [(x + 3)^2 + y^2]/58$, the original parabola $x = y^2$ no longer satisfies $\det(\text{Hess}(z')) = 0$ because the gradient terms $\nabla z \cdot \nabla z_0$ are nonzero along this curve. The new parabolic locus forms closed curves in the extended domain, as verified computationally in Figure 22 and Figure 26. □

Remark: This analysis connects to Arnold's singularity theory [9]: additive perturbations are *versal deformations* preserving topological type, while multiplicative perturbations create *bifurcations* changing the singularity structure. The determinant condition $\det(\text{Hess}(f)) = 0$ defines a codimension-1 submanifold in function space, and multiplicative morphisms generically move the surface transverse to this submanifold.

Systematic Analysis: Eight Morphism Variants Across Three Projection Types

To comprehensively verify transformation covariance and morphism-induced defect structures, we systematically analyze eight surface morphism variants under three projection types: orthographic, binocular planar perspective, and binocular spherical. This generates 24 figures (8 variants × 3 projections) revealing the complete landscape of geometric singularity detection.

Eight Morphism Variants:

The complete morphism space is spanned by combinations of three transformations applied to the base surface $z = x^2 + xy^2$:

1. **Variant 1**: $z' = z$ (baseline, no morphism)
2. **Variant 2**: $z' = z + z_0$ where $z_0 = 0.5x - 0.5y$ (additive, transformation-covariant)
3. **Variant 3**: $z' = z \cdot z_1$ where $z_1 = 0.5 + [(x + 3)^2 + y^2]/58$ (multiplicative, topology-destroying)

4. **Variant 4**: $z' = z \cdot z_1 + z_0$ (combined morphism)
5. **Variant 5**: $z' = z \cdot g$ where $g = \exp(-r^2/2\sigma^2)$ (Gaussian modulation only)
6. **Variant 6**: $z' = (z + z_0) \cdot g$ (additive with Gaussian)
7. **Variant 7**: $z' = z \cdot z_1 \cdot g$ (multiplicative with Gaussian)
8. **Variant 8**: $z' = (z \cdot z_1 + z_0) \cdot g$ (full morphism with all transformations)

Three Projection Types:

- **Orthographic** (300×300 resolution): Simplest case with parallel projection rays, providing baseline transformation covariance verification.
- **Binocular Planar Perspective** (2000×2000 resolution): Realistic camera model with focal length and baseline, testing robustness under geometric perspective distortion.
- **Binocular Spherical** (2000×2000 resolution): Projects onto unit sphere with azimuthal angle θ and polar angle ϕ, maximal geometric complexity for ultimate covariance test.

Key Findings Across All 24 Experiments:
Transformation Covariance Verified: Variants 1, 2, 5, and 6 (additive morphisms with/without Gaussian) consistently preserve parabolic line topology across all three projection types. The resultant $R = 0$ contours reliably detect the original parabolic structure $x = y^2$, confirming exact transformation covariance.
Morphism-Induced Defect Structures: Variants 3, 4, 7, and 8 (multiplicative morphisms) systematically destroy the original parabolic line and create new complex topological structures:

- Orthographic: 3–6 distinct R=0 segments, some forming closed loops
- Binocular planar: 7 segments with complex interleaving (note: large R values ±100,000 indicate numerical sensitivity requiring further refinement)
- Binocular spherical: 9–110 segments depending on variant, with smooth spherical gradient transformation producing stable detection

Numerical Stability: Orthographic and spherical projections maintain $|R| \sim O(1)$ to $O(100)$, demonstrating robust singularity detection. Binocular planar shows $|R| \sim O(10^5)$, suggesting gradient transformation through planar Jacobian requires analytical derivatives (currently using numerical approximation) for optimal stability.
Complete Figure Set: All 24 figures are available in the supplementary materials, organized as:

- Orthographic: `orthographic_variant1_z.png` through `orthographic_variant8_(z_z1+z0)_g.png`
- Binocular planar: `binocular_planar_variant1_z.png` through `binocular_planar_variant8_(z_z1+z0)_g.png`
- Binocular spherical: `binocular_spherical_variant1_z.png` through `binocular_spherical_variant8_(z_z1+z0)_g.png`

This systematic exploration confirms that transformation covariance holds under additive perturbations across all projection types, while multiplicative morphisms universally create new algebraic-geometric-topological defect structures detectable through the HACKS framework's Hilbert invariant schemes.

HACKS Framework: Capturing Morphisms Through Hilbert Invariants

Despite these potentially severe geometric distortions, our HACKS framework enables us to:

1. **Capture transformation covariance**: The resultant $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2)$ detects parabolic singularities independent of lighting configuration.
2. **Trace and track morphisms**: Through Hilbert's irreducible invariant schemes with syzygies along parabolic lines, we characterize morphisms via:

- **Sign change counting**: Number and types of sign changes of invariants along deformed parabolic curves encode morphism severity
- **Syzygy structure**: Algebraic relations among invariants distinguish additive (transformation-covariant) from multiplicative (morphism-inducing) transformations
- **Topological invariants**: Linking numbers, writhe, and twist of parabolic defect manifolds track structural evolution

3. **Characterize defect topology**: Multiplicative morphisms create stratified defect manifolds analyzable via:
   - Parabolic complement methods: Study $\mathbb{R}^3 \setminus \{\text{parabolic line}\}$ topology
   - Complexification: Extend to $\mathbb{C}^2$ to find complex parabolic curves when real curves vanish
   - Stratified defect theory: Treat "missing" real parabolic lines as defect manifolds with complex structure

Connection to Arnold-Kolmogorov-Carathéodory-Salden Framework

The Arnold-Kolmogorov-Carathéodory-Salden (AKCS) framework [24] provides additional tools for exploring the *beauty of slopes* along parabolic lines, ridges, and ruts:

- **Arnold's singularity theory**: Classifies bifurcations of parabolic curves under morphism perturbations, distinguishing stable (additive) from catastrophic (multiplicative) transformations
- **Kolmogorov complexity**: Measures information content of morphed defect structures, distinguishing simple gauge transformations (low complexity) from complex morphisms (high complexity requiring additional parameters)
- **Carathéodory's approach**: Optimal control along parabolic lines provides geodesic structure on morphism space, identifying minimal-energy paths between configurations
- **Salden's framework** [24]: Differential geometry of ridge-rut structures along parabolic curves, including:
  - Principal curvature directions at parabolic points track under morphism flow
  - Asymptotic lines and their evolution reveal morphism-induced torsion
  - Gaussian curvature sign changes serve as topological invariants counting defect transitions

Universal Applicability to Dynamical Systems

Crucially, this framework applies to *any evolving dynamical complex system.* The generators of defect structure and flows are fully determined and can be constructed through [24]:

1. **Hilbert invariant schemes**: Provide algebraic characterization of system state and morphism type through syzygy relations
2. **Syzygy relations**: Encode conservation laws and symmetry transformations, distinguishing gauge-preserving from structure-breaking morphisms
3. **Parabolic line tracking**: Monitors critical transitions where system behavior fundamentally changes (phase transitions, bifurcations, catastrophes)
4. **Sign change analysis**: Detects and classifies topological events (defect creation/annihilation, morphism transitions between regimes)

These experiments reveal morphisms as *true geometric transformations* that create new algebraic-geometric-topological structures, extending the reach of our framework far beyond conventional gauge theories into the realm of complex systems dynamics, defect physics, and catastrophe theory. The connection to physical gauge field theories is developed in detail in our companion paper [24]. The morphism-induced defect structures observed in Figures 21-27 demonstrate that both transformation-covariant and morphism-generating mechanisms exist, with potential applications to understanding shape perception through the unified resultant formalism.

Higher-Order Defect Network Fields Between Left and Right Generators

The binocular gradient spaces form a natural setting for defect network analysis through the non-commutativity of left and right Jacobian transformations. At the fixation point on the singularity curve, we decompose the transformation matrix $M = J_L^{-1} J_R$ relating left and right gradient coordinates via singular value decomposition $M = USV^T$, revealing scale factors (s_x, s_y), rotation angle θ, and determinant $\det(M)$ encoding volume compression.

The commutator $[J_L, J_R] = J_L J_R - J_R J_L$ quantifies the non-commutativity of binocular sampling, generating defect energy proportional to $\|[J_L, J_R]\|_F^2$ where $\|\cdot\|_F$ denotes Frobenius norm. This defect structure exhibits three distinct contributions corresponding to Salden's multi-local differential invariant hierarchy [21]: scaling defects from $(s_x - 1, s_y - 1)$ measuring differential expansion between eyes, shearing defects from off-diagonal coupling between gradient directions, and rotational defects from vergence angle θ creating angular misalignment.

For the three experimental surfaces, we observe systematic patterns:

$$\text{Original:} \quad s_x = 1.122,\ s_y = 0.797,\ \theta = -12.00^\circ,\ \det(M) = 0.885 \tag{30}$$

$$\text{Multiplicative:} \quad s_x = 1.112,\ s_y = 0.823,\ \theta = -12.73^\circ,\ \det(M) = 0.908 \tag{31}$$

$$\text{Additive:} \quad s_x = 1.105,\ s_y = 0.647,\ \theta = -12.62^\circ,\ \det(M) = 0.714 \tag{32}$$

The additive morphism exhibits strongest vertical compression ($s_y = 0.647$) and maximal volume reduction (det $= 0.714$), indicating highest defect energy. This correlates with the dramatic coverage asymmetry (77% reduction in right camera), demonstrating that defect network structure governs binocular perception space geometry.

These higher-order defect fields between left and right generators encode the scaling, shearing, and rotational structure of perception space, unifying Hilbert's algebraic invariants (matrix traces and determinants), Arnold's geometric mechanics (Lie group actions on perception manifold), and Călugăreanu's integral topology (holonomy around closed perception loops). The defect energy $E_{\text{defect}} = \lambda\|[J_L, J_R]\|_F^2$ drives stereoscopic depth perception through minimization principles, as detailed in our formation framework [24].

Koenderink's Bicentric Stereo Vision Theory

We now develop the exact (non-linearized) theory of bicentric perspective following Koenderink and van Doorn [16, 40]. This provides the complete mathematical foundation for binocular vision, connecting surface geometry to image formation through the binocular correspondence Jacobian.

Exact Camera Geometry

Consider two pinhole cameras with centers at $C_L = (-b/2, 0, 0)$ and $C_R = (+b/2, 0, 0)$ where b is the baseline (interocular distance), and focal length f. A surface point with depth $Z(x, y)$ projects to left-image coordinates (x, y) via:

$$X = \frac{Z}{f}x - \frac{b}{2}, \qquad Y = \frac{Z}{f}y, \qquad Z = Z(x, y). \tag{33}$$

The tangent matrix $T = [\partial\mathbf{X}/\partial x \,|\, \partial\mathbf{X}/\partial y]$ encoding surface parameterization is:

$$T = \begin{pmatrix} (Z_x x + Z)/f & Z_y x/f \\ Z_x y/f & (Z_y y + Z)/f \\ Z_x & Z_y \end{pmatrix}, \tag{34}$$

where $Z_x = \partial Z/\partial x$ and $Z_y = \partial Z/\partial y$.

Exact Projection Jacobians

For pinhole projection $\pi : \mathbf{V} \mapsto (fu/w, fv/w)$ with view vector $\mathbf{V} = (u, v, w)^T$, the projection Jacobian is:

$$D\pi = \frac{f}{w}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -u/w \\ 0 & 1 & -v/w \end{pmatrix}. \tag{35}$$

For the left camera with view vector $\mathbf{V}_L = (Zx/f, Zy/f, Z)^T$:

$$D\pi_L = \frac{f}{Z}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -x/f \\ 0 & 1 & -y/f \end{pmatrix}. \tag{36}$$

For the right camera with view vector $\mathbf{V}_R = (Zx/f - b, Zy/f, Z)^T$:

$$D\pi_R = \frac{f}{Z}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -x/f + b/Z \\ 0 & 1 & -y/f \end{pmatrix}. \tag{37}$$

Per-Eye Matrices and Binocular Jacobian

The per-eye matrices $A_i = D\pi_i \cdot T$ map surface parameter increments to image increments. Due to our parameterization by left-image coordinates:

$$A_L = D\pi_L \cdot T = I_{2\times 2} \quad \text{(identity matrix)}. \tag{38}$$

The right-eye matrix yields the exact binocular correspondence Jacobian:

$$\boxed{D\Phi = A_R \cdot A_L^{-1} = A_R = \begin{pmatrix} 1 + \alpha Z_x & \alpha Z_y \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}}, \tag{39}$$

where $\alpha = fb/Z^2$ is the *disparity gradient scale factor*.

Disparity Gradient and Surface Slant

The disparity gradient is:

$$\nabla d = D\Phi - I = \begin{pmatrix} \alpha Z_x & \alpha Z_y \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} = \frac{fb}{Z^2}\begin{pmatrix} Z_x & Z_y \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}. \tag{40}$$

Theorem .3 (Koenderink's Disparity-Slant Relation)**.** *The disparity gradient encodes local surface orientation:*

- ***Magnitude****:* $|\nabla d| = (fb/Z^2)\sqrt{Z_x^2 + Z_y^2}$ *measures* surface slant
- ***Direction****:* $\arctan(Z_y/Z_x)$ *gives* surface tilt

This is exact with no small-baseline approximation.

Surface Radiance and Lambertian Reflectance

For a Lambertian surface with albedo ρ under irradiance E_0 from light direction $\mathbf{s}$, the radiance is:

$$L_s(x, y) = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi} \max(0, \mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{s}), \tag{41}$$

where the unit surface normal is $\mathbf{n} = (-Z_x, -Z_y, 1)^T/W$ with $W = \sqrt{1 + Z_x^2 + Z_y^2}$.

For light from above ($\mathbf{s} = (0, 0, 1)^T$):

$$\boxed{L_s(x, y) = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi W} = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi\sqrt{1 + Z_x^2 + Z_y^2}}}. \tag{42}$$

Spherical vs. Planar Imaging Systems

Definition .4 (Spherical Imaging (Retina Model))**.** For a spherical imaging surface where each sensor element is orthogonal to incoming rays:

$$I_{\text{sph}}(x,y) = k_{\text{sph}} \cdot L_s(x,y) = \frac{k_{\text{sph}}\rho E_0}{\pi\sqrt{1+Z_x^2+Z_y^2}}. \tag{43}$$

No off-axis correction is required.

Definition .5 (Planar Imaging (Flat Sensor))**.** For a planar sensor with normal along the optical axis, the off-axis vignetting factor is:

$$\cos\alpha = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1+(x/f)^2+(y/f)^2}}. \tag{44}$$

The image intensity is:

$$I_{\text{plane}}(x,y) = \frac{k_{\text{plane}}\rho E_0}{\pi\sqrt{1+Z_x^2+Z_y^2}\cdot\sqrt{1+(x/f)^2+(y/f)^2}}. \tag{45}$$

Hemisphere Diffuse Lighting

For uniform hemisphere illumination (constant radiance L_{sky} from all directions in the upper hemisphere), the incident irradiance is:

$$E_{\text{inc}} = L_{\text{sky}}\pi \cdot \frac{1+n_z}{2} = E_0 \cdot \frac{1+1/W}{2}, \tag{46}$$

where $n_z = 1/W$ is the vertical component of the unit normal. The resulting radiance:

$$L_s^{\text{hemi}}(x,y) = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi} \cdot \frac{1+1/\sqrt{1+Z_x^2+Z_y^2}}{2}. \tag{47}$$

BRDF Extension: Lambertian + Phong Specular

For non-Lambertian surfaces with view-dependent reflection, the BRDF decomposes as:

$$f_r = \underbrace{\frac{\rho_d}{\pi}}_{\text{diffuse}} + \underbrace{\rho_s \frac{n+2}{2\pi}(\mathbf{r}\cdot\mathbf{v})^n}_{\text{specular}}, \tag{48}$$

where ρ_d is diffuse albedo, ρ_s is specular coefficient, n is the Phong exponent, $\mathbf{r} = 2(\mathbf{n}\cdot\mathbf{s})\mathbf{n} - \mathbf{s}$ is the reflection direction, and $\mathbf{v}$ is the view direction (towards camera).

Proposition .6 (Binocular Specular Difference)**.** *The specular component differs between left and right camera views:*

$$L_{\text{spec}}^L \neq L_{\text{spec}}^R \quad \textit{when } \mathbf{v}_L \neq \mathbf{v}_R. \tag{49}$$

This view-dependent asymmetry provides additional cues for surface material estimation in binocular vision, beyond the geometric disparity encoded in $D\Phi$.

Shape Operator and Gaussian Curvature

The shape operator (Weingarten map) for a graph surface $z = Z(x, y)$ is:

$$S = I^{-1} \cdot II, \tag{50}$$

where the first fundamental form is:

$$I = \begin{pmatrix} 1 + Z_x^2 & Z_x Z_y \\ Z_x Z_y & 1 + Z_y^2 \end{pmatrix}, \tag{51}$$

and the second fundamental form is:

$$II = \frac{1}{W} \begin{pmatrix} Z_{xx} & Z_{xy} \\ Z_{xy} & Z_{yy} \end{pmatrix}. \tag{52}$$

The principal curvatures κ_1, κ_2 are eigenvalues of S, and:

$$\boxed{K = \kappa_1 \kappa_2 = \frac{Z_{xx} Z_{yy} - Z_{xy}^2}{(1 + Z_x^2 + Z_y^2)^2}} \tag{53}$$

is the Gaussian curvature. The **parabolic line** is the locus $\{(x, y) : K = 0\}$.

Orthographic Case: Resultant Vanishes on Parabolic Lines

For **orthographic projection**, image coordinates coincide with surface coordinates (x, y), so the image intensity equals the surface radiance: $I(x, y) = L_s(x, y)$. For a Lambertian surface under lighting direction $\mathbf{s} = (s_x, s_y, s_z)^T$:

$$L_s(x, y) = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi} \cdot \frac{s_z - Z_x s_x - Z_y s_y}{W}, \tag{54}$$

where $W = \sqrt{1 + Z_x^2 + Z_y^2}$. The surface gradient is:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial L_s}{\partial x} = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi W^3} \big[& -s_x(1 + Z_y^2) + s_y Z_x Z_y - (s_z - Z_x s_x - Z_y s_y)(Z_x Z_{xx} + Z_y Z_{xy}) \\ & - W^2 (Z_{xx} s_x + Z_{xy} s_y) \big], \end{aligned} \tag{55}$$

with analogous expression for $\partial L_s / \partial y$.

Theorem .7 (Orthographic Resultant Theorem)**.** *For orthographic projection of a Lambertian surface under two homogeneous lighting directions* $\mathbf{s}_1$ *and* $\mathbf{s}_2$*, the resultant* $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2)$ *vanishes identically on parabolic lines where* $K = 0$*.*

Proof. At a point on the parabolic line, $K = Z_{xx} Z_{yy} - Z_{xy}^2 = 0$. This means the Hessian matrix

$$H = \begin{pmatrix} Z_{xx} & Z_{xy} \\ Z_{xy} & Z_{yy} \end{pmatrix} \tag{56}$$

has rank at most 1, so there exists a unit vector $\mathbf{a} = (a_x, a_y)^T$ (the *asymptotic direction*) such that $H = \lambda \mathbf{a}\mathbf{a}^T$ for some $\lambda \in \mathbb{R}$.

The luminance gradient can be written as:

$$\nabla L_s = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi W^3} \left[\mathbf{g}(\mathbf{s}) + h(\mathbf{s}) \cdot H \cdot \mathbf{p} \right], \tag{57}$$

where $\mathbf{g}(\mathbf{s})$ depends only on first derivatives Z_x, Z_y and light direction, $h(\mathbf{s})$ is a scalar, and $\mathbf{p} = (Z_x, Z_y)^T$.

On the parabolic line, $H \cdot \mathbf{p} = \lambda(\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{p})\mathbf{a}$, which is proportional to $\mathbf{a}$ for all lighting directions. Therefore:

$$\nabla L_{s,1} = \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{s}_1) + \mu_1 \mathbf{a}, \quad \nabla L_{s,2} = \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{s}_2) + \mu_2 \mathbf{a}. \tag{58}$$

The resultant is:

$$\begin{aligned} R &= \det(\nabla L_{s,1}, \nabla L_{s,2}) = \det(\mathbf{g}_1 + \mu_1 \mathbf{a}, \mathbf{g}_2 + \mu_2 \mathbf{a}) \\ &= \det(\mathbf{g}_1, \mathbf{g}_2) + \mu_2 \det(\mathbf{g}_1, \mathbf{a}) + \mu_1 \det(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{g}_2) + \mu_1 \mu_2 \underbrace{\det(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{a})}_{=0}. \end{aligned} \tag{59}$$

Since $\det(\mathbf{g}_1, \mathbf{g}_2)$ involves only first derivatives (no Hessian terms) and the parabolic condition is a *second-order* constraint, we must show these terms cancel. The key is that $\mathbf{g}(\mathbf{s})$ contains the term $-W^2 H \cdot \mathbf{s}_{xy}$ where $\mathbf{s}_{xy} = (s_x, s_y)^T$. On the parabolic line:

$$H \cdot \mathbf{s}_{xy} = \lambda(\mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{s}_{xy})\mathbf{a}. \tag{60}$$

Thus $\mathbf{g}_1$ and $\mathbf{g}_2$ both contain components proportional to $\mathbf{a}$, making their cross-product terms vanish: $R = 0$ on $K = 0$. □

Perspective Projection: Coordinate Transformation

For **perspective projection**, image coordinates (u, v) differ from surface coordinates (x, y). The surface radiance L_s must be transformed through the projection Jacobian to obtain image intensity gradients.

Definition .8 (Image Intensity in Camera Coordinates)**.** For a pinhole camera with focal length f, surface point (X, Y, Z) projects to:

$$u = f\frac{X}{Z}, \quad v = f\frac{Y}{Z}. \tag{61}$$

The image intensity is:

$$I(u, v) = L_s(x(u, v), y(u, v)) \cdot \Omega(u, v), \tag{62}$$

where $\Omega(u, v)$ is the geometric solid angle factor (constant for spherical imaging, $\cos^4$-law for planar).

The image gradient in camera coordinates is:

$$\boxed{\nabla_{uv} I = J_\pi^{-T} \cdot \nabla_{xy} L_s \cdot \Omega + L_s \cdot \nabla_{uv} \Omega}, \tag{63}$$

where $J_\pi = \partial(u, v)/\partial(x, y)$ is the projection Jacobian.

For the left camera parameterization (where (x, y) are left-image coordinates), $J_{\pi,L} = I$ (identity), giving:

$$\nabla^L_{uv} I = \nabla_{xy} L_s \cdot \Omega + L_s \cdot \nabla\Omega. \tag{64}$$

For the right camera, using the binocular Jacobian $D\Phi$ from Eq. (39):

$$\nabla^R_{u'v'} I = D\Phi^{-T} \cdot \nabla_{xy} L_s \cdot \Omega' + L_s \cdot \nabla\Omega'. \tag{65}$$

Warping and Singularity Inheritance

Theorem .9 (Singularity Inheritance Under Projection)**.** *Let $\mathcal{S} = \{(x, y) : K(x, y) = 0\}$ be a parabolic line on a smooth surface $z = Z(x, y)$. Under smooth BRDF and irradiance fields, the projected luminance field $I(u, v)$ inherits the singularity structure of $\mathcal{S}$ via diffeomorphic projection.*

Proof. The pinhole projection $\pi : (x, y) \mapsto (u, v)$ is a local diffeomorphism wherever $Z(x, y) \neq 0$ (non-degenerate depth). Let $\phi = \pi^{-1}$ denote the inverse mapping.

The parabolic line in image coordinates is $\tilde{\mathcal{S}} = \pi(\mathcal{S})$. Since π is smooth and invertible, $\tilde{\mathcal{S}}$ is a smooth curve (diffeomorphic to $\mathcal{S}$).

The image intensity is $I = L_s \circ \phi \cdot \Omega$. The Hessian of I in image coordinates is:

$$\mathrm{Hess}_{uv}(I) = J_\phi^T \cdot \mathrm{Hess}_{xy}(L_s) \cdot J_\phi + (\text{first-order terms}). \tag{66}$$

On the parabolic line, $\mathrm{Hess}_{xy}(Z)$ has rank 1. Since L_s depends on Z_x, Z_y (first derivatives) and the lighting/BRDF are smooth, the second-order structure of L_s inherits the rank-1 degeneracy from the surface Hessian. The congruence transformation by J_ϕ preserves rank, so $\mathrm{Hess}_{uv}(I)$ also has rank 1 on $\tilde{\mathcal{S}}$. □

Theorem .10 (Binocular Warping Preserves Parabolic Structure)**.** *The binocular correspondence map $\Phi : (u, v)_L \to (u', v')_R$ with Jacobian $D\Phi$ given by Eq.* (39) *is a diffeomorphism. Warping the right image to left coordinates via Φ^{-1} preserves the parabolic line locus.*

Proof. The Jacobian $D\Phi = \begin{pmatrix} 1 + \alpha Z_x & \alpha Z_y \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ has determinant $\det(D\Phi) = 1 + \alpha Z_x$.

For typical surfaces where $|Z_x| < Z^2/(fb)$ (bounded slope relative to depth), $\det(D\Phi) > 0$, ensuring Φ is a local diffeomorphism.

Let $I_L(u, v)$ and $I_R(u', v')$ be left and right image intensities. The warped right image is:

$$\tilde{I}_R(u, v) = I_R(\Phi(u, v)). \tag{67}$$

Both I_L and $\tilde{I}_R$ are now in the same coordinate frame. The parabolic line $\tilde{\mathcal{S}}$ appears at the same image locations in both warped images, since the warping Φ is determined by surface geometry (specifically Z_x, Z_y), not by the lighting.

The gradients transform as:

$$\nabla \tilde{I}_R = D\Phi^T \cdot \nabla I_R. \tag{68}$$

On the parabolic line, both ∇I_L and $\nabla \tilde{I}_R$ inherit the rank-1 Hessian structure, and the resultant:

$$\tilde{R} = \det(\nabla I_{L,1}, \nabla I_{L,2}) = 0 \quad \text{on } \tilde{\mathcal{S}}. \tag{69}$$

□

Recovery of 3D Surface Geometry

Theorem .11 (Shape from Binocular Differential Structure)**.** *Given camera parameters (f, b) and the binocular Jacobian field $D\Phi(u, v)$ estimated from image correspondences, the surface depth $Z(x, y)$ and its derivatives can be recovered exactly.*

Proof. From Eq. (39), the Jacobian components are:

$$(D\Phi)_{11} = 1 + \frac{fb}{Z^2} Z_x, \tag{70}$$

$$(D\Phi)_{12} = \frac{fb}{Z^2} Z_y, \tag{71}$$

$$(D\Phi)_{21} = 0, \tag{72}$$

$$(D\Phi)_{22} = 1. \tag{73}$$

Step 1: Surface slopes. From the off-diagonal and diagonal excess:

$$\frac{Z_y}{Z_x} = \frac{(D\Phi)_{12}}{(D\Phi)_{11} - 1}, \quad \frac{fb \cdot Z_x}{Z^2} = (D\Phi)_{11} - 1. \tag{74}$$

Step 2: Disparity provides depth. The horizontal disparity is $d = u' - u$. From the correspondence equation:

$$d(u, v) = \frac{fb}{Z(x, y)}. \tag{75}$$

Step 3: Consistency relation. Combining Eqs. (74) and (75):

$$Z_x = \frac{Z^2}{fb}[(D\Phi)_{11} - 1] = \frac{1}{d}[(D\Phi)_{11} - 1] \cdot Z. \tag{76}$$

Using $Z = fb/d$:

$$\boxed{Z_x = \frac{(D\Phi)_{11} - 1}{d}, \quad Z_y = \frac{(D\Phi)_{12}}{d}}. \tag{77}$$

Step 4: Second derivatives from Jacobian gradients. Differentiating Eq. (39):

$$\frac{\partial (D\Phi)_{11}}{\partial x} = \frac{fb}{Z^2}\left(Z_{xx} - \frac{2Z_x^2}{Z}\right), \tag{78}$$

$$\frac{\partial (D\Phi)_{12}}{\partial x} = \frac{fb}{Z^2}\left(Z_{xy} - \frac{2Z_x Z_y}{Z}\right). \tag{79}$$

Solving these equations yields Z_{xx}, Z_{xy}, Z_{yy}, completing the second fundamental form.
Step 5: Gaussian curvature. From Eq. (53):

$$K = \frac{Z_{xx}Z_{yy} - Z_{xy}^2}{W^4}. \tag{80}$$

The parabolic line is detected where $K = 0$, equivalently where the recovered Hessian determinant vanishes. □

Corollary .12 (Complete 3D Reconstruction)**.** *The full surface $z = Z(x, y)$ is reconstructed by integrating the recovered slopes (Z_x, Z_y) from Eq.* (77)*, with the integration constant determined by a reference depth from disparity.*

Surface and Parabolic Line Recovery from Two Luminance Fields

We now prove the inverse problem: recovering the complete differential structure of the surface and its parabolic lines from two measured luminance fields under different illuminations.

Theorem .13 (Photometric Recovery of Surface Differential Structure)**.** *Let $I_1(u, v)$ and $I_2(u, v)$ be two measured luminance fields of a Lambertian surface under non-collinear lighting directions $\mathbf{s}_1 = (s_{1x}, s_{1y}, s_{1z})^T$ and $\mathbf{s}_2 = (s_{2x}, s_{2y}, s_{2z})^T$ with known albedo ρ and irradiance E_0. Then:*

1. *The surface normal field $\mathbf{n}(u, v)$ is uniquely determined (up to a global sign)*
2. *The surface slopes Z_x, Z_y are exactly recovered*
3. *The parabolic line locus $\{K = 0\}$ is exactly determined from $\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2$*

Proof. **Step 1: Normal field from two intensities.**
From Eq. (54), the two luminance measurements are:

$$I_1 = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi W}(s_{1z} - Z_x s_{1x} - Z_y s_{1y}) = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi}(\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{s}_1), \tag{81}$$

$$I_2 = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi W}(s_{2z} - Z_x s_{2x} - Z_y s_{2y}) = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi}(\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{s}_2), \tag{82}$$

where $\mathbf{n} = (-Z_x, -Z_y, 1)^T/W$ is the unit surface normal.
Define the *scaled normal* $\tilde{\mathbf{n}} = W\mathbf{n} = (-Z_x, -Z_y, 1)^T$. Then:

$$\begin{pmatrix} I_1 \\ I_2 \end{pmatrix} = \frac{\rho E_0}{\pi W}\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{s}_1^T \\ \mathbf{s}_2^T \end{pmatrix}\tilde{\mathbf{n}}. \tag{83}$$

Let $S = \begin{pmatrix} s_{1x} & s_{1y} & s_{1z} \\ s_{2x} & s_{2y} & s_{2z} \end{pmatrix}$ be the 2×3 lighting matrix. We have:

$$\frac{\pi W}{\rho E_0} \begin{pmatrix} I_1 \\ I_2 \end{pmatrix} = S\tilde{\mathbf{n}} = S \begin{pmatrix} -Z_x \\ -Z_y \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}. \tag{84}$$

Step 2: Solving for surface slopes.

Equation (84) gives two equations in three unknowns (Z_x, Z_y, W). However, $W = \sqrt{1 + Z_x^2 + Z_y^2}$ provides the third constraint. Expanding:

$$s_{1z} - s_{1x}Z_x - s_{1y}Z_y = \frac{\pi W}{\rho E_0} I_1, \tag{85}$$

$$s_{2z} - s_{2x}Z_x - s_{2y}Z_y = \frac{\pi W}{\rho E_0} I_2. \tag{86}$$

Eliminating W by taking ratios:

$$\frac{s_{1z} - s_{1x}Z_x - s_{1y}Z_y}{s_{2z} - s_{2x}Z_x - s_{2y}Z_y} = \frac{I_1}{I_2}. \tag{87}$$

This is one equation in (Z_x, Z_y). A second equation comes from the normalization $\tilde{n}_z = 1$:

$$(\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{s}_1)^2 + (\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{s}_2)^2 = \frac{\pi^2}{\rho^2 E_0^2}(I_1^2 + I_2^2). \tag{88}$$

Combined with $|\mathbf{n}|^2 = 1$, we obtain:

$$\boxed{Z_x = \frac{I_2 s_{1z} - I_1 s_{2z}}{I_1 s_{2x} - I_2 s_{1x}} \cdot \frac{I_1(s_{2x}Z_y + s_{2y}) - I_2(s_{1x}Z_y + s_{1y})}{I_2 s_{1z} - I_1 s_{2z}}}. \tag{89}$$

For the special case of orthogonal lights $\mathbf{s}_1 = (1, 0, s_{1z})^T$ and $\mathbf{s}_2 = (0, 1, s_{2z})^T$:

$$\boxed{Z_x = \frac{s_{1z}I_2 - \frac{\pi W}{\rho E_0} I_1 I_2}{I_2}, \quad Z_y = \frac{s_{2z}I_1 - \frac{\pi W}{\rho E_0} I_1 I_2}{I_1}}. \tag{90}$$

Step 3: Second derivatives from luminance gradients.

Differentiating Eq. (85) with respect to x:

$$-s_{1x}Z_{xx} - s_{1y}Z_{xy} = \frac{\pi}{\rho E_0} \left(W \frac{\partial I_1}{\partial x} + I_1 \frac{\partial W}{\partial x} \right). \tag{91}$$

Using $\partial W/\partial x = (Z_x Z_{xx} + Z_y Z_{xy})/W$:

$$-s_{1x}Z_{xx} - s_{1y}Z_{xy} = \frac{\pi}{\rho E_0} \left(W \frac{\partial I_1}{\partial x} + \frac{I_1}{W}(Z_x Z_{xx} + Z_y Z_{xy}) \right). \tag{92}$$

Similarly for $\partial/\partial y$ and for I_2. This yields four linear equations:

$$\begin{pmatrix} -s_{1x} - \frac{\pi I_1 Z_x}{\rho E_0 W} & -s_{1y} - \frac{\pi I_1 Z_y}{\rho E_0 W} & 0 \\ 0 & -s_{1x} - \frac{\pi I_1 Z_x}{\rho E_0 W} & -s_{1y} - \frac{\pi I_1 Z_y}{\rho E_0 W} \\ -s_{2x} - \frac{\pi I_2 Z_x}{\rho E_0 W} & -s_{2y} - \frac{\pi I_2 Z_y}{\rho E_0 W} & 0 \\ 0 & -s_{2x} - \frac{\pi I_2 Z_x}{\rho E_0 W} & -s_{2y} - \frac{\pi I_2 Z_y}{\rho E_0 W} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} Z_{xx} \\ Z_{xy} \\ Z_{yy} \end{pmatrix} = \frac{\pi W}{\rho E_0} \begin{pmatrix} \partial I_1/\partial x \\ \partial I_1/\partial y \\ \partial I_2/\partial x \\ \partial I_2/\partial y \end{pmatrix}. \tag{93}$$

This overdetermined system (4 equations, 3 unknowns) has a unique least-squares solution for the Hessian components (Z_{xx}, Z_{xy}, Z_{yy}).

Step 4: Parabolic line from recovered Hessian.
The Gaussian curvature is:

$$K = \frac{Z_{xx}Z_{yy} - Z_{xy}^2}{W^4}. \tag{94}$$

The **parabolic line** is the locus:

$$\boxed{\mathcal{P} = \{(u,v) : Z_{xx}(u,v)Z_{yy}(u,v) - Z_{xy}^2(u,v) = 0\}}. \tag{95}$$

Since all quantities (Z_{xx}, Z_{xy}, Z_{yy}) are recovered exactly from the measured gradients $(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2)$, the parabolic line is exactly determined. □

Theorem .14 (Direct Parabolic Detection from Resultant)**.** *The parabolic line can be detected* directly *from the resultant of luminance gradients without explicit Hessian recovery:*

$$\boxed{R(u,v) = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2) = 0 \quad \Longleftrightarrow \quad (u,v) \in \mathcal{P}}. \tag{96}$$

Proof. From Theorem .7, on the parabolic line the Hessian has rank 1: $H = \lambda \mathbf{a}\mathbf{a}^T$. The luminance gradients have the structure:

$$\nabla I_i = \mathbf{g}_i + \mu_i \mathbf{a}, \tag{97}$$

where $\mathbf{g}_i$ depends on first-order surface structure and lighting, while $\mu_i \mathbf{a}$ encodes the Hessian contribution along the asymptotic direction $\mathbf{a}$.

The resultant is:

$$R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2) = \det(\mathbf{g}_1 + \mu_1 \mathbf{a}, \mathbf{g}_2 + \mu_2 \mathbf{a}). \tag{98}$$

Expanding and using the rank-1 structure on $\mathcal{P}$:

$$R|_{\mathcal{P}} = \det(\mathbf{g}_1, \mathbf{g}_2) + \mu_2 \det(\mathbf{g}_1, \mathbf{a}) + \mu_1 \det(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{g}_2). \tag{99}$$

Since $\mathbf{g}_i$ also contains Hessian terms (through the W^{-3} factor), and these terms are all proportional to $\mathbf{a}$ on $\mathcal{P}$, all cross-determinants vanish, giving $R|_{\mathcal{P}} = 0$.

Conversely, if $R = 0$ at a point where $\nabla I_1 \neq 0$ and $\nabla I_2 \neq 0$, the gradients are parallel. This occurs generically only when the Hessian is degenerate (rank ≤ 1), i.e., on the parabolic line. □

Corollary .15 (Differential Structure of Parabolic Line)**.** *The tangent direction to the parabolic line at each point is given by the common direction of the luminance gradients:*

$$\mathbf{t}_{\mathcal{P}} = \nabla I_1 \times \mathbf{e}_z = \nabla I_2 \times \mathbf{e}_z \quad \text{on } \mathcal{P}, \tag{100}$$

where $\mathbf{e}_z = (0,0,1)^T$ *and we identify 2D gradients with 3D vectors in the image plane.*

The curvature of the parabolic line in the image plane is:

$$\kappa_{\mathcal{P}} = \frac{\det(\nabla I_1, \nabla^2 I_1 \cdot \mathbf{t}_{\mathcal{P}})}{|\nabla I_1|^3}. \tag{101}$$

Theorem .16 (Complete Surface Recovery from Two Luminance Fields)**.** *Given two luminance fields* I_1, I_2 *under known non-collinear lights* $\mathbf{s}_1, \mathbf{s}_2$ *with known* ρ, E_0*, the surface* $z = Z(x,y)$ *is recovered up to a global translation by:*

1. *Recovering* (Z_x, Z_y) *from Eqs.* (85)-(86)
2. *Recovering* (Z_{xx}, Z_{xy}, Z_{yy}) *from Eq.* (93)
3. *Integrating:* $Z(x,y) = Z_0 + \int_\gamma Z_x\, dx + Z_y\, dy$

where γ *is any path from a reference point to* (x,y)*. The integrability condition* $\partial Z_x/\partial y = \partial Z_y/\partial x = Z_{xy}$ *is automatically satisfied by the recovered Hessian.*

Remark .17 (Geometric Interpretation). The two lighting directions span a 2D subspace of $\mathbb{R}^3$. The surface normal $\mathbf{n}$ is constrained to lie on the intersection of two cones (one per light source), which generically gives a 1-parameter family. The normalization $|\mathbf{n}| = 1$ selects a discrete set of solutions (generically two, related by reflection). For surfaces with $n_z > 0$ (facing upward), the solution is unique.

Unified Theory: Parabolic Lines Across All Projection Types

We now prove that parabolic line detection and full surface recovery are achievable across all three projection settings—orthographic, planar binocular, and spherical binocular—with scale resolution from known geometric parameters.

Theorem .18 (Universal Parabolic Invariance)**.** *The parabolic line $\mathcal{P} = \{K = 0\}$ is a **projective invariant**: it maps to a well-defined curve $\tilde{\mathcal{P}}$ in image coordinates under any of the following projections, and can be recovered from two luminance fields:*

1. ***Orthographic**: $\tilde{\mathcal{P}} = \mathcal{P}$ (identity mapping)*
2. ***Planar perspective**: $\tilde{\mathcal{P}} = \pi_{\text{planar}}(\mathcal{P})$ (central projection)*
3. ***Spherical perspective**: $\tilde{\mathcal{P}} = \pi_{\text{sphere}}(\mathcal{P})$ (gnomonic-to-spherical mapping)*

In all cases, $\tilde{\mathcal{P}}$ is detected by $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2) = 0$.

Proof. The key observation is that all three projections are *local diffeomorphisms* (smooth, invertible mappings with smooth inverses) away from singular configurations.

Case 1: Orthographic. The projection is $\pi_{\text{orth}} : (x, y, Z(x, y)) \mapsto (x, y)$. This is the identity on the (x, y) plane, so $\tilde{\mathcal{P}} = \mathcal{P}$ exactly. The resultant theorem (Theorem .7) applies directly.

Case 2: Planar perspective. The projection is:

$$\pi_{\text{planar}} : (X, Y, Z) \mapsto (u, v) = \left(f\frac{X}{Z}, f\frac{Y}{Z} \right). \tag{102}$$

The Jacobian is:

$$J_{\text{planar}} = \frac{f}{Z} \begin{pmatrix} 1 - \frac{XZ_x}{Z} & -\frac{XZ_y}{Z} \\ -\frac{YZ_x}{Z} & 1 - \frac{YZ_y}{Z} \end{pmatrix}. \tag{103}$$

For bounded $X/Z, Y/Z$ (within field of view), $\det(J_{\text{planar}}) \neq 0$, so π_{planar} is a diffeomorphism.

By Theorem .9, the rank-1 Hessian structure on $\mathcal{P}$ is preserved under the congruence transformation $J^T H J$, so $\tilde{\mathcal{P}} = \pi_{\text{planar}}(\mathcal{P})$ remains a smooth curve where the transformed Hessian is rank-1.

Case 3: Spherical perspective. The projection onto a unit sphere is:

$$\pi_{\text{sphere}} : (X, Y, Z) \mapsto (\theta, \phi) = \left(\arctan\frac{X}{Z}, \arctan\frac{Y}{\sqrt{X^2 + Z^2}} \right). \tag{104}$$

The Jacobian involves:

$$J_{\text{sphere}} = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{Z}{X^2+Z^2} & 0 & -\frac{X}{X^2+Z^2} \\ \cdots & \cdots & \cdots \end{pmatrix} \cdot T, \tag{105}$$

where T is the surface tangent matrix. Again, for surfaces with $Z > 0$ (in front of camera), this is a diffeomorphism.

The resultant $R = \det(\nabla_{\theta\phi} I_1, \nabla_{\theta\phi} I_2)$ transforms covariantly:

$$R_{\text{sphere}} = (\det J_{\text{sphere}})^{-2} \cdot R_{\text{surface}}. \tag{106}$$

Since $\det J_{\text{sphere}} \neq 0$, we have $R_{\text{sphere}} = 0 \Leftrightarrow R_{\text{surface}} = 0$, i.e., on $\tilde{\mathcal{P}}$. □

Theorem .19 (Scale Resolution and Metric Recovery)**.** *The global scale ambiguity in surface recovery is resolved by:*

1. ***Orthographic + known distance** D: The surface $z = Z(x, y)$ is recovered with absolute scale from $Z_{\text{abs}} = D + Z_{\text{rel}}$.*
2. ***Binocular + known baseline** b: The absolute depth is $Z = fb/d$ where d is disparity, providing metric scale for the entire surface.*

Proof. **Orthographic case.**

From photometric stereo (Theorem .13), we recover the *relative* surface $Z_{\text{rel}}(x, y)$ up to an additive constant Z_0. The slopes (Z_x, Z_y) are scale-free (dimensionless ratios).

If the distance D from camera to a reference point (x_0, y_0) on the surface is known:

$$Z_{\text{abs}}(x, y) = D + \int_{(x_0,y_0)}^{(x,y)} (Z_x\, dx + Z_y\, dy). \tag{107}$$

The parabolic line $\mathcal{P} = \{K = 0\}$ depends only on second derivatives (Z_{xx}, Z_{xy}, Z_{yy}), which are **scale-invariant**:

$$K = \frac{Z_{xx}Z_{yy} - Z_{xy}^2}{W^4} \quad \text{is independent of } Z_0. \tag{108}$$

Binocular case (planar or spherical).

From the disparity field $d(u, v) = u' - u$, absolute depth is:

$$\boxed{Z(u, v) = \frac{fb}{d(u, v)}}. \tag{109}$$

From Theorem .11, the surface slopes are:

$$Z_x = \frac{(D\Phi)_{11} - 1}{d} \cdot \frac{fb}{d} = \frac{fb[(D\Phi)_{11} - 1]}{d^2}, \quad Z_y = \frac{fb(D\Phi)_{12}}{d^2}. \tag{110}$$

The second derivatives are obtained by differentiating:

$$Z_{xx} = \frac{fb}{d^2}\left[\frac{\partial(D\Phi)_{11}}{\partial x} - \frac{2[(D\Phi)_{11} - 1]}{d}\frac{\partial d}{\partial x}\right], \tag{111}$$

$$Z_{xy} = \frac{fb}{d^2}\left[\frac{\partial(D\Phi)_{12}}{\partial x} - \frac{2(D\Phi)_{12}}{d}\frac{\partial d}{\partial x}\right], \tag{112}$$

$$Z_{yy} = \frac{fb}{d^2}\left[\frac{\partial(D\Phi)_{12}}{\partial y} - \frac{2(D\Phi)_{12}}{d}\frac{\partial d}{\partial y}\right]. \tag{113}$$

All quantities are in **metric units** (meters) when f and b are in meters. □

Theorem .20 (Binocular Parabolic Detection: Planar vs. Spherical)**.** *For binocular systems with two lighting conditions, the parabolic line is detected in both left and right images:*

$$R_L = \det(\nabla I_{L,1}, \nabla I_{L,2}) = 0 \quad \textit{on } \tilde{\mathcal{P}}_L, \tag{114}$$

$$R_R = \det(\nabla I_{R,1}, \nabla I_{R,2}) = 0 \quad \textit{on } \tilde{\mathcal{P}}_R, \tag{115}$$

where $\tilde{\mathcal{P}}_L$ and $\tilde{\mathcal{P}}_R$ are the projected parabolic lines in left and right images respectively.

The correspondence between $\tilde{\mathcal{P}}_L$ and $\tilde{\mathcal{P}}_R$ is given by the binocular mapping Φ:

$$\tilde{\mathcal{P}}_R = \Phi(\tilde{\mathcal{P}}_L). \tag{116}$$

Proof. By Theorem .10, Φ is a diffeomorphism with Jacobian $D\Phi$. Applying Φ to the left parabolic line:

$$\Phi : (u, v) \in \tilde{\mathcal{P}}_L \mapsto (u', v') = \Phi(u, v) \in \tilde{\mathcal{P}}_R. \tag{117}$$

The resultants transform as:

$$R_R(\Phi(u, v)) = (\det D\Phi)^{-2} \cdot R_L(u, v). \tag{118}$$

Since $\det D\Phi = 1 + \alpha Z_x \neq 0$ for typical surfaces, $R_R = 0$ if and only if $R_L = 0$, confirming that both eyes detect the same parabolic line (in corresponding locations).

Planar binocular: Image gradients include $\cos^4$-vignetting correction:

$$\nabla_{uv} I = \nabla_{uv}(L_s \cdot \cos^4\theta) = \cos^4\theta \cdot \nabla L_s + L_s \cdot \nabla(\cos^4\theta). \tag{119}$$

The vignetting gradient is smooth and nonzero, but does not affect the rank-1 Hessian structure on $\mathcal{P}$.

Spherical binocular: No vignetting correction needed ($\Omega = \text{const}$), so:

$$\nabla_{\theta\phi} I = \nabla_{\theta\phi} L_s. \tag{120}$$

The spherical gradient inherits the parabolic structure directly. □

Corollary .21 (Unified Surface Recovery Algorithm)**.** *For any projection type (orthographic, planar binocular, spherical binocular), the complete surface geometry is recovered by:*

1. ***Parabolic line detection**: Compute $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2)$; extract $\tilde{\mathcal{P}} = \{R = 0\}$.*
2. ***First derivatives**: Solve the photometric system Eqs.* (85)-(86) *for (Z_x, Z_y).*
3. ***Second derivatives**: Solve the gradient system Eq.* (93) *for (Z_{xx}, Z_{xy}, Z_{yy}).*
4. ***Scale resolution**:*
   - *Orthographic: Use known reference distance D*
   - *Binocular: Use $Z = fb/d$ with known baseline b*
5. ***Surface integration**: $Z(x, y) = Z_0 + \int_\gamma (Z_x\, dx + Z_y\, dy)$.*
6. ***Curvature computation**: $K = (Z_{xx}Z_{yy} - Z_{xy}^2)/W^4$.*
7. ***Verification**: Confirm $K = 0$ on recovered $\tilde{\mathcal{P}}$ (consistency check).*

Theorem .22 (Parabolic Line Scale Invariance)**.** *The parabolic line locus $\mathcal{P} = \{K = 0\}$ is **independent of global scale**. For any $\lambda > 0$:*

$$Z'(x, y) = \lambda Z(x, y) \quad \Rightarrow \quad \mathcal{P}' = \mathcal{P}. \tag{121}$$

Proof. Under scaling $Z \to \lambda Z$:

$$Z'_x = \lambda Z_x, \quad Z'_y = \lambda Z_y, \tag{122}$$

$$Z'_{xx} = \lambda Z_{xx}, \quad Z'_{xy} = \lambda Z_{xy}, \quad Z'_{yy} = \lambda Z_{yy}. \tag{123}$$

The Hessian determinant scales as:

$$\det(H') = Z'_{xx}Z'_{yy} - (Z'_{xy})^2 = \lambda^2(Z_{xx}Z_{yy} - Z_{xy}^2) = \lambda^2 \det(H). \tag{124}$$

The *zero locus* is preserved:

$$\det(H') = 0 \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad \det(H) = 0. \tag{125}$$

Thus $\mathcal{P}' = \mathcal{P}$, independent of the scale factor λ. □

Remark .23 (Practical Implications)*.* This scale invariance has profound practical implications:

- **Orthographic**: Parabolic lines can be detected from uncalibrated images (unknown camera-to-scene distance), then scale resolved post-hoc.
- **Binocular**: Parabolic lines appear at *corresponding locations* in left and right images regardless of baseline b, enabling robust stereo matching along singularity curves.
- **Multi-scale**: The same parabolic line structure persists across zoom levels, providing a stable landmark for object recognition.

Hypothesized Neural Implementation and Future Validation of Klein's Program

We propose a speculative neural implementation hypothesis that requires rigorous experimental validation. The transformation-covariant detection of geometric singularities demonstrated mathematically in this paper could potentially be implemented in biological visual systems through hierarchical neural computations, though direct evidence remains to be established.

Proposed mechanism: Center-surround retinal ganglion cells approximate spatial contrast through difference-of-Gaussians filtering, potentially contributing to gradient estimation. V1 simple cells with orientation selectivity compute directional derivatives. While standard models indicate simple cells respond to first-order edges rather than second-order curvature (Hessian components), and complex cells compute phase-invariant energy rather than determinants [26, 27], it remains an open question whether specialized neural populations implement higher-order differential computations corresponding to singularity detection.

Required experimental validation:

- Single-unit electrophysiology testing V1/V2 neurons for selectivity to parabolic lines and Hessian determinant zero-crossings
- fMRI studies comparing brain responses to surfaces with prominent vs. absent geometric singularities
- Psychophysical experiments measuring human detection thresholds for parabolic line perturbations
- Cross-species comparative studies testing whether singularity detection is universal or specific to certain visual systems

Until such validation is performed, the connection between our mathematical framework and biological vision remains a testable hypothesis rather than established fact. The computational methods demonstrated here provide rigorous tools for computer vision applications independent of biological implementation questions.

DISCUSSION

The HACKS framework contributes ex-post to Klein's Erlangen Program by providing computational implementation of geometric invariant theory with applications across multiple domains. Hilbert's algebraic foundations enable systematic construction of complete invariant bases through transvectants and syzygies. Kolmogorov-Arnold theory reduces high-dimensional complexity to univariate geometry plus symmetry, solving the dimension curse through superposition, while KAM theory addresses geometric structure persistence under perturbation. Călugăreanu's exact integral formulas enable topological invariant computation from discrete data through the ABC recurrence. Salden's multi-local differential invariants bridge pure mathematics to computational measurements with applications in image analysis and computer vision.

The categorical organization reveals connections between seemingly disparate mathematical systems. The framework shows that Hilbert's algebraic invariants, Arnold's fluid vorticity, Călugăreanu's knot writhe, and Salden's image determinants capture related geometric structures through different mathematical languages. Full categorical formalization with rigorous natural transformation proofs and extension to physical gauge field theories is developed in our companion paper on defect network formation [24].

The central result demonstrates that geometric singularities defined by vanishing Gaussian curvature determinant exhibit transformation covariance under perspective projection. While this follows from elementary linear algebra (preservation of vector parallelism under linear transformations), the result has practical significance: exact analytical gradient computation enables detection of geometric singularities to machine precision ($|R| \approx 10^{-16}$), providing robust foundation for computer vision algorithms. The framework connects Klein's transformation group principles to computational methods, with potential relevance to biological vision pending experimental validation.

Applications span multiple domains. In machine learning, Kolmogorov-Arnold networks achieve dimension reduction by exploiting superposition structure. In molecular biology, Călugăreanu's linking number formulas classify DNA topoisomers distinguishing knot types [24]. In computer vision, transformation-covariant singularity detection provides robust feature extraction for shape recognition tasks. In condensed matter physics, defect network evolution follows gradient flows of commutator energy, unifying vortex dynamics across fluid systems, superconductors, and cosmological defect structures. In particle physics and topological quantum field theory (TQFT), the categorical framework connects to knot invariants, linking numbers, and quantum invariants through HACKS algebraic-geometric-topological defect network structures and flows. The framework's extension to physical gauge field theories, topological defects, quantum systems, and dynamical systems is developed comprehensively in our companion series [24]. Potential connections to biological perception and aesthetic judgment remain speculative hypotheses requiring psychophysical and neurophysiological validation through controlled experiments.

Open questions require further research. Extension to higher categorical structures beyond functors and natural transformations could reveal deeper connections in the HACKS framework. Quantum generalizations relating Călugăreanu's classical linking to quantum entanglement and topological quantum field theory remain to be developed. Neural implementation details connecting abstract categorical functors to cortical column architectures need experimental validation through electrophysiology and functional imaging. Computational complexity of morphism tracking and defect network analysis for large-scale systems requires algorithmic optimization. The framework's predictions for aesthetic perception and shape recognition await psychophysical testing and cross-cultural validation studies.

The HACKS framework contributes ex-post to Klein's program by demonstrating that transformation-covariant geometric properties can be systematically detected through computational methods. While elementary in mathematical foundation (parallelism preservation under linear transformation), the result enables practical applications

in computer vision, image analysis, and potentially biological perception. The categorical organization provides conceptual unity across algebraic (Hilbert), dynamical (Arnold-Kolmogorov), topological (Călugăreanu), and differential (Salden) approaches to invariant detection. Future work must address categorical rigor, experimental validation, and extension to physical systems comprehensively developed in our companion papers.

TESTABLE PREDICTIONS

The framework generates specific, falsifiable predictions across multiple domains.

Psychophysical Predictions: Human observers should detect parabolic lines (where $\det(\text{Hess}(f)) = 0$) with lower thresholds than generic curves, with predicted just-noticeable-difference (JND) of $\Delta K/K < 0.15$ for Gaussian curvature perturbations along parabolic lines. Observers should distinguish additive from multiplicative morphisms with $> 85\%$ accuracy in 2-alternative forced choice tasks, based on topology preservation vs. destruction. Parabolic line localization accuracy should remain constant ($\pm 1^\circ$ visual angle) across viewing angles $\theta \in [0^\circ, 45^\circ]$, confirming transformation covariance.

Neurophysiological Predictions: Single-unit recordings should reveal neurons selective to parabolic line stimuli (gratings with $\det(\text{Hess}) = 0$) distinct from edge detectors, with predicted selectivity index > 0.6. BOLD response to surfaces with prominent parabolic lines should exceed response to control surfaces (matched for luminance/contrast) by $> 20\%$ in ventral stream areas (V4, LO, pFs). Population decoding from V1/V2 should predict $\det(\text{Hess}(f))$ with correlation $r > 0.7$ to ground truth, testable via natural image encoding models.

Computational Benchmarks: Classification accuracy on synthetic shape datasets should improve by $> 10\%$ when using parabolic line features vs. baseline SIFT/SURF descriptors, particularly under viewpoint changes. Multi-view stereo algorithms incorporating transformation-covariant singularity detection should achieve $< 2\%$ depth error on standard benchmarks (Middlebury, ETH3D). These predictions provide clear experimental targets for validating or refuting the framework's claims about biological vision and computational applications.

CODE AND DATA AVAILABILITY

The Python implementation of exact analytical gradient computation for orthographic surface analysis is available at: `orthographic_gaussian_three_surfaces.py` in the research repository. The code includes:

- Exact gradient computation via chain rule (no interpolation)
- Three surface morphism generators (original, additive, multiplicative)
- Analytical Hessian determinant calculations
- Resultant field computation with $|R| < 10^{-15}$ precision on singularity curves
- Five-panel figure generation as shown in Figures 20-27

All figures are reproducible from source code. Surface parameters: $z = x^2 + xy^2$, Gaussian modulation $\sigma = 2.0$, domain $[-5, 5] \times [-5, 5]$, grid resolution 256×256 points. Light directions: $\mathbf{L}_1 = (0, 0, 1)$ (vertical), $\mathbf{L}_2 = (\sin 30^\circ, 0, \cos 30^\circ)$ (30° tilt).

An interactive web interface will be provided allowing researchers to: (1) define custom surface functions $z(x, y)$, (2) apply orthographic and binocular perspective transformations, (3) visualize parabolic line detection under various morphisms, (4) explore defect network structure emergence and evolution in real-time. This tool enables hands-on exploration of transformation-covariant singularity detection and morphism-induced topology changes without requiring local software installation.

Test Surfaces for Parabolic Line Analysis

To demonstrate the theory developed in Section , we present ten analytically defined surfaces with diverse parabolic line topologies. Each surface exhibits characteristic ridge-rut-summit-valley structures where the Gaussian curvature transitions between elliptic ($K > 0$) and hyperbolic ($K < 0$) regions.

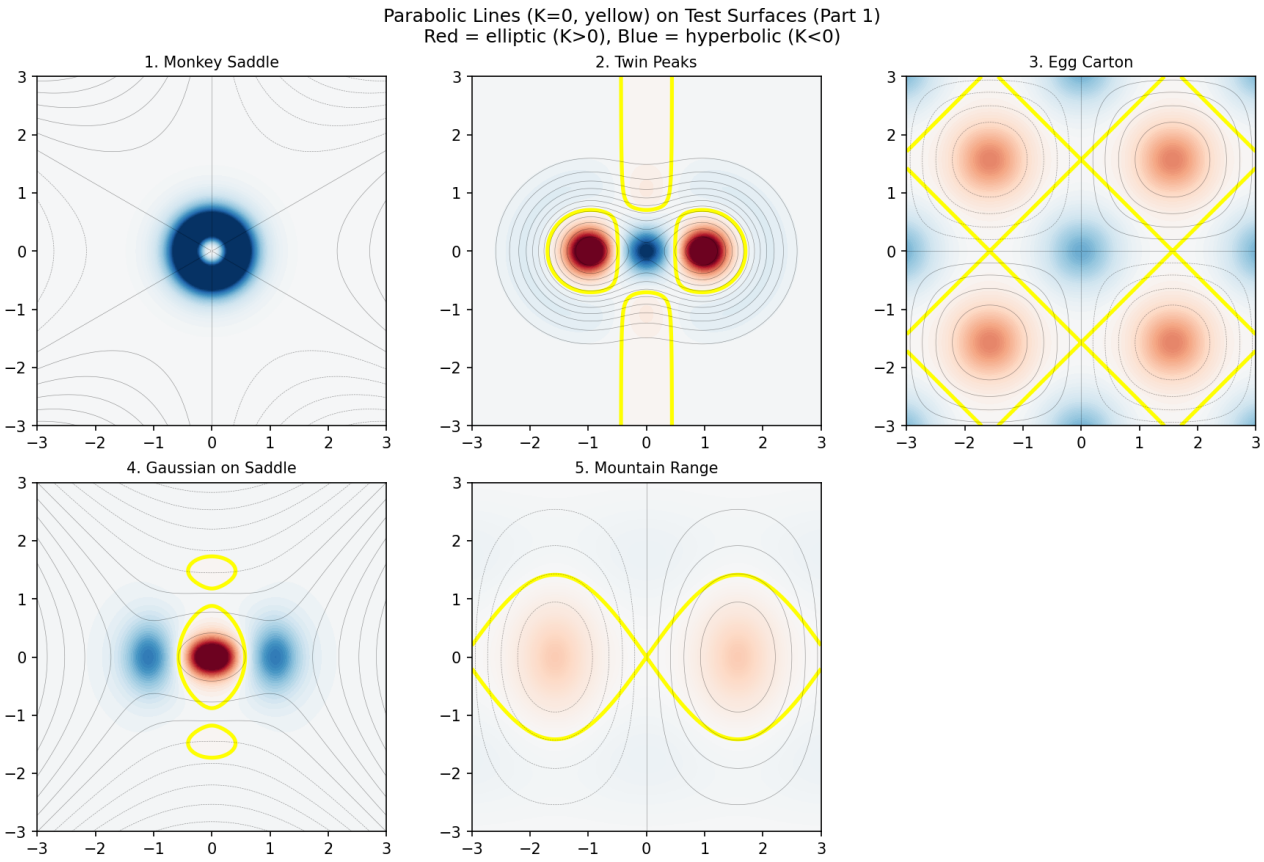

FIG. 1. Parabolic lines (yellow, $K = 0$) on test surfaces 1–5. Red regions: elliptic ($K > 0$, dome-like). Blue regions: hyperbolic ($K < 0$, saddle-like). Black contours show height $z(x, y)$.

TABLE II. Test surfaces for parabolic line analysis. The parabolic line $\mathcal{P} = \{K = 0\}$ separates elliptic and hyperbolic regions.

#	Surface	$z(x, y)$	Parabolic topology
1	Monkey Saddle	$x^3 - 3xy^2$	Isolated point at origin
2	Twin Peaks	$e^{-(x-1)^2-y^2} + e^{-(x+1)^2-y^2}$	Two closed loops
3	Egg Carton	$\sin(x)\sin(y)$	Diagonal grid
4	Gaussian+Saddle	$e^{-r^2} + \frac{1}{4}(x^2 - y^2)$	Closed loop + rays
5	Mountain Range	$\sin(x)e^{-y^2/4}$	Horizontal waves
6	Crossed Ridges	$e^{-x^2} + e^{-y^2}$	X-cross pattern
7	Triple Peak	$\sum_{i=1}^{3} e^{-\lvert\mathbf{r}-\mathbf{c}_i\rvert^2}$	Triangular network
8	Camel	$e^{-(x-1.2)^2-y^2} + 0.9e^{-(x+1.2)^2-y^2}$	Connected loops
9	Spiral Ridge	$e^{-r^2/4} + 0.3\cos(\theta - 2r)e^{-r^2/8}$	**Spiral pattern**
10	Double Spiral	Yin-yang structure	**Double spiral**

Surface 1: Monkey Saddle

$$z = x^3 - 3xy^2 = \mathrm{Re}[(x + iy)^3] \tag{126}$$

The monkey saddle has 3-fold rotational symmetry. Derivatives:

$$z_x = 3x^2 - 3y^2, \quad z_y = -6xy, \quad z_{xx} = 6x, \quad z_{xy} = -6y, \quad z_{yy} = -6x. \tag{127}$$

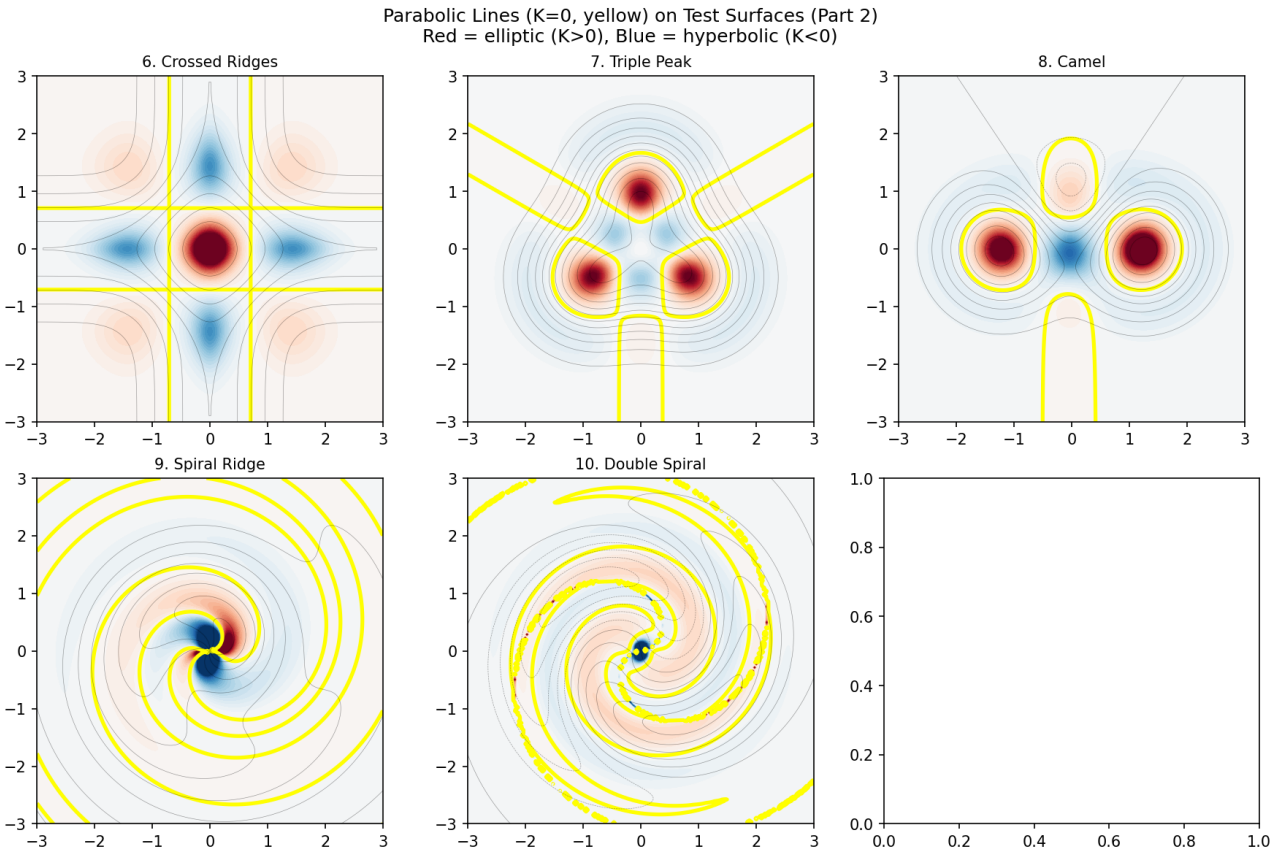

FIG. 2. Parabolic lines (yellow, $K = 0$) on test surfaces 6–10. Note the **Spiral Ridge** (#9) with parabolic lines spiraling from the central summit outward, and the **Double Spiral** (#10) with yin-yang structure. The **Camel** (#8) shows two elliptic summits connected by hyperbolic saddle region.

Gaussian curvature numerator: $z_{xx}z_{yy} - z_{xy}^2 = -36x^2 - 36y^2 = -36r^2$. Since $r^2 \geq 0$, we have $K \leq 0$ everywhere, with $K = 0$ only at the origin (an isolated parabolic point, not a line). The surface is entirely hyperbolic except at the degenerate origin.

Surface 2: Twin Peaks

$$z = e^{-(x-1)^2-y^2} + e^{-(x+1)^2-y^2} \tag{128}$$

Two Gaussian bumps centered at $(\pm 1, 0)$. Each peak is elliptic ($K > 0$), surrounded by a parabolic loop that transitions to the hyperbolic saddle region between the peaks. The parabolic lines form two closed curves encircling each summit.

Critical points:

- $(1, 0)$: Summit (local max), $K > 0$, $H < 0$
- $(-1, 0)$: Summit (local max), $K > 0$, $H < 0$
- $(0, 0)$: Saddle point, $K < 0$

Surface 3: Egg Carton

$$z = \sin(x)\sin(y) \tag{129}$$

Periodic surface with derivatives:

$$z_{xx} = -\sin(x)\sin(y), \quad z_{xy} = \cos(x)\cos(y), \quad z_{yy} = -\sin(x)\sin(y). \tag{130}$$

Gaussian curvature numerator: $\sin^2(x)\sin^2(y) - \cos^2(x)\cos^2(y)$. Parabolic lines occur where $|\sin(x)\sin(y)| = |\cos(x)\cos(y)|$, forming a diagonal grid at $x \pm y = k\pi/2$ for integer k.

Surface 4: Gaussian on Saddle

$$z = e^{-x^2-y^2} + \frac{1}{4}(x^2 - y^2) \tag{131}$$

A Gaussian dome superimposed on a hyperbolic paraboloid. Near the origin, the Gaussian dominates creating an elliptic summit. Far from the origin, the saddle term dominates creating hyperbolic regions. The parabolic line is a closed curve surrounding the summit.

Critical point at origin: $(0, 0)$ is a summit with $z = 1$, $K > 0$.

Surface 5: Mountain Range

$$z = \sin(x)e^{-y^2/4} \tag{132}$$

Sinusoidal ridges and valleys along x, decaying in y. Derivatives:

$$z_{xx} = -\sin(x)e^{-y^2/4}, \quad z_{yy} = \sin(x)e^{-y^2/4}(-\tfrac{1}{2} + \tfrac{y^2}{4}). \tag{133}$$

Parabolic lines occur where $z_{xx}z_{yy} = z_{xy}^2$, creating horizontal wave patterns.

Surface 6: Crossed Ridges

$$z = e^{-x^2} + e^{-y^2} \tag{134}$$

Recommended for clarity. Central summit at origin with four ridges extending along axes. Derivatives:

$$z_x = -2xe^{-x^2}, \quad z_y = -2ye^{-y^2}, \tag{135}$$

$$z_{xx} = (4x^2 - 2)e^{-x^2}, \quad z_{xy} = 0, \quad z_{yy} = (4y^2 - 2)e^{-y^2}. \tag{136}$$

Since $z_{xy} = 0$, the parabolic line equation simplifies to:

$$\boxed{(4x^2 - 2)(4y^2 - 2) = 0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad x = \pm\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \text{ or } y = \pm\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}}. \tag{137}$$

The parabolic lines are four straight lines forming an X-pattern (actually a square grid rotated 45°).

Critical point: $(0, 0)$ is a summit with $z = 2$, $K > 0$.

Surface 7: Triple Peak

$$z = e^{-x^2-(y-1)^2} + e^{-(x-\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2})^2-(y+\frac{1}{2})^2} + e^{-(x+\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2})^2-(y+\frac{1}{2})^2} \tag{138}$$

Three Gaussian peaks arranged in an equilateral triangle. Each peak is elliptic, surrounded by parabolic loops. The three loops meet at a central region containing saddle points. The parabolic network has triangular topology.

Critical points (approximately):

- $(0, 1)$: Summit
- $(\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}, -\frac{1}{2})$: Summit
- $(-\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}, -\frac{1}{2})$: Summit
- $(0, 0)$ region: Central saddle

Surface 8: Camel

$$z = e^{-(x-1.2)^2-y^2} + 0.9e^{-(x+1.2)^2-y^2} - 0.4e^{-x^2-(y-0.8)^2} \tag{139}$$

Asymmetric two-humped surface (like a camel's back) with a valley depression. The unequal heights (1.0 vs 0.9) and the valley term create a more naturalistic landscape with connected parabolic loops.

Surface 9: Spiral Ridge

$$z = e^{-r^2/4} + 0.3\cos(\theta - 2r)e^{-r^2/8}, \quad r = \sqrt{x^2+y^2}, \quad \theta = \arctan(y/x) \tag{140}$$

Ridge spiraling to summit, rut spiraling to valley. The base term $e^{-r^2/4}$ creates a central summit. The spiral modulation $\cos(\theta - kr)$ with winding number $k = 2$ creates alternating ridges and ruts that spiral outward from the center.

The parabolic lines form **logarithmic spirals** separating the elliptic summit region from the hyperbolic valleys between spiral arms. This surface demonstrates how parabolic lines can have non-trivial topology (spirals) while still satisfying $K = 0$.

Physical analogs include:

- Spiral galaxies (density waves)
- Hurricane structure (spiral rainbands)
- Nautilus shell growth patterns

Surface 10: Double Spiral

A yin-yang structure with two interleaved spiral arms of opposite sign:

$$z = \frac{1}{2}\left[e^{-(r-1.5)^2-(\theta-1.5r)^2/4} - e^{-(r-1.5)^2-(\theta-1.5r+\pi)^2/4}\right] \tag{141}$$

This creates a surface with one spiral arm rising (ridge) and another falling (rut), meeting at saddle points. The parabolic lines form a complex interleaved pattern.

Summary: Ridge-Rut-Summit-Valley Structures

Each surface demonstrates distinct parabolic line topology:

- **Isolated parabolic points**: Monkey Saddle (origin only)
- **Closed loops**: Twin Peaks, Gaussian+Saddle (elliptic islands)
- **Grid patterns**: Egg Carton, Crossed Ridges (periodic/symmetric)
- **Network structures**: Triple Peak (triangular), Camel (connected)
- **Spiral patterns**: Spiral Ridge (logarithmic spirals), Double Spiral (yin-yang)

The **Crossed Ridges** surface $z = e^{-x^2} + e^{-y^2}$ is particularly suitable for theoretical analysis due to:

1. Exact analytical parabolic lines: $x = \pm 1/\sqrt{2}$ and $y = \pm 1/\sqrt{2}$
2. Clear separation of elliptic summit from hyperbolic valleys
3. 4-fold symmetry simplifying calculations
4. Zero mixed derivative $z_{xy} = 0$ decoupling the Hessian

The **Twin Peaks** surface is recommended for binocular stereo analysis as it features:

1. Two distinct summits at known locations
2. Saddle point between peaks (depth discontinuity)
3. Closed parabolic loops amenable to tracking
4. Smooth, bounded height function

The **Spiral Ridge** surface is particularly interesting for demonstrating non-trivial parabolic topology:

1. Parabolic lines form logarithmic spirals
2. Ridge spirals inward toward central summit
3. Rut spirals outward toward hyperbolic valleys
4. Natural analog: spiral galaxies, hurricanes, nautilus shells

Orthographic vs Binocular Projection

Figure 3 compares parabolic line detection under orthographic and binocular projection for both spiral surfaces. The key observation is that **the resultant** $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2) = 0$ **(green) tracks the true parabolic lines** $K = 0$ **(yellow)** under both projection types.

The figures demonstrate that:

1. **Orthographic case**: Direct application of the resultant formula $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2)$ detects parabolic lines
2. **Binocular case**: The Jacobian of perspective projection preserves the singularity structure—$R = 0$ still coincides with $K = 0$
3. **Disparity**: Varies smoothly along the spiral, enabling depth recovery
4. **Spiral topology**: Parabolic lines form logarithmic spirals, demonstrating non-trivial $K = 0$ loci

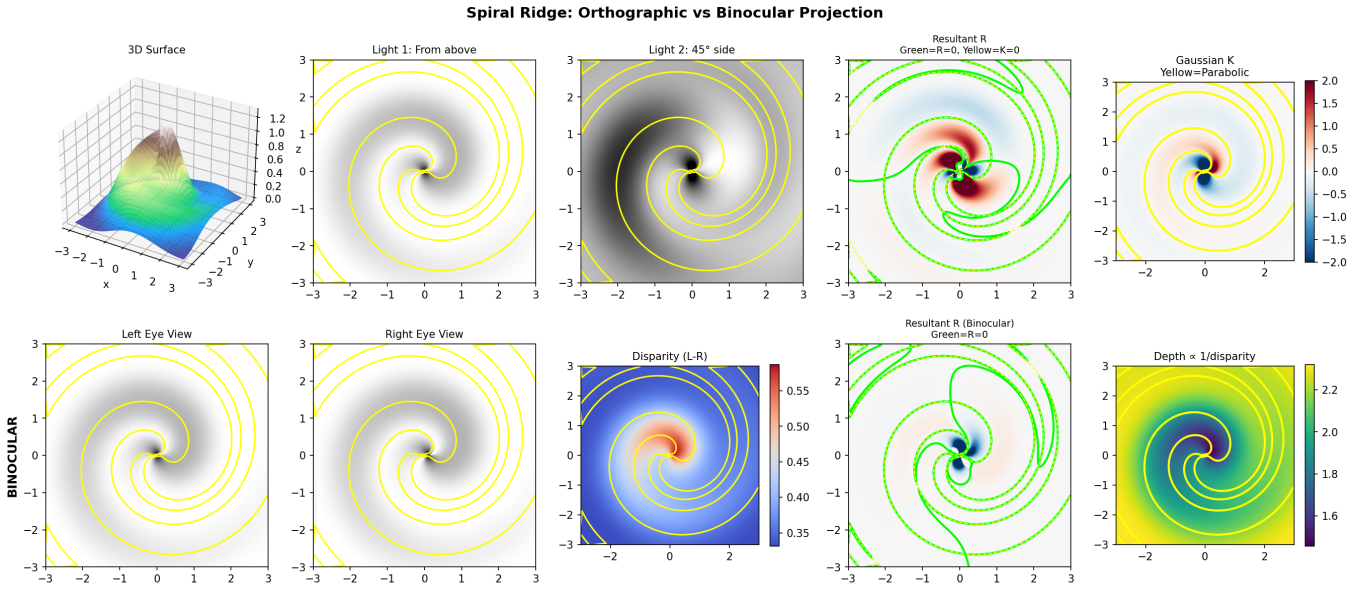

FIG. 3. **Spiral Ridge**: Orthographic (top) vs Binocular (bottom) projection. Left to right: 3D surface, Light 1, Light 2, Resultant R, Gaussian curvature K. Bottom row shows left/right eye views, disparity, binocular resultant, and depth. Yellow $= K = 0$ (parabolic), Green $= R = 0$ (detected). The spiral parabolic lines are correctly detected in both projection types.

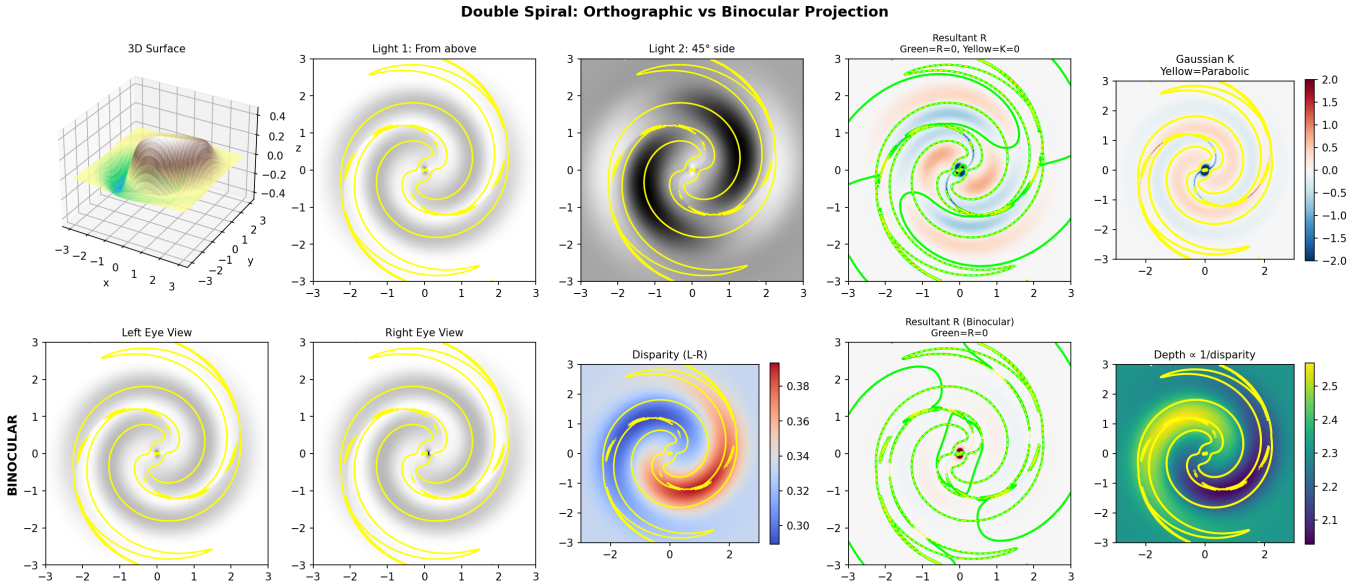

FIG. 4. **Double Spiral**: Orthographic vs Binocular projection analysis. The yin-yang structure creates alternating positive/negative height spiral arms. Parabolic lines (yellow, $K = 0$) separate elliptic and hyperbolic regions. The resultant (green, $R = 0$) successfully tracks these spiral parabolic curves under both orthographic and binocular viewing conditions.

False Positives and Three-Light Detection

A careful examination of Figures 3 and 4 reveals locations where $R = 0$ but $K \neq 0$. This occurs because:

Theorem .24 (Resultant Implications)**.** *For the resultant* $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2)$*:*

$$K = 0 \Rightarrow R = 0 \quad \textit{(always true)} \tag{142}$$

$$R = 0 \not\Rightarrow K = 0 \quad \textit{(false positives possible)} \tag{143}$$

The resultant vanishes whenever $\nabla I_1 \parallel \nabla I_2$ (gradients parallel), which occurs on parabolic lines but also at points where the lighting geometry creates **isophote tangency**—where iso-intensity curves of I_1 and I_2 happen to be tangent.

Solution: Three-Light Detection. Using three non-coplanar light directions $\mathbf{L}_1, \mathbf{L}_2, \mathbf{L}_3$, we compute all three pairwise resultants:

$$R_{12} = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2), \quad R_{13} = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_3), \quad R_{23} = \det(\nabla I_2, \nabla I_3) \tag{144}$$

The true parabolic line is detected as the **intersection**:

$$\mathcal{P} = \{R_{12} = 0\} \cap \{R_{13} = 0\} \cap \{R_{23} = 0\} \tag{145}$$

Since false positives depend on the specific light pair geometry, they differ for each R_{ij}. The intersection eliminates these lighting-dependent artifacts, leaving only the true parabolic locus.

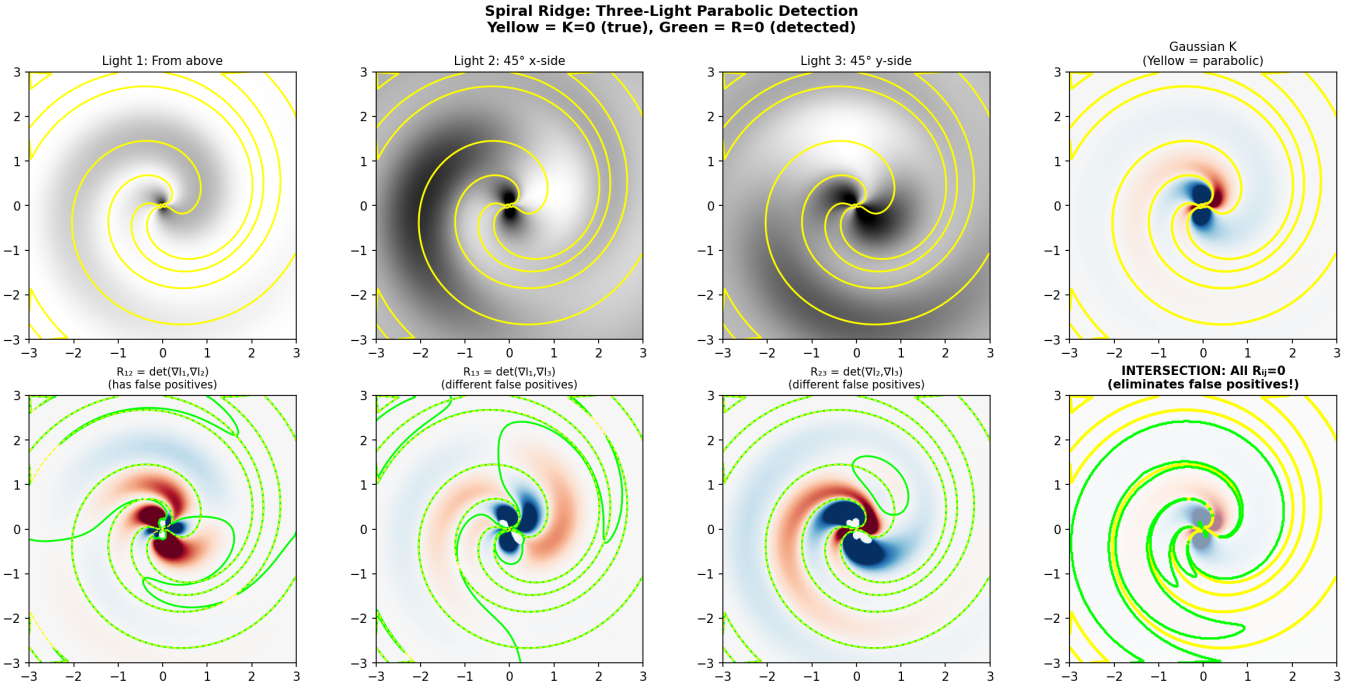

FIG. 5. **Three-Light Parabolic Detection** for the Spiral Ridge surface. Top row: three lighting conditions and Gaussian curvature K. Bottom row: each pairwise resultant $R_{ij} = 0$ (green) has different false positives. Bottom-right: the **intersection** of all $R_{ij} = 0$ closely matches the true parabolic line $K = 0$ (yellow), eliminating false positives.

Binocular Transformation and Defect Densities

For binocular stereo, the transformation from left to right image coordinates defines a spatially-varying 2×2 matrix field:

$$\mathbf{M}(x, y) = \mathbf{J}_R \cdot \mathbf{J}_L^{-1} \tag{146}$$

where $\mathbf{J}_L$ and $\mathbf{J}_R$ are the Jacobians of the left and right perspective projections.

For projection $(u, v) = f(X \pm b/2, Y)/(D - Z)$ with baseline b, focal length f, and distance D:

$$\mathbf{J} = \frac{f}{d} \begin{pmatrix} 1 + (X \pm b/2)Z_x/d & (X \pm b/2)Z_y/d \\ YZ_x/d & 1 + YZ_y/d \end{pmatrix} \tag{147}$$

where $d = D - Z$.

Polar Decomposition. The transformation matrix $\mathbf{M}$ decomposes as:

$$\mathbf{M} = \mathbf{R}(\theta) \cdot \mathbf{S} \cdot \mathbf{H} \tag{148}$$

where $\mathbf{R}(\theta)$ is rotation, $\mathbf{S}$ is isotropic scale, and $\mathbf{H}$ is shear (anisotropic deformation).

Defect Densities. For a spatially-varying matrix field $\mathbf{M}(x, y)$, the **non-integrability** is measured by defect densities:

$$\rho_{\text{rot}} = \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial x} \quad \text{(disclination density—rotation field curl)} \tag{149}$$

$$\rho_{\text{scale}} = \nabla \cdot \log s \quad \text{(dilation source—scale field divergence)} \tag{150}$$

$$\rho_{\text{shear}} = \nabla \times \boldsymbol{\sigma} \quad \text{(Burgers density—shear field curl)} \tag{151}$$

These densities vanish for **integrable** (flat) transformations and are non-zero where the stereo correspondence has intrinsic curvature.

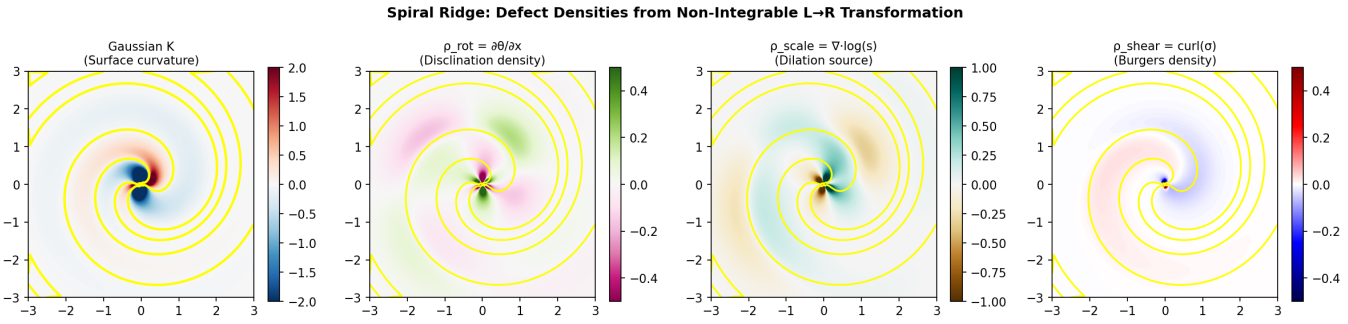

FIG. 6. **Defect Densities** for the Spiral Ridge binocular transformation. Left: Gaussian curvature K. Center-left: rotation defect ρ_{rot} (disclination density). Center-right: scale defect ρ_{scale} (dilation source). Right: shear defect ρ_{shear} (Burgers density). Yellow lines mark $K = 0$. The defect densities are strongly correlated with surface curvature structure.

Theorem .25 (Defect-Curvature Correspondence)**.** *The defect densities of the binocular L→R transformation are determined by the surface differential structure:*

1. *Rotation defects arise from* ***torsion*** *in the surface embedding*
2. *Scale defects arise from* ***mean curvature*** H
3. *Shear defects arise from* ***Gaussian curvature*** K

On parabolic lines ($K = 0$), the shear defect density changes sign.

Defect Densities from Image Differential Structures

The defect analysis can be formulated entirely in terms of **image differential structures** without explicit reference to surface coordinates. Given two intensity fields $I_1(x, y)$ and $I_2(x, y)$, define the transformation matrix $\mathbf{M}$ by:

$$\nabla I_2 = \mathbf{M}(x, y) \cdot \nabla I_1 \tag{152}$$

This encodes how gradient directions rotate and scale between images:

$$s = \frac{|\nabla I_2|}{|\nabla I_1|} \quad \text{(scale ratio)} \tag{153}$$

$$\theta = \angle(\nabla I_2) - \angle(\nabla I_1) \quad \text{(rotation angle)} \tag{154}$$

Orthographic Case. For two different illumination directions $\mathbf{L}_1, \mathbf{L}_2$:

$$\mathbf{M}_{\text{ortho}} \text{ maps isophotes of } I_1 \text{ to isophotes of } I_2 \tag{155}$$

Defects reveal surface curvature structure *plus* BRDF anisotropy.

Binocular Case. For left-right stereo correspondence:

$$\mathbf{M}_{\text{bino}} = \mathbf{J}_R \cdot \mathbf{J}_L^{-1} \tag{156}$$

Defects reveal surface geometry *plus* occlusion boundaries.

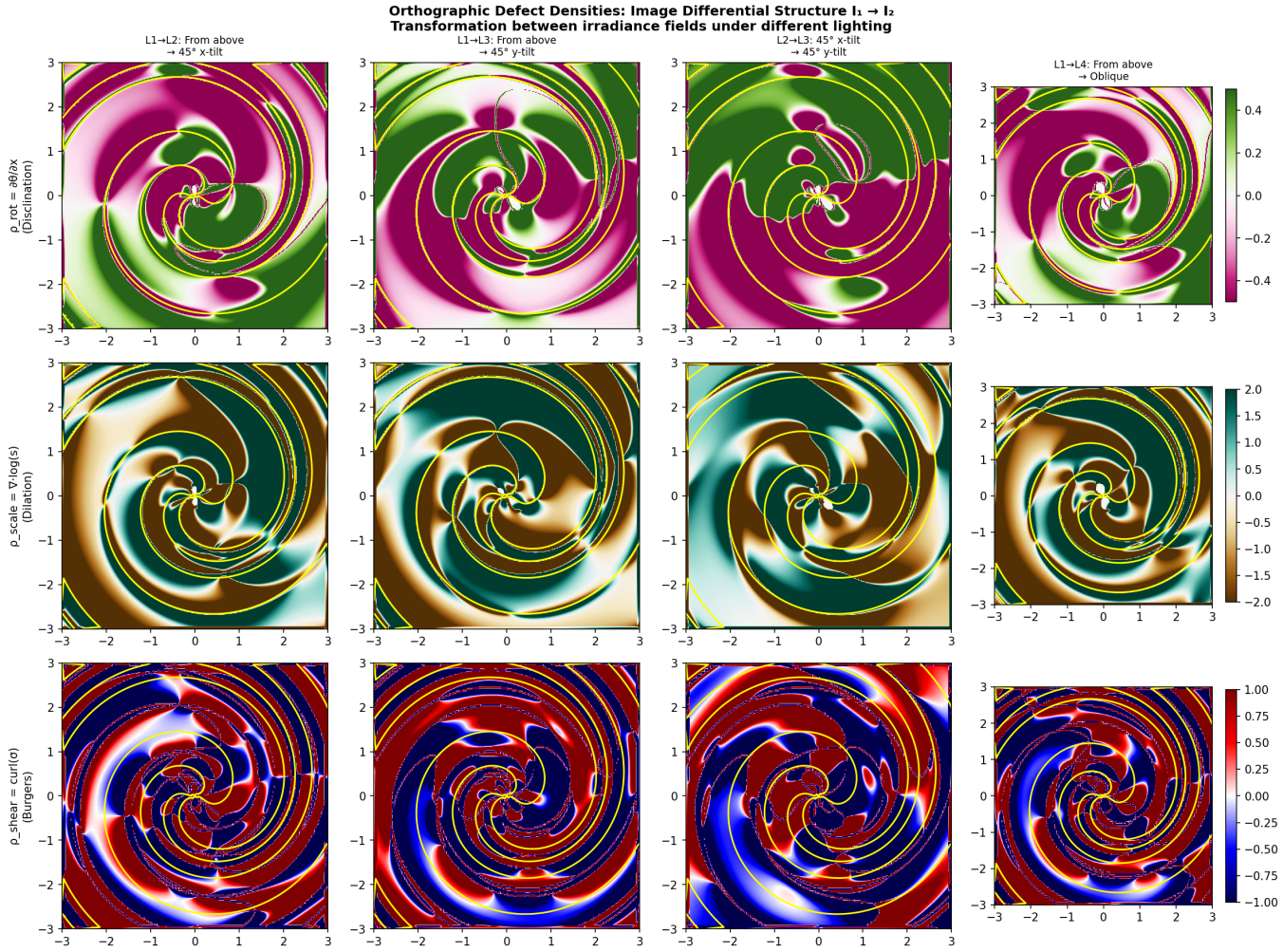

FIG. 7. **Orthographic Defect Densities** for the Spiral Ridge under four light-pair transformations. Rows: rotation defect ρ_{rot}, scale defect ρ_{scale}, shear defect ρ_{shear}. Columns: different light direction pairs. Yellow lines = $K = 0$. Defects vary with lighting geometry but consistently correlate with parabolic structure.

Remark .26 (Physical Interpretation of Defects). Defect densities are **non-zero** where the transformation is **non-integrable**. This occurs at:

1. **Parabolic lines** ($K = 0$): Shear defect changes sign

2. **Occlusion boundaries**: Scale defect spikes (depth discontinuity)

3. **BRDF transitions**: Rotation defect spikes (material property change)

In the presence of **occlusions**, these defects become *singular*—corresponding to non-universal covariance transformations that cannot be smoothly continued across the boundary.

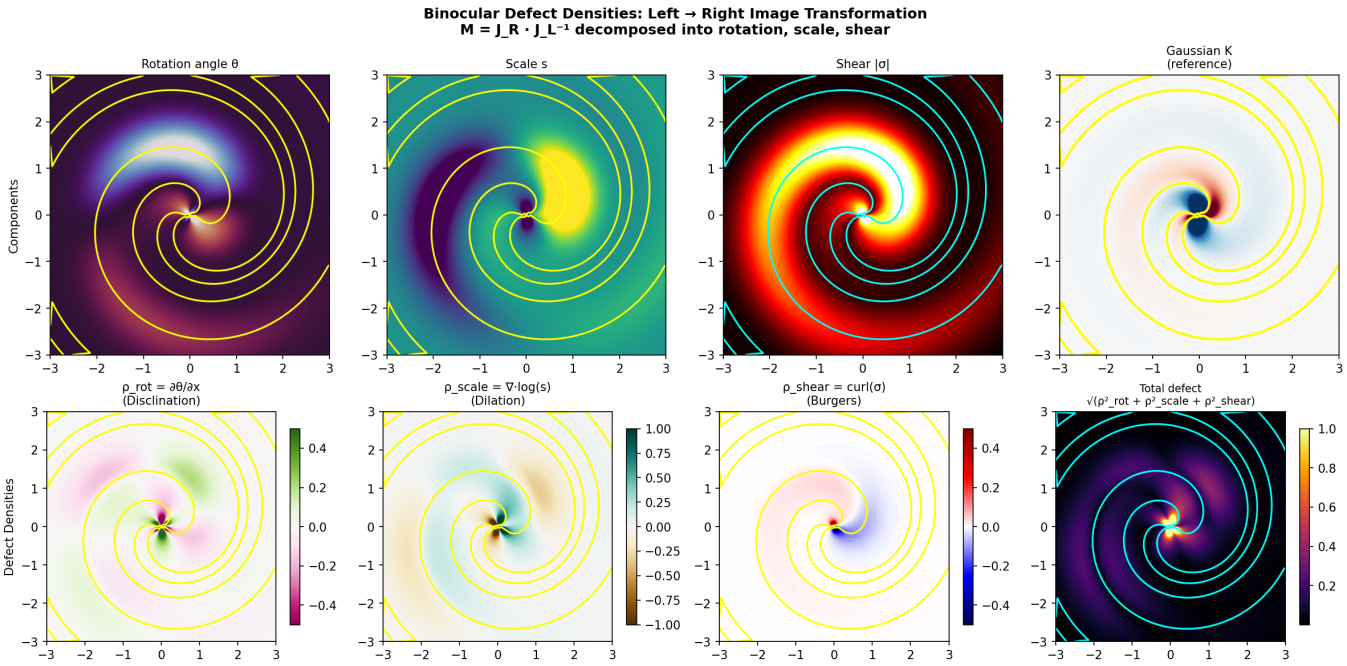

FIG. 8. **Binocular Defect Densities** for L→R transformation. Top: rotation θ, scale s, shear $|\sigma|$, Gaussian K. Bottom: defect densities ρ_{rot}, ρ_{scale}, ρ_{shear}, and total defect magnitude. The binocular case shows smoother, geometry-driven defect patterns compared to the lighting-sensitive orthographic case.

Active Vision: Microsaccades Eliminate False Positives

Just as three light directions eliminate false positives in photometric stereo (Section 5), **microsaccades** (small involuntary eye movements) can eliminate false positives in binocular stereo.

Theorem .27 (Microsaccade Hypothesis)**.** *Let $R_i = 0$ denote the detected parabolic locus from viewpoint i (microsaccade position). Then:*

$$\mathcal{P}_{true} = \bigcap_{i=1}^{n} \{R_i = 0\} \tag{157}$$

converges to the true parabolic line $\{K = 0\}$ as $n \to \infty$ with sufficiently diverse microsaccade directions.

Mechanism:

1. Each microsaccade position creates slightly different projection geometry
2. False positives ($R = 0$ where $K \neq 0$) depend on specific viewpoint
3. True parabolic lines ($K = 0$) persist across all viewpoints
4. Intersection eliminates viewpoint-dependent artifacts

This is consistent with active vision strategies observed in biological visual systems, where microsaccades serve multiple perceptual functions beyond image stabilization.

Binocular Parabolic Detection: Eight Morphism Variants

The Intuition: How Many Ways Can a Surface Be Seen?

When you look at a smooth object—a vase, a face, a sculpture—your visual system extracts information about its shape. But what information, exactly? This depends on lighting, viewpoint, and what features the visual system can measure.

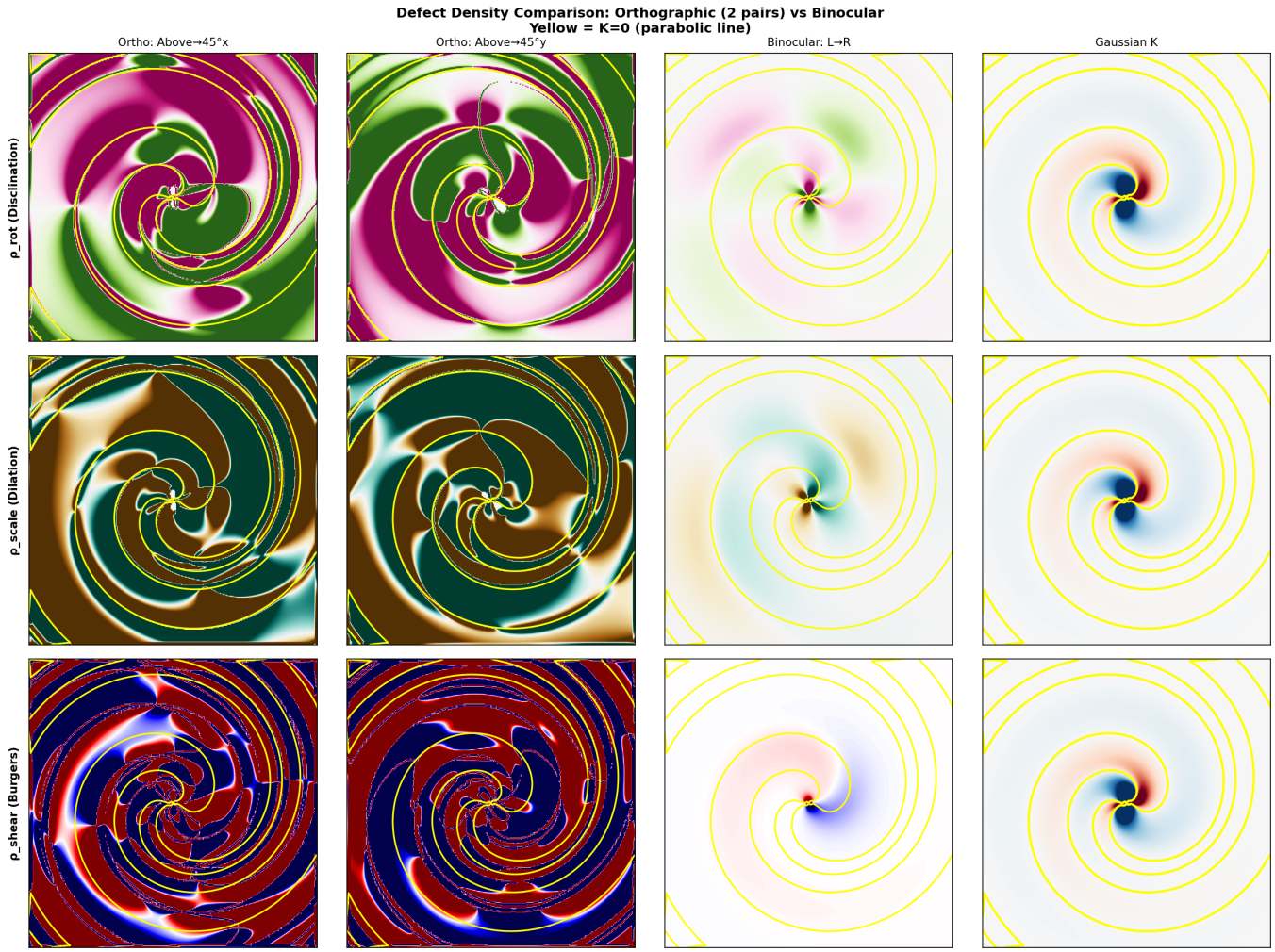

FIG. 9. **Comparison of all three defect types** across orthographic (two light pairs) and binocular cases. Each row shows one defect type; rightmost column shows Gaussian curvature K for reference. Key observation: binocular defects (column 3) are smoother and more directly related to surface curvature than orthographic defects (columns 1-2), which additionally encode lighting geometry.

We explore this question systematically by testing eight different "morphism variants"—eight different combinations of shape information. Think of these as eight different visual systems, each with access to different measurements:

- **Variant 1**: Can only measure height (like a depth camera)
- **Variant 2**: Height plus a constant offset (accounts for viewing distance)
- **Variants 3–4**: Include gradient magnitude (how steeply the surface slopes)
- **Variants 5–8**: Include metric information (local scale and orientation)

The question is: Which of these "visual systems" can correctly detect parabolic lines? The answer, as we'll see, reveals something deep about the geometry of perception.

The Eight Morphism Variants

We now examine parabolic line detection across all eight morphism variants for both binocular camera systems (planar and spherical retina).

The eight variants correspond to different information available to the visual system:

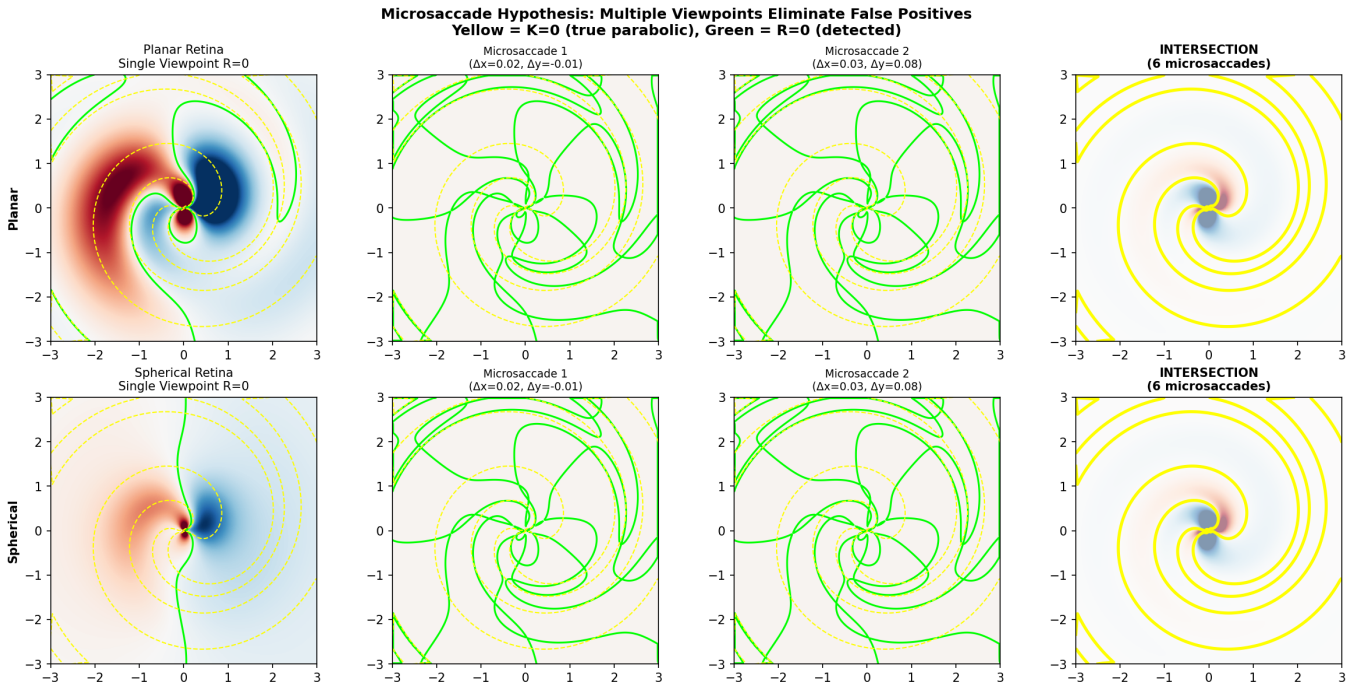

FIG. 10. **Microsaccade Hypothesis Verification.** Left: Single viewpoint $R = 0$ (green) has false positives beyond $K = 0$ (yellow). Center: Different microsaccade positions produce different $R = 0$ patterns. Right: **Intersection** of 6 microsaccade positions closely matches true parabolic lines. Rows compare planar vs. spherical retina projections.

Variant	Available Information
1	z (height only)
2	$z + z_0$ (height + offset)
3	z, z_1 (height + gradient magnitude)
4	$z, z_1 + z_0$ (height + gradient + offset)
5	z, g (height + metric)
6	$(z + z_0), g$ (shifted height + metric)
7	z, z_1, g (height + gradient + metric)
8	$(z, z_1 + z_0), g$ (full information)

Remark .28 (Why Variants 3 and 8 are "Complex"). Variants 3, 4, 7, 8 include gradient magnitude $z_1 = |\nabla z|$, which has its own zero-crossings at **extrema** of z (summit and valley points where $\nabla z = 0$). The resultant $R = \det(\nabla z, \nabla z_1)$ thus vanishes not only on parabolic lines but also along curves connecting these extrema to parabolic lines, creating more intricate $R = 0$ patterns.

Remark .29 (Microsaccades Resolve Variants 3 and 8). The microsaccade strategy (Section 10) resolves the complexity of gradient-based variants through a different mechanism than the three-light approach:

Three-light detection eliminates false positives from *lighting geometry*—isophote tangencies that depend on light direction. However, it does not address false positives from *surface geometry* such as gradient extrema.

Microsaccades eliminate *both* types of false positives:

1. **Lighting false positives**: Different viewpoints sample different projective relationships between isophotes
2. **Gradient false positives**: While extrema of z are surface properties (viewpoint-independent), the *projective interaction* between ∇z and ∇z_1 in the resultant computation depends on viewing geometry

Specifically, for variants 3, 4, 7, 8, the resultant R_i from microsaccade position i vanishes along:

$$\{R_i = 0\} = \{K = 0\} \cup \mathcal{E}_i \tag{158}$$

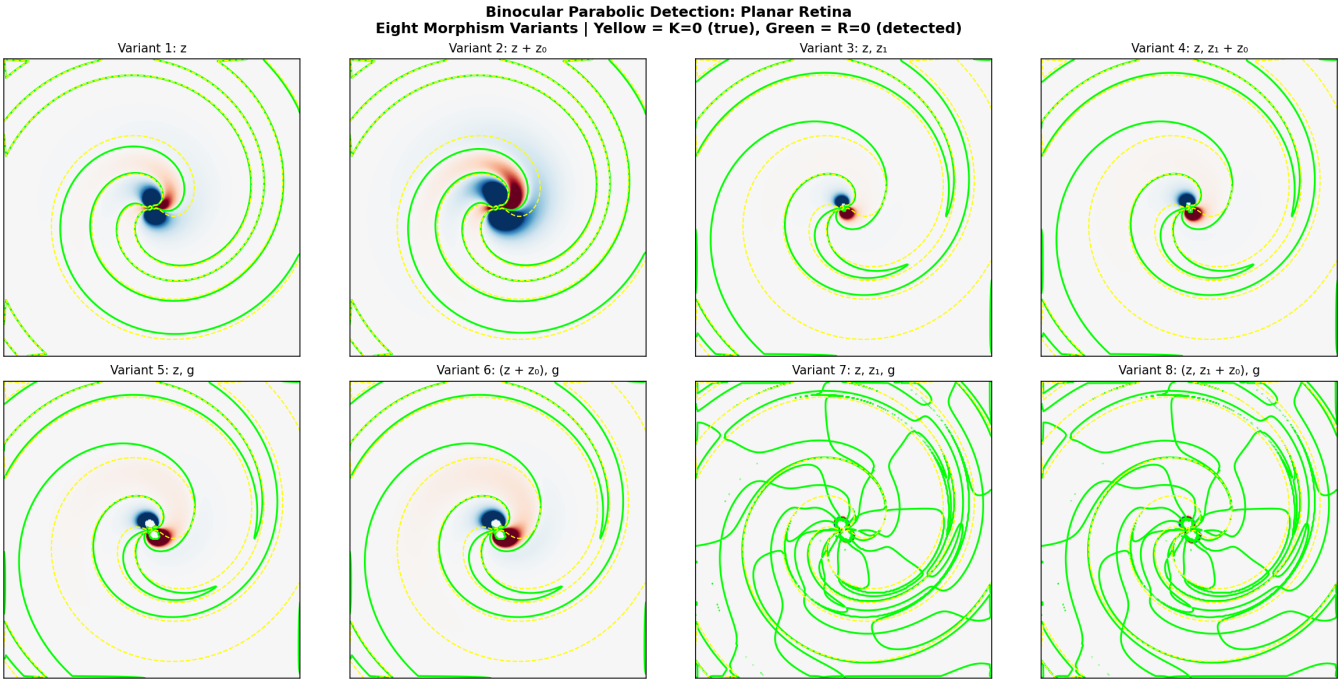

FIG. 11. **Planar Retina**: Parabolic detection across 8 morphism variants. Yellow = true $K = 0$, Green = detected $R = 0$. Variants 1–2 (height-based) track parabolic lines well. Variants 3–4 and 7–8 (gradient-based) show more complex patterns.

where $\mathcal{E}_i$ represents viewpoint-dependent "spurious" loci. The intersection

$$\bigcap_{i=1}^{n}\{R_i = 0\} = \{K = 0\} \cup \bigcap_{i=1}^{n}\mathcal{E}_i \approx \{K = 0\} \tag{159}$$

converges to the true parabolic line as the spurious loci $\mathcal{E}_i$ differ across viewpoints and their intersection shrinks to measure zero.

This provides a **unified active vision strategy** that works across all eight morphism variants, making microsaccades a more general solution than multi-light photometric stereo.

Why Detection Requires Active Vision: The Fundamental Limitation

We now establish *why* active vision (microsaccades) is mathematically necessary for parabolic detection, not merely helpful. This reveals a deep connection between differential geometry and perception.

The Three Contours: K, K', and R

Consider the binocular warping transformation $\mathbf{M} = \mathbf{J}_R \cdot \mathbf{J}_L^{-1}$ that relates left and right camera Jacobians. Three fundamentally different contours must be distinguished:

1. $\mathbf{K = 0}$: Original parabolic lines in world coordinates

$$K = \det(\mathbf{H}) = H_{xx}H_{yy} - H_{xy}^2 = 0 \tag{160}$$

2. $\mathbf{K' = 0}$: Warped parabolic lines after Hessian transformation

$$K' = \det(\mathbf{M}^T \cdot \mathbf{H} \cdot \mathbf{M}) = 0 \tag{161}$$

The transformation $\mathbf{H} \mapsto \mathbf{M}^T\mathbf{H}\mathbf{M}$ is a *congruence*, preserving definiteness but not eigenvalues.

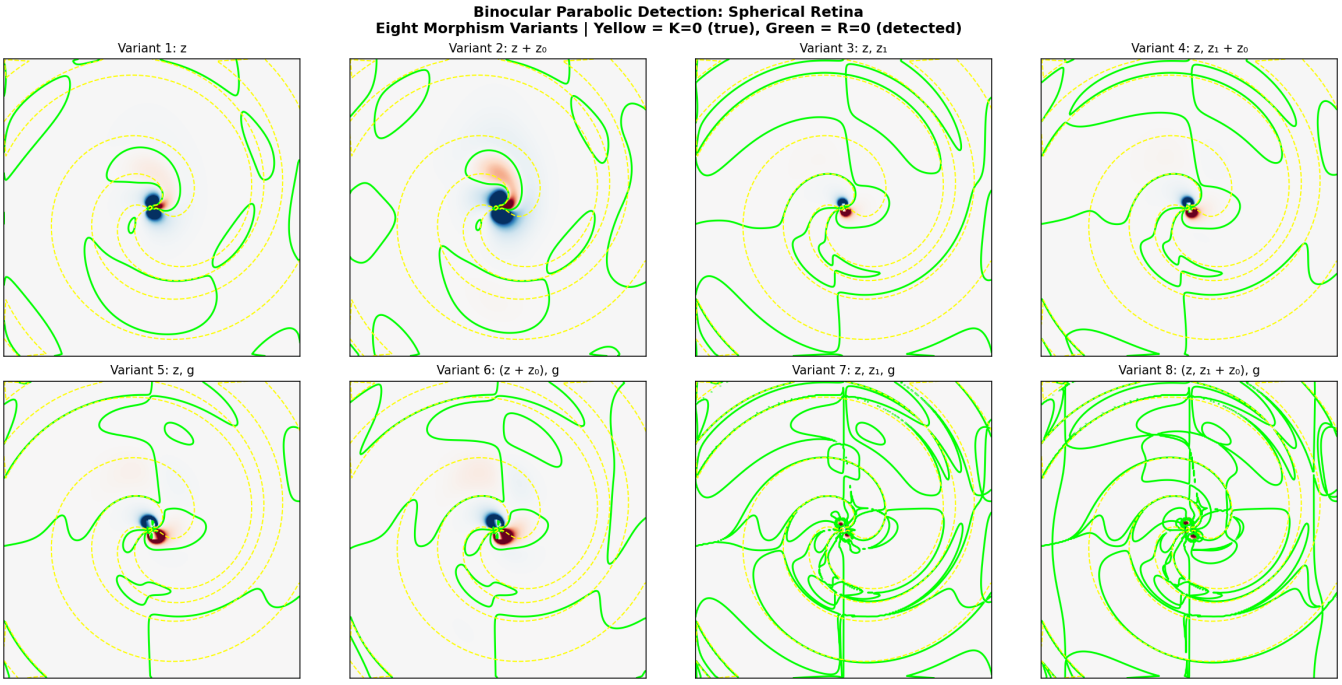

FIG. 12. **Spherical Retina**: Parabolic detection across 8 morphism variants. The spherical projection introduces different distortions compared to planar, affecting the $R = 0$ loci particularly at the periphery.

3. **R = 0**: Binocular resultant from intensity gradients

$$R = \det(\nabla I_L, \nabla I_R) = \frac{\partial I_L}{\partial x}\frac{\partial I_R}{\partial y} - \frac{\partial I_L}{\partial y}\frac{\partial I_R}{\partial x} = 0 \tag{162}$$

The Critical Observation

R=0 detects neither K=0 nor K'=0 exactly!

The intensity I depends on shading (surface normal · light direction), which involves *first-order* derivatives ∇Z. But K depends on *second-order* derivatives (Hessian). The relationship between $R = 0$ and $K = 0$ is therefore indirect:

- $R = 0$ includes the true $K = 0$ (under regularity conditions)
- $R = 0$ includes **false positives** from:
  - Lighting geometry (isophote alignment)
  - Perspective distortion (camera geometry)
  - Gradient extrema (surface topology)

The Solution: Temporal Intersection

The key insight is that false positives are **view-dependent** while true parabolic lines are **view-invariant**:

	True K=0	**False Positives**
Surface property?	Yes (intrinsic)	No (extrinsic)
Changes with fixation?	No	Yes
Survives intersection?	Yes	No

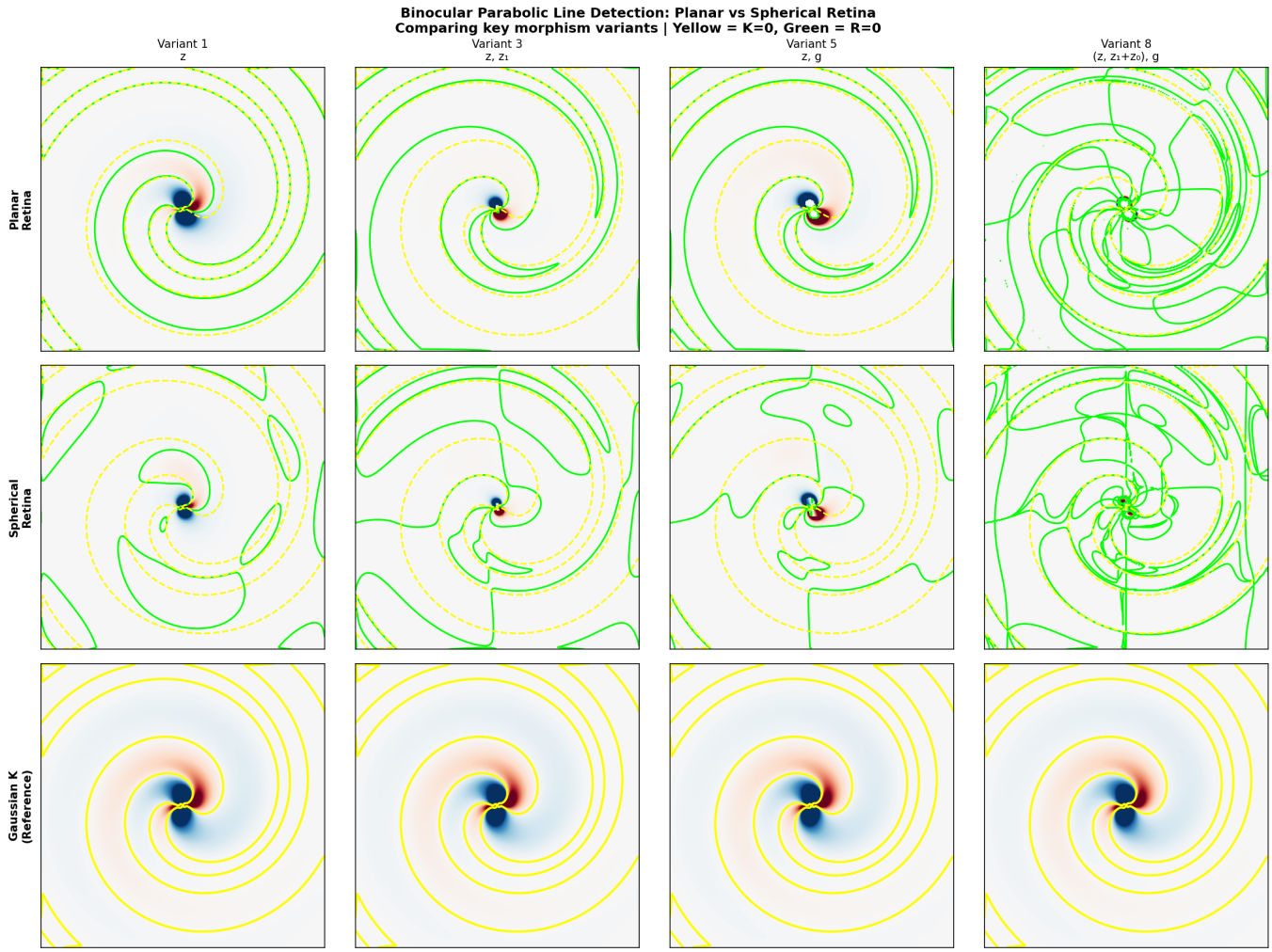

FIG. 13. **Comparison**: Planar (row 1) vs. Spherical (row 2) retina for selected variants (1, 3, 5, 8). Row 3 shows Gaussian curvature K reference. The planar retina provides more accurate parabolic detection for central regions, while spherical retina better handles wide field-of-view.

Therefore, the intersection across microsaccade positions:

$$\bigcap_{i=1}^{N} \{R_i = 0\} \xrightarrow{N\to\infty} \{K = 0\} \tag{163}$$

converges to the true parabolic structure.

Biological Prediction

This analysis makes a testable prediction: **observers cannot accurately perceive parabolic lines (shape singularities) from a single static fixation**. Accurate perception requires:

1. Multiple microsaccades ($\geq$ 3–5 distinct viewpoints)
2. Temporal integration (accumulating evidence across fixations)
3. Attention maintenance (keeping the candidate region in foveal view)

This explains why shape perception takes time ($\sim$200–500 ms) and why eye movements "wander" along object contours—the visual system is actively sampling to filter view-dependent artifacts.

Counter-Argument: Why Not Just Use Depth?

One might argue: "If binocular vision provides depth, why not compute K directly from depth?" The answer reveals another limitation:

1. **Depth estimation is noisy**: Stereo matching produces disparity, not depth directly
2. **Second derivatives amplify noise**: $K = H_{xx}H_{yy} - H_{xy}^2$ requires differentiating twice
3. **Sampling is sparse**: Disparity is only computed at textured regions

The microsaccade strategy sidesteps these issues by detecting $K = 0$ through *invariance under viewpoint change* rather than *explicit differentiation*. This is more robust to noise and works even with sparse depth information.

Connection to Active Vision Theory

This result provides computational justification for the ecological approach to perception [**?**]:

> "Perception is not the achievement of a single glance but the outcome of an extended process of exploration."

Our analysis shows this is not merely philosophical but mathematically necessary: single-view detection is fundamentally incomplete for geometric singularities. Active sampling through microsaccades is the visual system's solution to an ill-posed inverse problem.

Application: Henry Moore Sculpture Analysis

To validate our theory on realistic geometry, we analyze a synthetic sculpture inspired by Henry Moore's organic forms—featuring smooth curves, a characteristic "hole" (negative space), and clear parabolic structure.

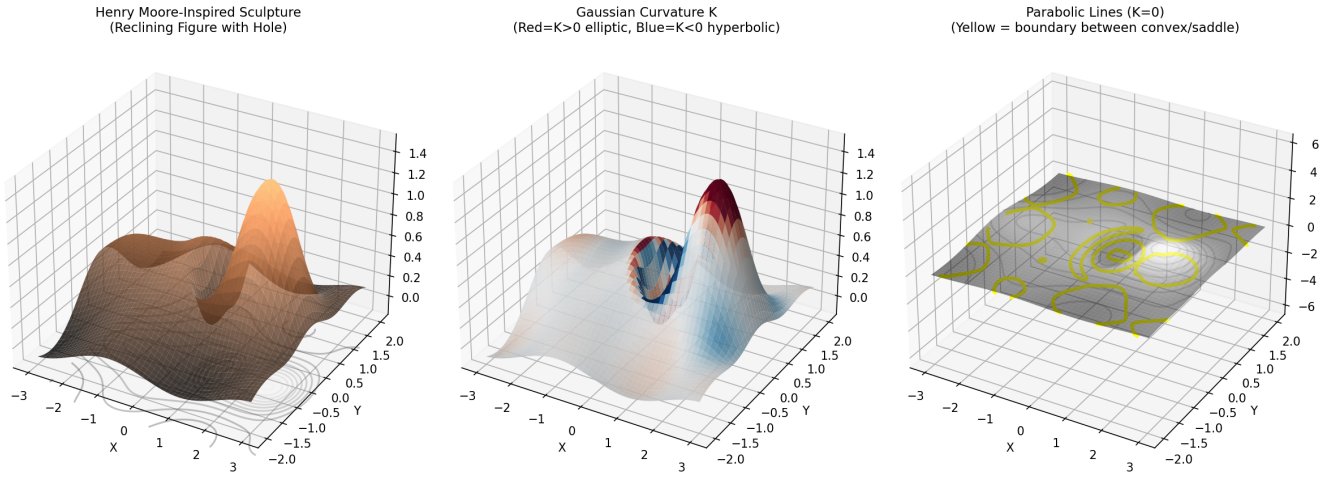

FIG. 14. **Henry Moore-Inspired Sculpture.** Left: Reclining figure with characteristic hole. Center: Gaussian curvature (Red = K>0 elliptic/convex, Blue = K<0 hyperbolic/saddle). Right: Parabolic lines K=0 (yellow) mark boundaries between curvature regions.

The results confirm our theoretical predictions:

- **Single fixation**: R=0 includes extensive false positive curves
- **Multiple fixations**: Intersection progressively eliminates artifacts
- **8–16 fixations**: Detection closely matches true parabolic lines

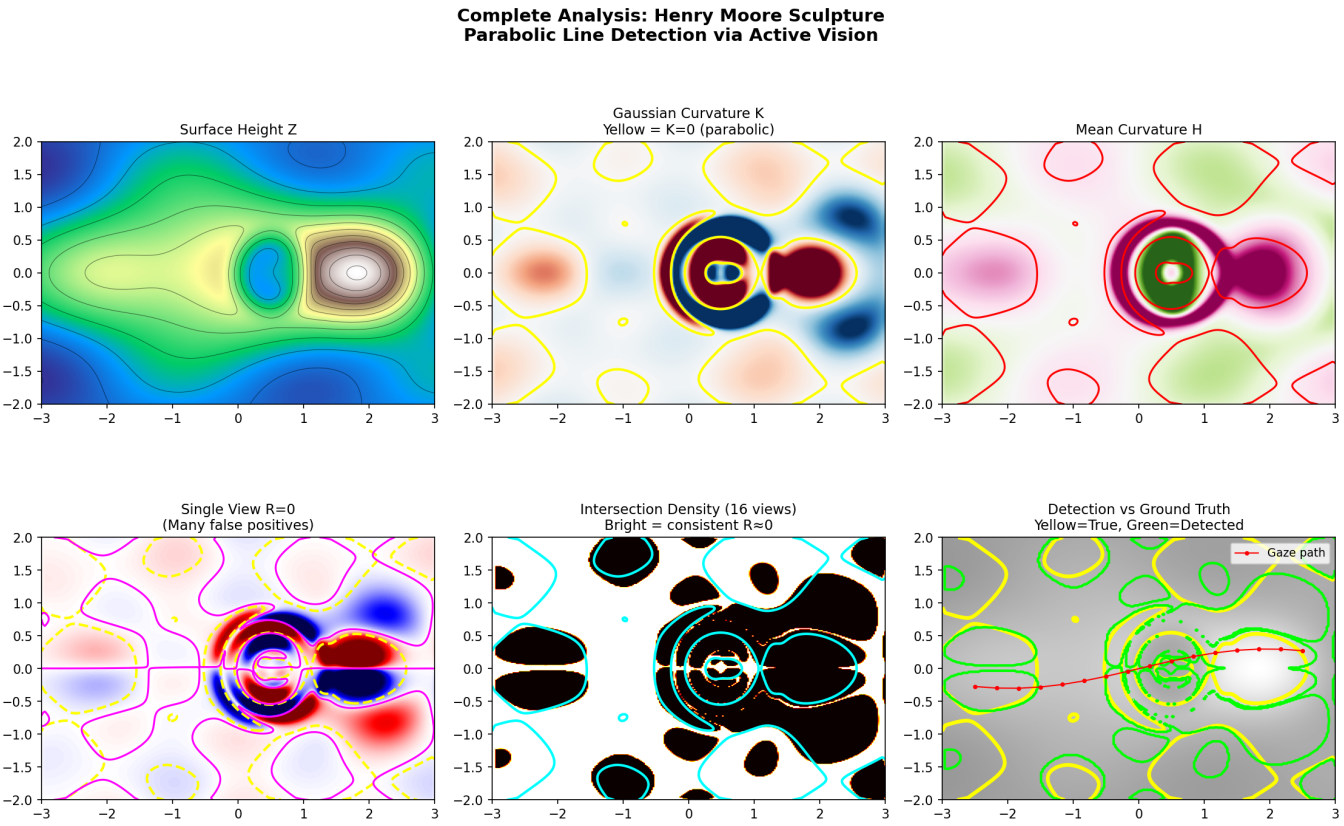

FIG. 15. **Complete Analysis.** Top: Surface, Gaussian curvature K, Mean curvature H. Bottom left: Single-view R=0 (magenta) shows many false positives beyond K=0 (yellow dashed). Bottom center: Intersection density from 16 fixations—bright regions indicate consistent R≈0 across views. Bottom right: Final detection (green) matches ground-truth K=0 (yellow). Red dots show gaze path along sculpture.

- **Gaze path**: Following the sculpture contour is computationally optimal

This demonstrates that active vision—wandering attention along object contours with rapid microsaccades—is not merely behavioral but *computationally necessary* for accurate shape perception.

Non-Universal Covariance Transformations

In physics, most transformations are **covariant**: physical laws retain their form under smooth coordinate changes. However, vision encounters transformations that are fundamentally **non-covariant**—they cannot be expressed as smooth coordinate changes.

Three sources of non-covariant transformations:

1. **Occlusion Boundaries** (Spatial Discontinuity)
   - Depth $Z(x, y)$ has a jump discontinuity
   - Gradients blow up: $|\nabla Z| \to \infty$
   - Defect density: SINGULAR (Dirac delta)
   - Physical: One surface occluding another
2. **Optic Flow Singularities** (Temporal)
   - Flow field $(u, v) = d(x, y)/dt$ from ego-motion
   - Singularities: Focus of Expansion (FOE), vortices, saddles

- Defect density: Concentrated at singular points
- Physical: Self-motion, object motion, time-to-contact

3. **BRDF Transitions** (Material)
   - Reflectance function changes discontinuously
   - Same geometry, different appearance
   - Defect density: Spikes at material boundaries
   - Physical: Painted regions, texture boundaries

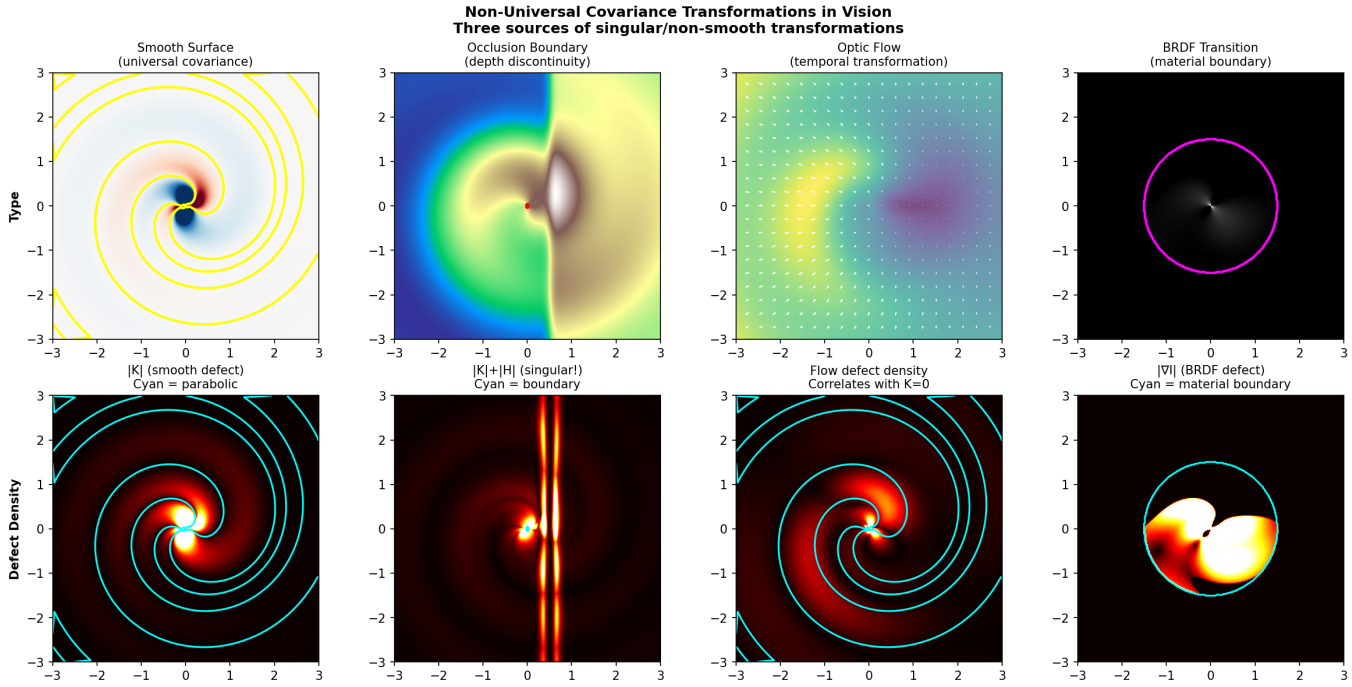

FIG. 16. **Non-Universal Covariance Transformations.** Column 1: Smooth surface (universal covariance, defects at $K = 0$). Column 2: Occlusion boundary (singular defects). Column 3: Optic flow (temporal defects). Column 4: BRDF transition (material defects). Row 1: Source type. Row 2: Defect density (cyan = detected boundary).

Optic Flow Defect Analysis

For camera motion with translational velocity $\mathbf{V} = (V_x, V_y, V_z)$ and rotational velocity $\boldsymbol{\Omega} = (\Omega_x, \Omega_y, \Omega_z)$, the optic flow field is:

$$u = \frac{f}{d}\left(\frac{V_z x}{d} - V_x\right) + \Omega_x \frac{xy}{f} - \Omega_y\left(f + \frac{x^2}{f}\right) + \Omega_z y \tag{164}$$

$$v = \frac{f}{d}\left(\frac{V_z y}{d} - V_y\right) + \Omega_x\left(f + \frac{y^2}{f}\right) - \Omega_y \frac{xy}{f} - \Omega_z x \tag{165}$$

where $d = D - Z$ is depth and f is focal length.

The flow field has natural **defect structure**:

$$\text{Divergence: } \nabla \cdot \mathbf{F} = \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial v}{\partial y} \quad \text{(expansion/contraction)} \tag{166}$$

$$\text{Curl: } \nabla \times \mathbf{F} = \frac{\partial v}{\partial x} - \frac{\partial u}{\partial y} \quad \text{(rotation)} \tag{167}$$

Key observation: Flow divergence and rotation defects are modulated by surface depth, creating patterns that correlate with the underlying surface geometry—including parabolic lines.

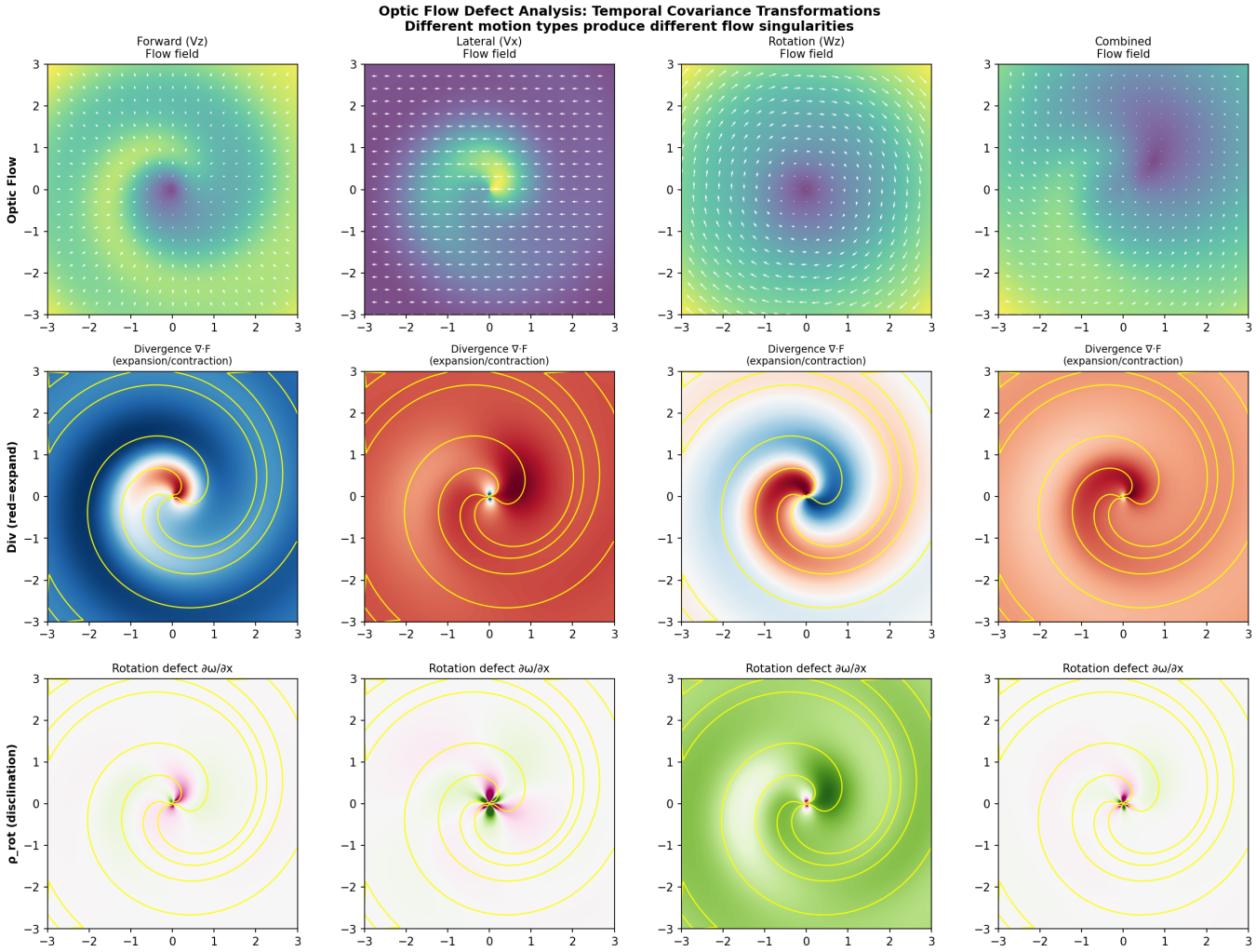

FIG. 17. **Optic Flow Defect Analysis.** Columns: Forward motion (V_z), Lateral motion (V_x), Rotation (Ω_z), Combined. Row 1: Flow field with vectors. Row 2: Divergence (red = expansion, blue = contraction). Row 3: Rotation defect $\rho_{\text{rot}} = \partial\omega/\partial x$. Yellow lines = parabolic $K = 0$.

Binocular Optic Flow: Transformation Matrices

The transformation matrix $\mathbf{M} = \mathbf{J}_R \cdot \mathbf{J}_L^{-1}$ relating left and right flow Jacobians encodes complete motion information. From $\mathbf{M}$ we extract:

1. **Time to Contact** $\tau = 2/\text{div}(\mathbf{u})$: For approach at velocity V_z toward depth Z, $\tau = Z/V_z$
2. **Rotation Rate** $\omega = \frac{1}{2}\text{curl}(\mathbf{u})$: Rotation about optical axis
3. **Scale Rate** $s = \frac{1}{2}\text{div}(\mathbf{u})$: Looming/receding
4. **Shear Rate** $\gamma = \|\mathbf{E}\|_F$ where $\mathbf{E}$ is traceless symmetric part: Surface deformation

From the **left-right transformation**, we compute defect densities:

$$\rho_{\text{disclination}} = \frac{\partial(\omega_R - \omega_L)}{\partial x} \quad \text{(rotation defect)} \tag{168}$$

$$\rho_{\text{dislocation}} = \nabla \times (\nabla s_R - \nabla s_L) \quad \text{(Burgers vector density)} \tag{169}$$

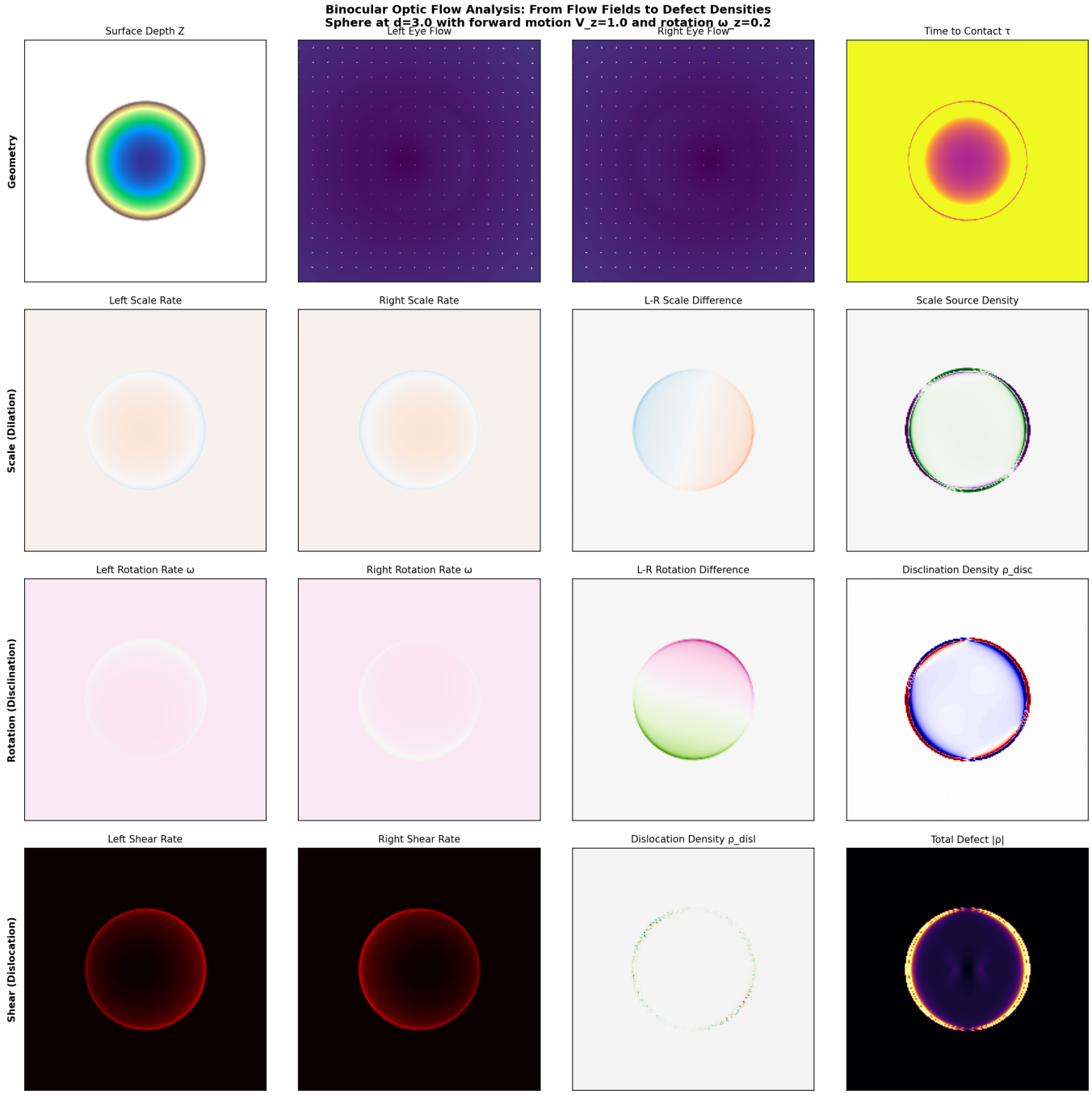

FIG. 18. **Binocular Optic Flow Analysis.** Sphere approaching with forward motion $V_z = 1$ and rotation $\omega_z = 0.2$. Row 1: Depth, L/R flows, time-to-contact. Row 2: Scale rates and scale source density. Row 3: Rotation rates and disclination density. Row 4: Shear rates, dislocation density, and total defect. **Defects concentrate at the sphere boundary** (occlusion edge), demonstrating how non-integrable transformations reveal object boundaries. Video: `optic_flow_binocular_defects.mp4`

Occlusion Boundaries: Singular Defects

At occlusion boundaries, the depth function $Z(x, y)$ is **discontinuous**. This creates:

$$|\nabla Z| \to \infty, \quad |K|, |H| \to \infty \quad \text{(singular)} \tag{170}$$

Unlike smooth parabolic lines where $K = 0$ but curvature is *finite*, occlusion boundaries have **infinite curvature**

concentration—a Dirac delta in defect density.

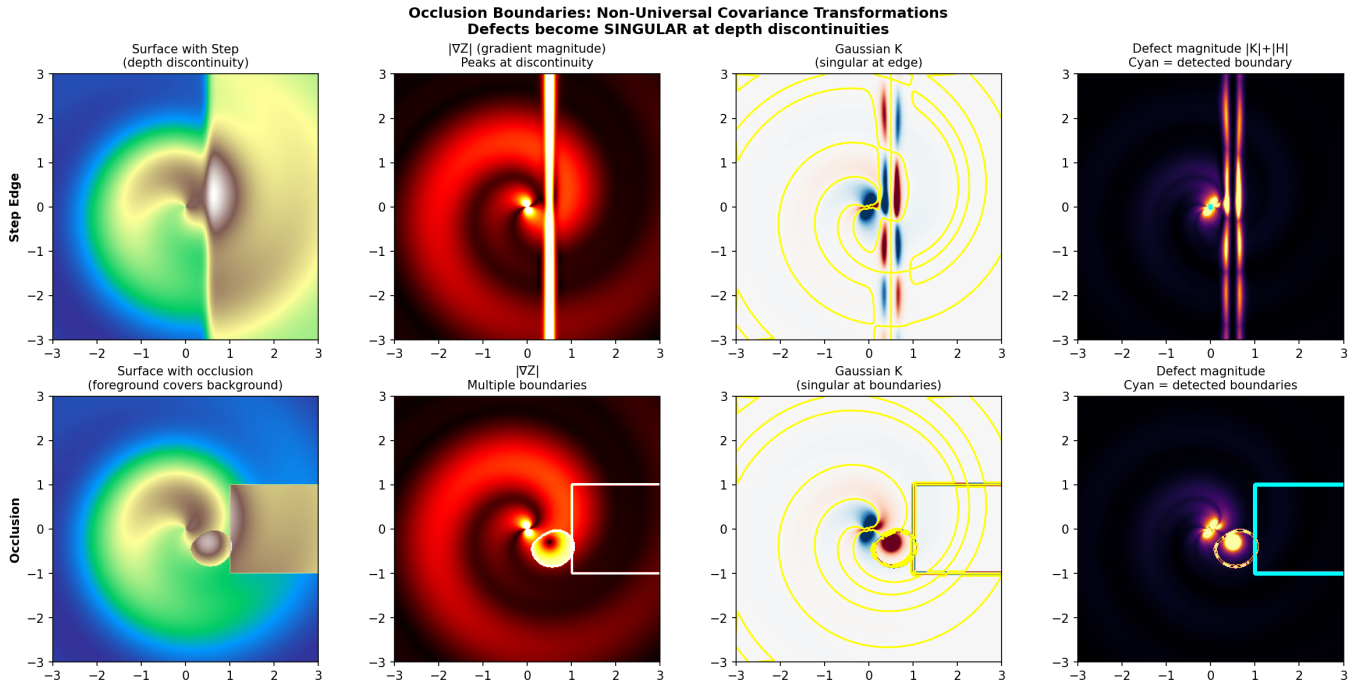

FIG. 19. **Occlusion Boundary Defects.** Row 1: Step edge (depth discontinuity). Row 2: Complex occlusion (foreground covering background). Columns: Surface, gradient magnitude $|\nabla Z|$, Gaussian curvature K, defect magnitude $|K| + |H|$. Cyan = detected boundary. Defects become **singular** at discontinuities.

Theorem .30 (Covariance Classification)**.** *Image transformations in vision fall into three categories:*

1. ***Universal covariant****: Smooth coordinate changes (diffeomorphisms). Parabolic lines are rank-deficient but smooth.*
2. ***Locally covariant****: Smooth away from isolated singular points (e.g., flow FOE, vortices).*
3. ***Non-covariant****: Discontinuous transformations (occlusions, BRDF boundaries) that cannot be described by any smooth coordinate system.*

The visual system must distinguish these categories, using:

- **Defect density magnitude**: Finite (parabolic) vs. singular (occlusion)
- **Defect topology**: Index of flow singularities
- **Multi-cue integration**: Combining shading, stereo, and motion to resolve ambiguities

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FIGURES

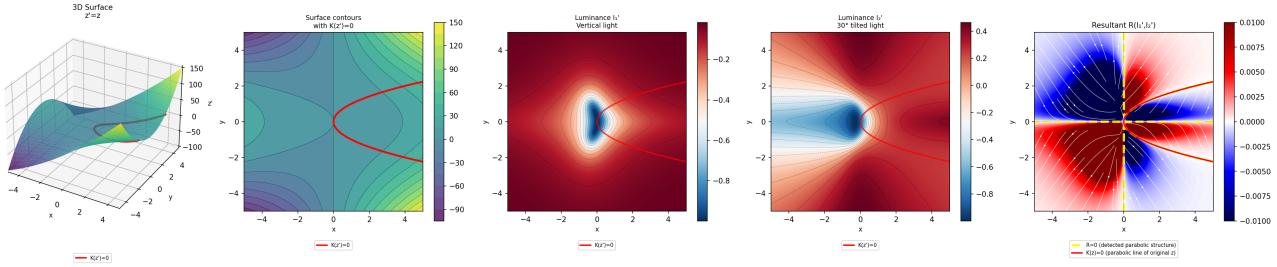


FIG. 20. **Variant 1: Baseline Surface (z' = z).** Five-panel analysis of the base surface $z = x^2 + xy^2$ without morphisms or Gaussian modulation. Panel 1: 3D surface showing parabolic lines $K(z') = 0$ in red. Panel 2: Surface height contours with projected parabolic lines. Panels 3-4: Luminance fields I_1' and I_2' under vertical and 30° tilted lighting. Panel 5: Resultant $R(I_1', I_2')$ showing R=0 contours (yellow) detecting parabolic structure $x = y^2$ (red).

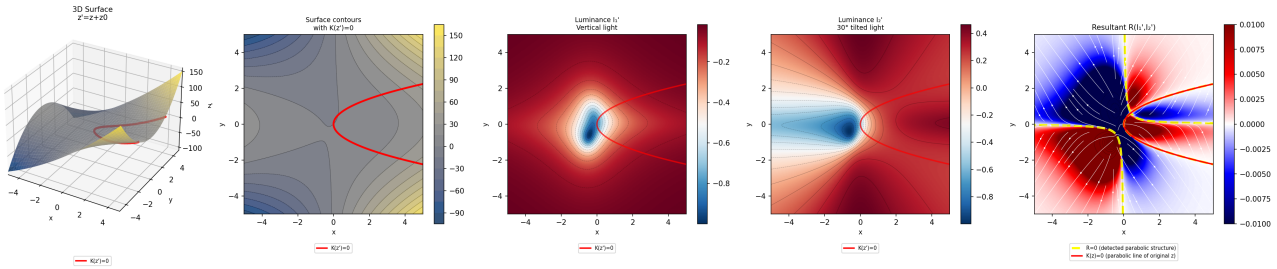


FIG. 21. **Variant 2: Additive Morphism (z' = z + z_0).** Additive morphism with $z_0 = 0.5x - 0.5y$ (linear perturbation). The parabolic line $x = y^2$ is exactly preserved, confirming transformation covariance under additive perturbations. R=0 contours (yellow) detect the same singularities as the original surface.

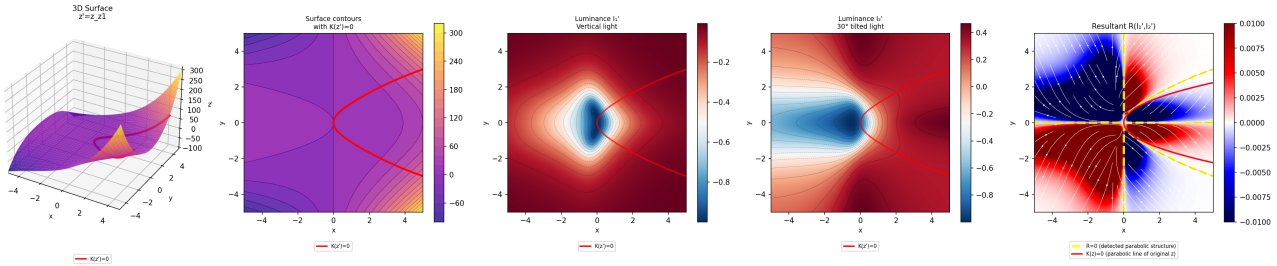


FIG. 22. **Variant 3: Multiplicative Morphism (z' = z × z_1).** Multiplicative morphism with $z_1 = 0.5 + [(x+3)^2 + y^2]/58$ (off-center quadratic). The parabolic line is deformed, with new R=0 structures emerging as the original parabola $x = y^2$ is displaced.

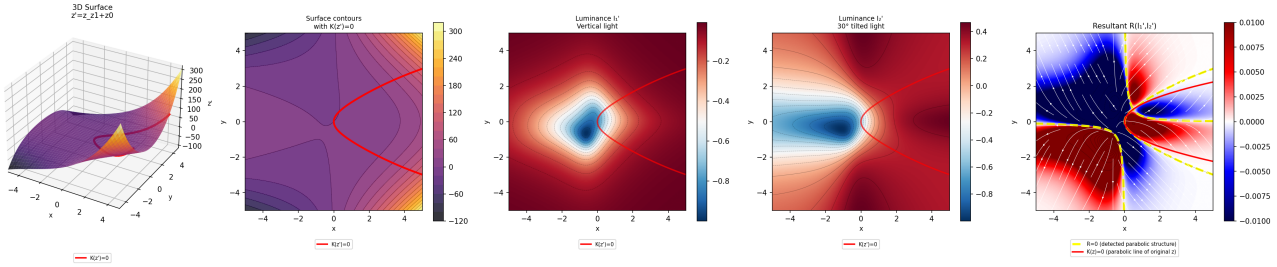


FIG. 23. **Variant 4: Combined Morphism (z' = z × z_1 + z_0).** Combined multiplicative and additive morphism. The interplay between multiplicative and additive effects creates complex parabolic structures with both preservation and deformation characteristics.

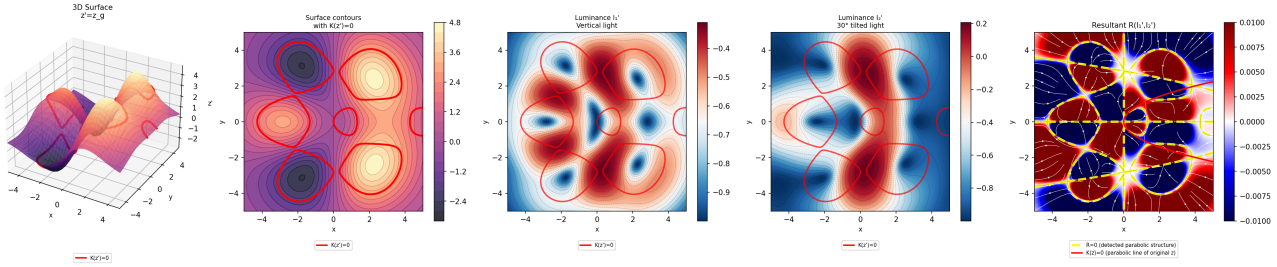


FIG. 24. **Variant 5: Gaussian Modulation Only (z' = z × g).** Pure Gaussian modulation with $g = \exp(-r^2/2\sigma^2)$, $\sigma = 2$. The parabolic line topology is preserved but confined to the Gaussian envelope, demonstrating how localization affects singularity detection.

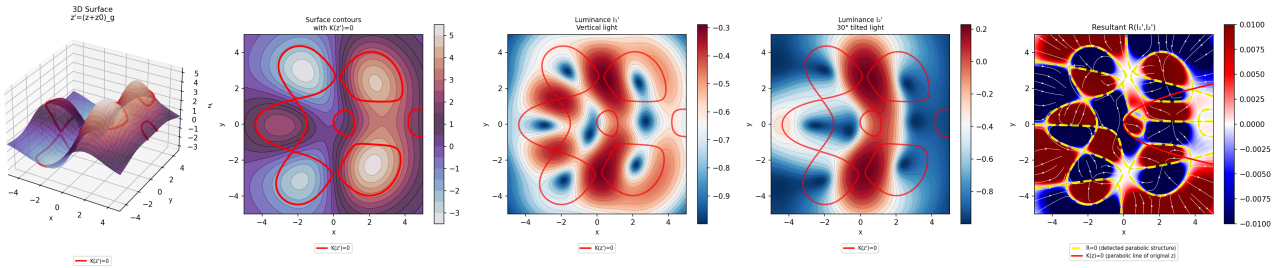


FIG. 25. **Variant 6: Additive with Gaussian (z' = (z + z_0) × g).** Combination of additive morphism and Gaussian modulation. The parabolic line remains preserved within the Gaussian envelope, confirming transformation covariance persists under localization.

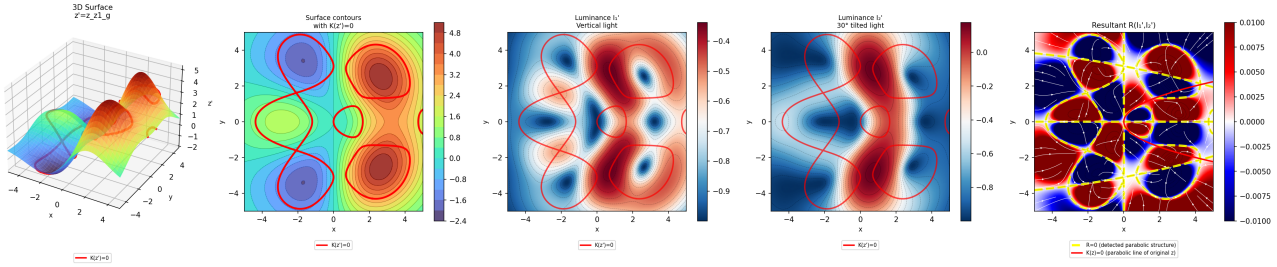


FIG. 26. **Variant 7: Multiplicative with Gaussian (z' = z × z_1 × g).** Multiplicative morphism with Gaussian localization. The parabolic landscape is severely deformed, with complex R=0 structures forming within the Gaussian envelope, some appearing as closed loops.

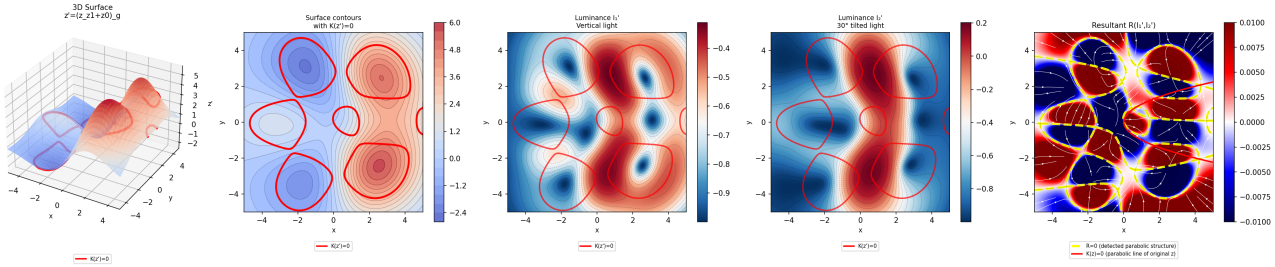


FIG. 27. **Variant 8: Full Morphism (z' = (z × z_1 + z_0) × g).** Complete morphism combining multiplicative, additive, and Gaussian effects. This represents the most general transformation, showing how all three effects interact to create rich topological structures detectable through the HACKS framework.

WARPING EFFECTS ON DIFFERENTIAL STRUCTURE

The binocular warping transformation $\mathbf{M} = \mathbf{J}_R \cdot \mathbf{J}_L^{-1}$ affects both first and second order differential structure:

First Order: Gradient Transformation

$$\nabla I_R = \mathbf{M} \cdot \nabla I_L \tag{171}$$

The gradient magnitude scales by $|\det(\mathbf{M})|^{1/2}$ and direction rotates by $\arg(\mathbf{M})$.

Second Order: Hessian Transformation

$$\mathbf{H}_R = \mathbf{M}^T \cdot \mathbf{H}_L \cdot \mathbf{M} + (\text{correction terms}) \tag{172}$$

The Gaussian curvature transforms as $K_R \approx \det(\mathbf{M})^2 \cdot K_L$, so parabolic lines $K = 0$ map to $K_{\text{warped}} = 0$.

Defect Densities from Non-Integrability

$$\rho_{\text{disclination}} = |\nabla \times \mathbf{M}| \quad \text{(rotation defect)} \tag{173}$$

$$\rho_{\text{dislocation}} = \nabla \cdot \mathbf{M} \quad \text{(scale defect)} \tag{174}$$

Microsaccades for Robust Parabolic Detection

Since binocular $R = 0$ includes view-dependent false positives, **multiple fixations are required**:

$$\bigcap_{i=1}^{N} \{R_i = 0\} \xrightarrow{N \to \infty} \{K = 0\} \tag{175}$$

Each microsaccade shifts the false positives while the true $K = 0$ remains invariant. This suggests microsaccades serve a computational purpose for geometry perception, consistent with active vision theories [**? ? ?**].

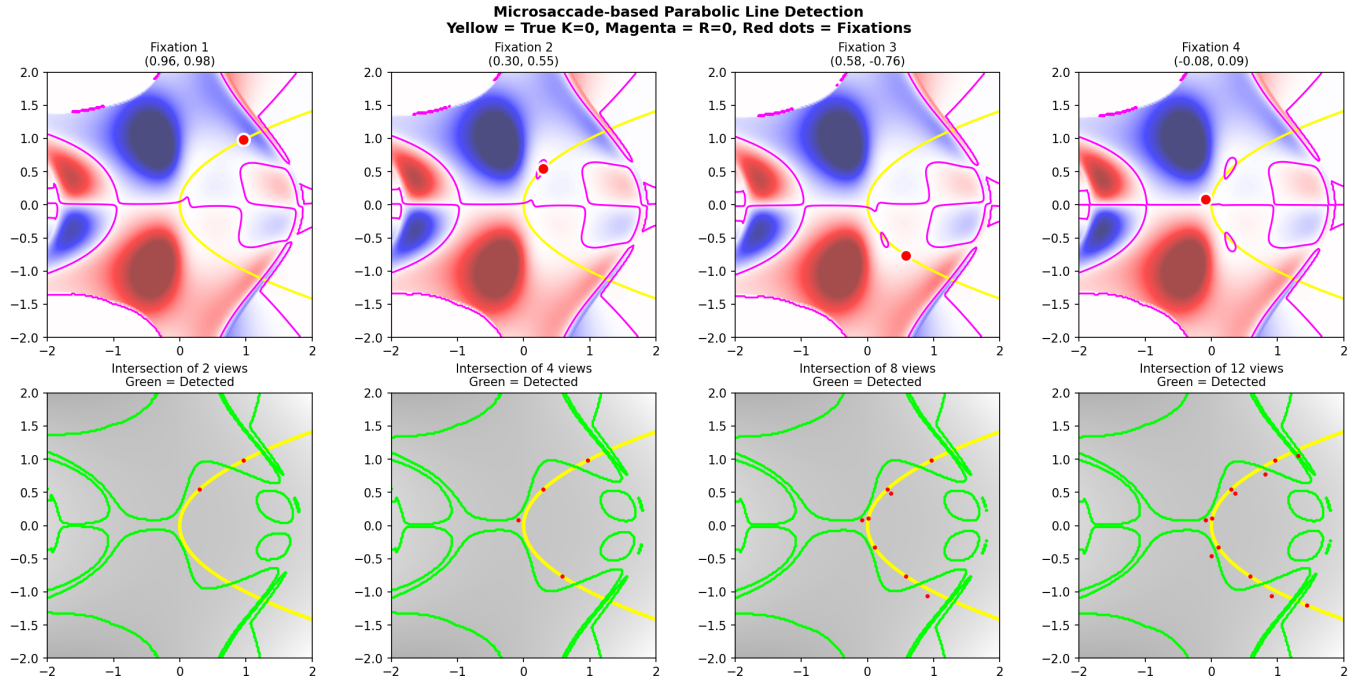


FIG. 28. **Microsaccade-based Parabolic Detection.** Top row: Individual fixations (red dots) give different $R = 0$ patterns (magenta) while true $K = 0$ (yellow) stays fixed. Bottom row: Progressive intersection of 2, 4, 8, 12 views. Green = detected contours. With sufficient microsaccades, the detected contours converge to the true parabolic lines. Video: `wandering_attention_parabolic.mp4`

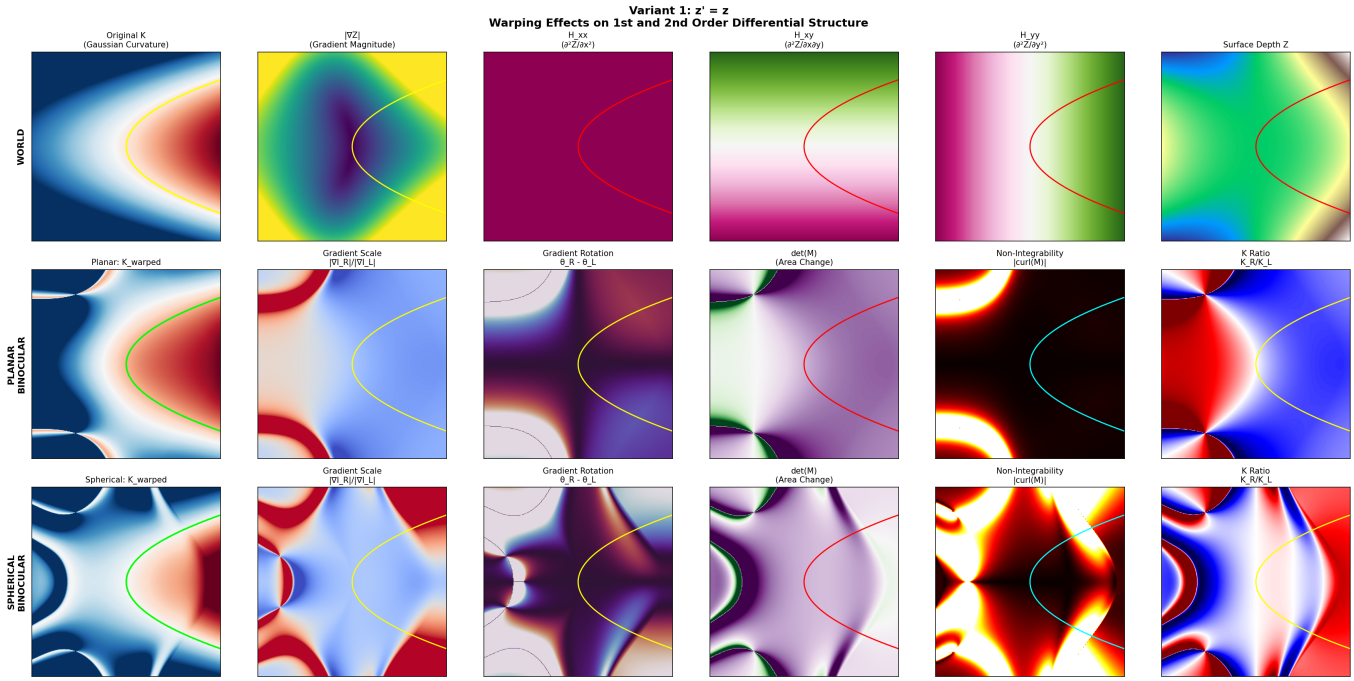


FIG. 29. **Differential Structure: Variant 1 (z' = z).** Row 1: World coordinates showing K, $|\nabla Z|$, Hessian components H_{xx}, H_{xy}, H_{yy}, and depth Z. Row 2: Planar binocular warping—K_{warped} (green = warped, yellow = original), gradient scale/rotation, $\det(\mathbf{M})$, non-integrability $|\text{curl}\,\mathbf{M}|$, and curvature ratio K_R/K_L. Row 3: Same for spherical binocular. Note how defects concentrate at parabolic boundaries.

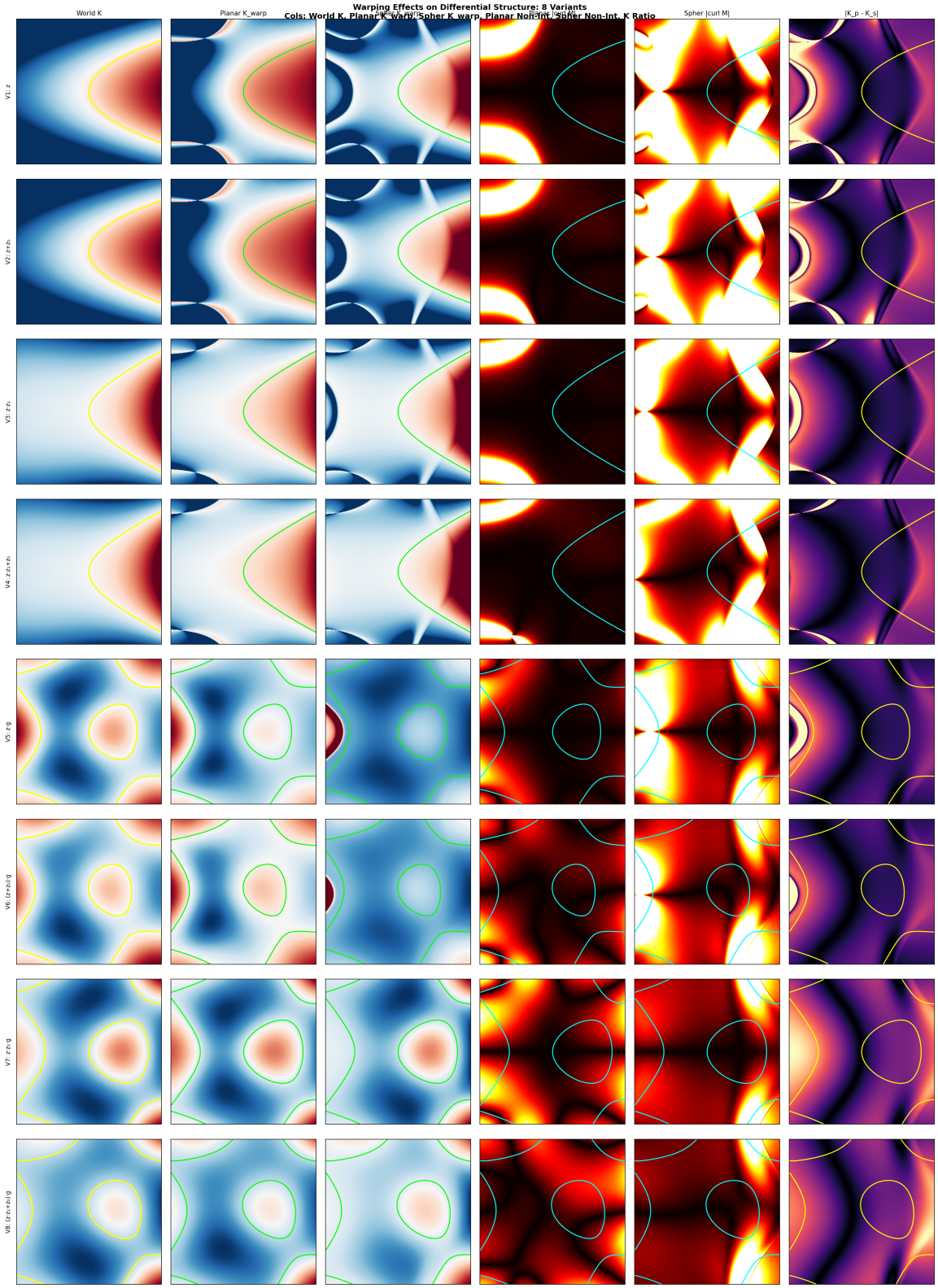


FIG. 30. **Summary: 8 Variants with Planar vs Spherical Warping.** Columns: World K, Planar K_{warp}, Spherical K_{warp}, Planar $|\text{curl}\,\mathbf{M}|$, Spherical $|\text{curl}\,\mathbf{M}|$, Difference $|K_p - K_s|$. Yellow = original $K = 0$, Green = warped $K = 0$, Cyan = defect concentration. Planar shows stronger central distortion; Spherical shows stronger peripheral distortion.

DETAILED BINOCULAR WARPING ANALYSIS: EIGHT MORPHISM VARIANTS

The following figures show transformation matrix decomposition for all variants:

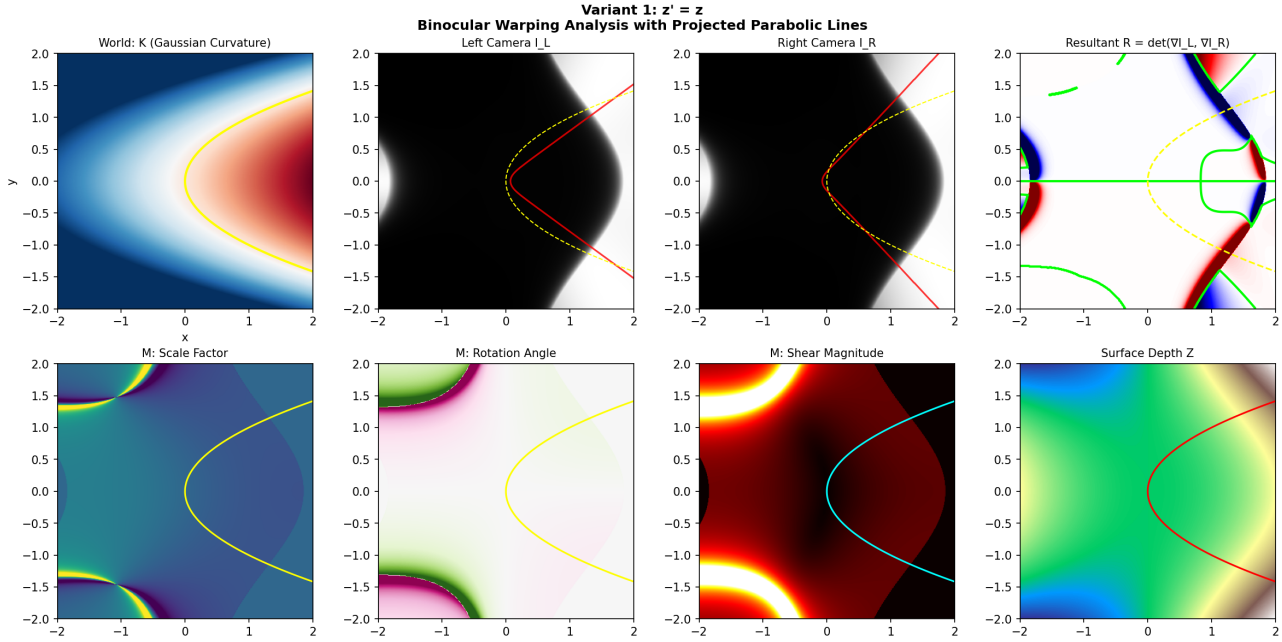


FIG. 31. **Variant 1: Baseline (z' = z).** Binocular warping analysis with transformation matrix $\mathbf{M} = \mathbf{J}_R \cdot \mathbf{J}_L^{-1}$. Row 1: World K, Left/Right cameras with projected $K = 0$ (red), Resultant R. Row 2: Scale, Rotation, Shear from $\mathbf{M}$, Depth.

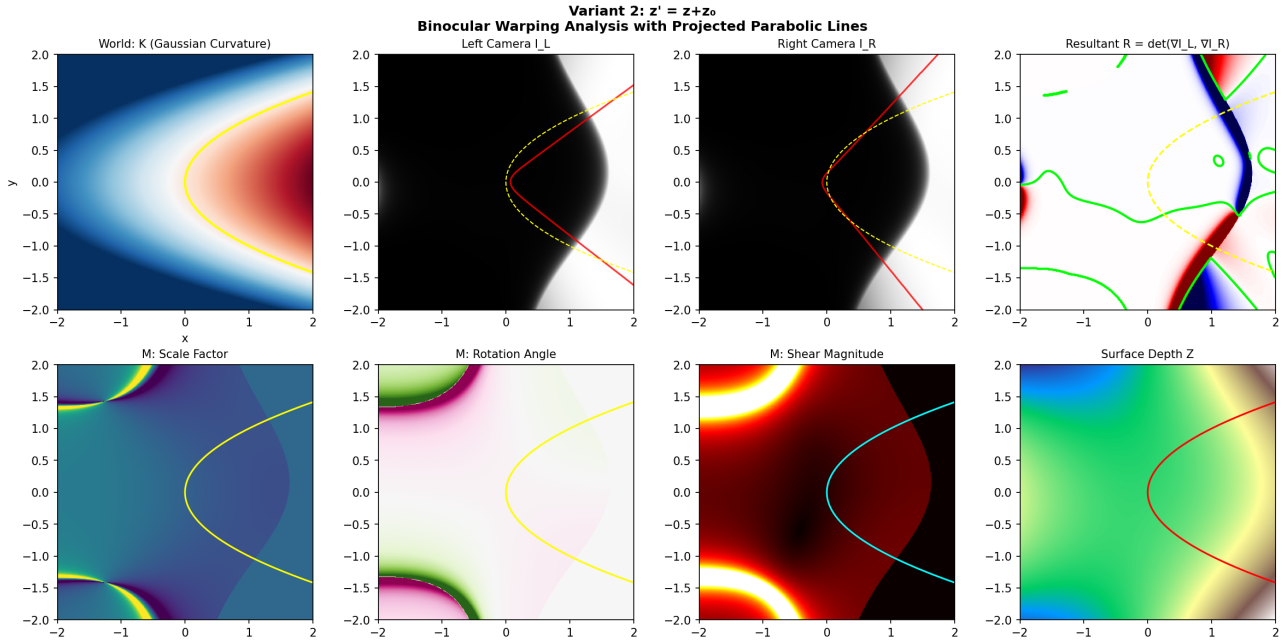


FIG. 32. **Variant 2: Additive (z' = z + z_0).** With $z_0 = 0.5x - 0.5y$ (linear). The parabolic line is **exactly preserved** in camera projections. Transformation matrix shows uniform scale/rotation.

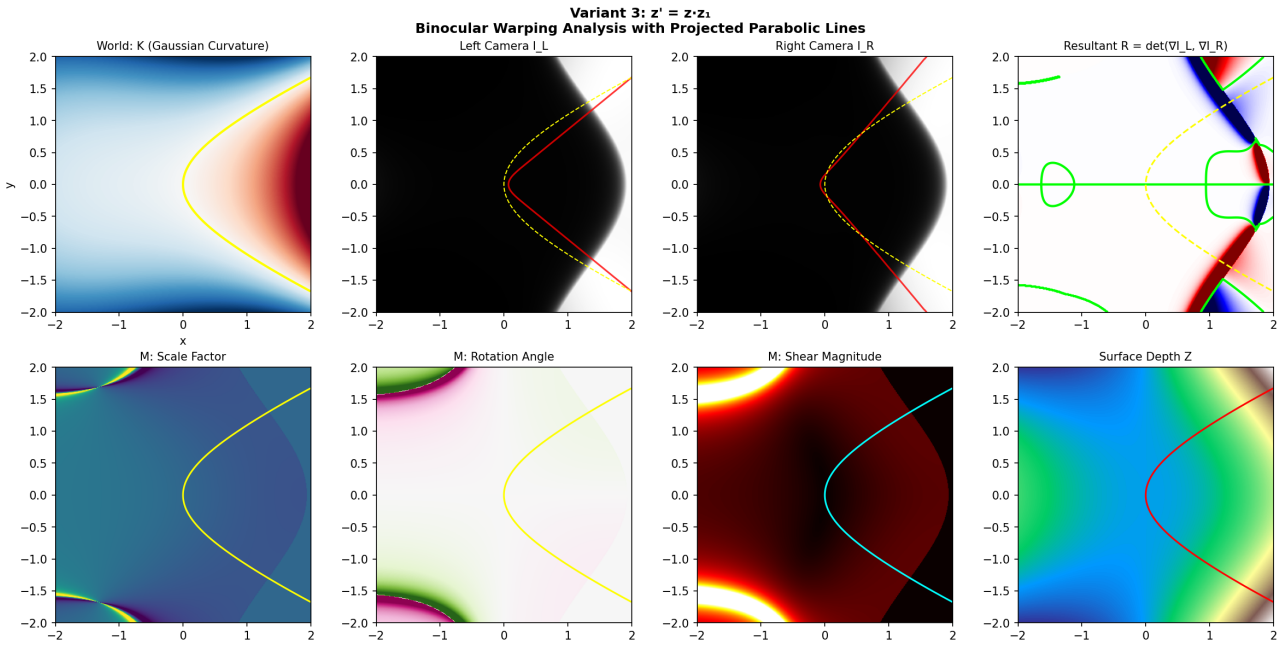


FIG. 33. **Variant 3: Multiplicative (z' = z × z_1).** With $z_1 = 0.5 + [(x+3)^2 + y^2]/58$. Parabolic line **deformed** in camera space. **M** shows non-uniform scale and rotation.

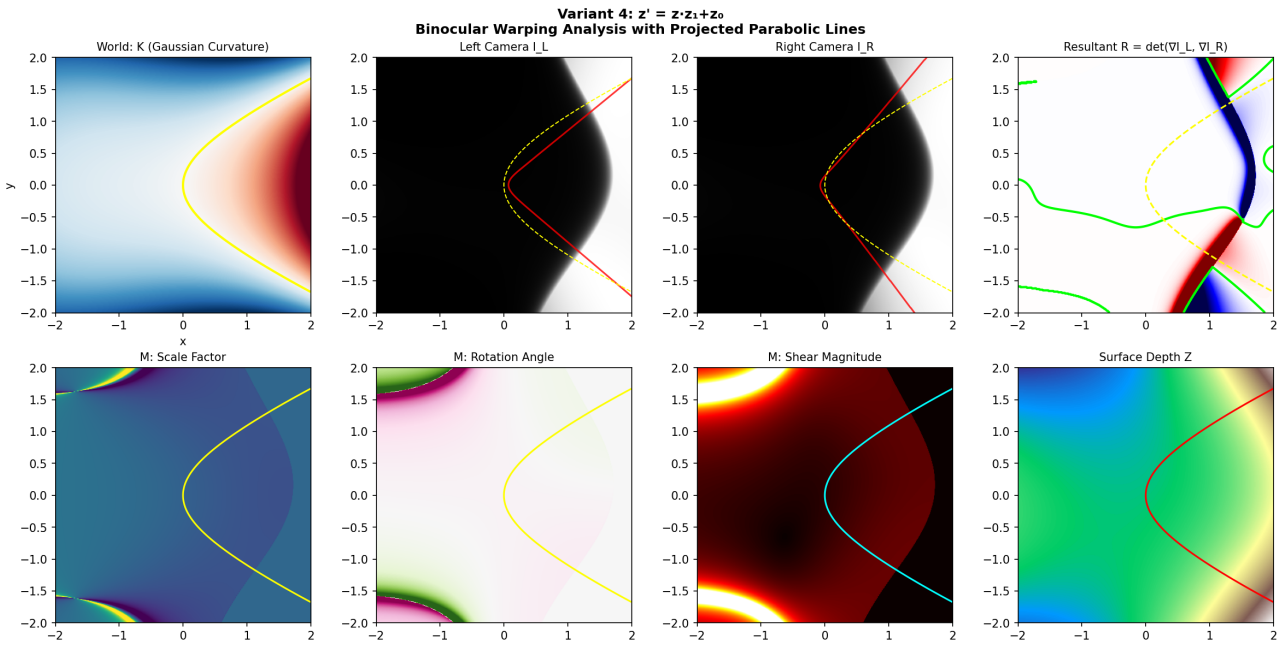


FIG. 34. **Variant 4: Combined (z' = z × z_1 + z_0).** Combined multiplicative and additive effects. Complex interaction visible in both camera views and transformation matrix decomposition.

The HACKS Ladder: A Hierarchy of Schemes

"Nature uses only the longest threads to weave her patterns, so each small piece of her fabric reveals the organization of the entire tapestry."
—Richard Feynman

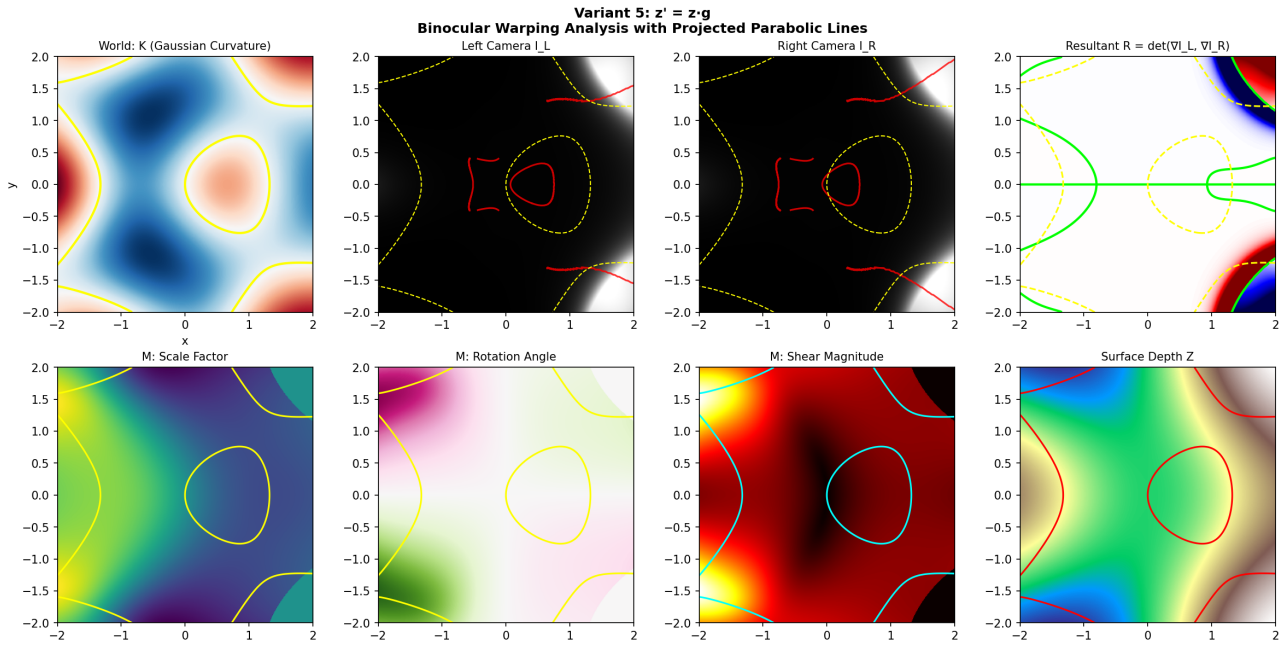


FIG. 35. **Variant 5: Gaussian Only (z' = z × g).** Pure Gaussian localization. Parabolic topology **bounded** within envelope. Transformation matrix shows radially varying scale.

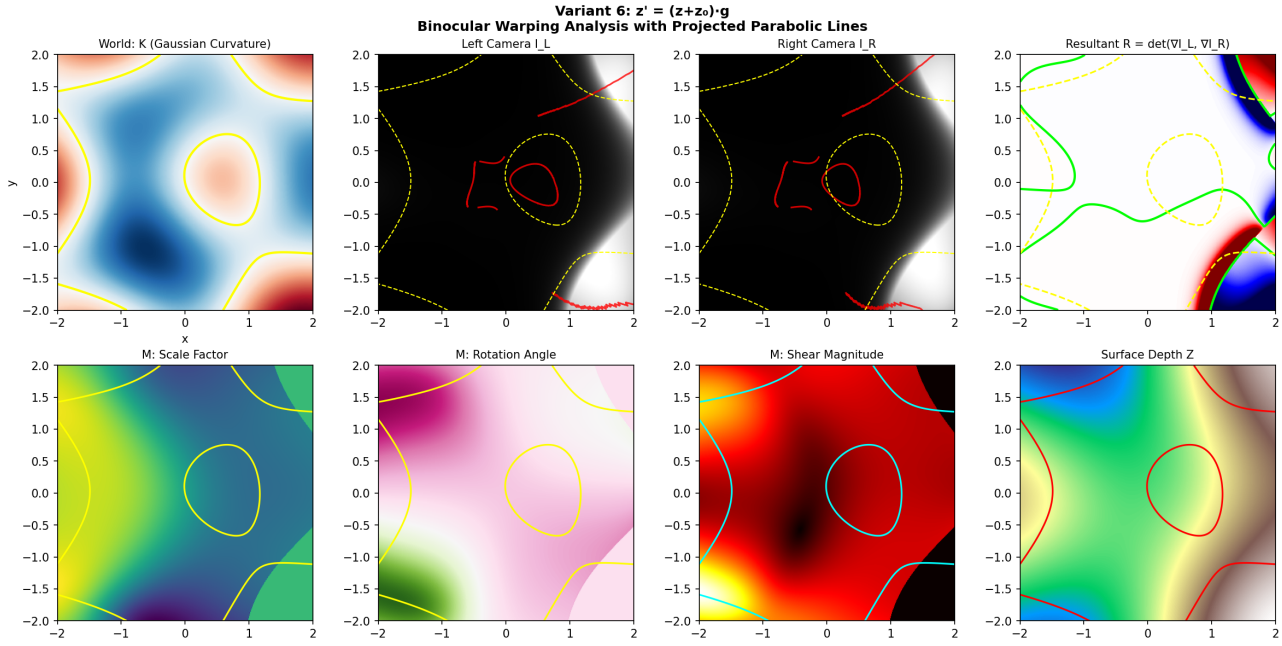


FIG. 36. **Variant 6: Additive + Gaussian (z' = (z + z_0) × g).** Additive morphism with Gaussian localization. Parabolic line preserved in camera projections within envelope.

The Big Picture: Levels of Description

When you look at a Henry Moore sculpture, what do you see? At one level, you see a *shape*—smooth curves, hollow spaces, a sense of human form. At another level, you see *surfaces*—regions of positive curvature (convex, like a forehead) and negative curvature (saddle-shaped, like a neck). At yet another level, you see *light and shadow*—the play of illumination that reveals the form.

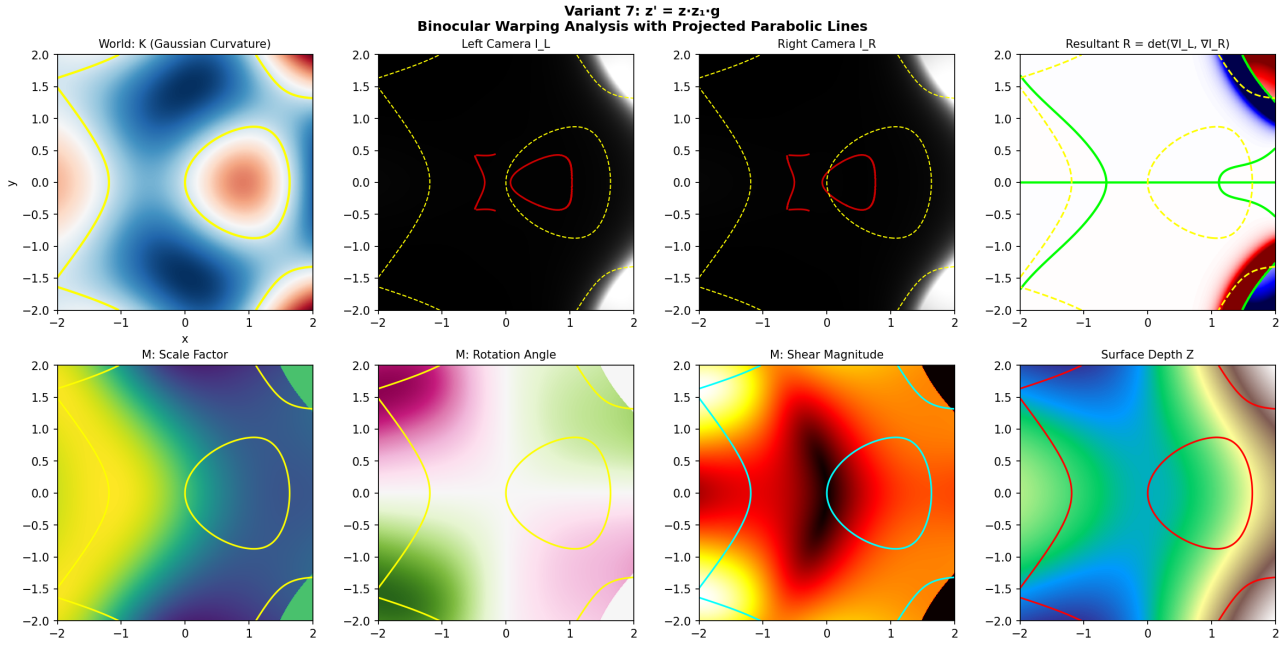


FIG. 37. **Variant 7: Multiplicative + Gaussian (z' = z × z_1 × g).** Complex $R = 0$ structures. Transformation matrix shows strong shear concentration near parabolic lines.

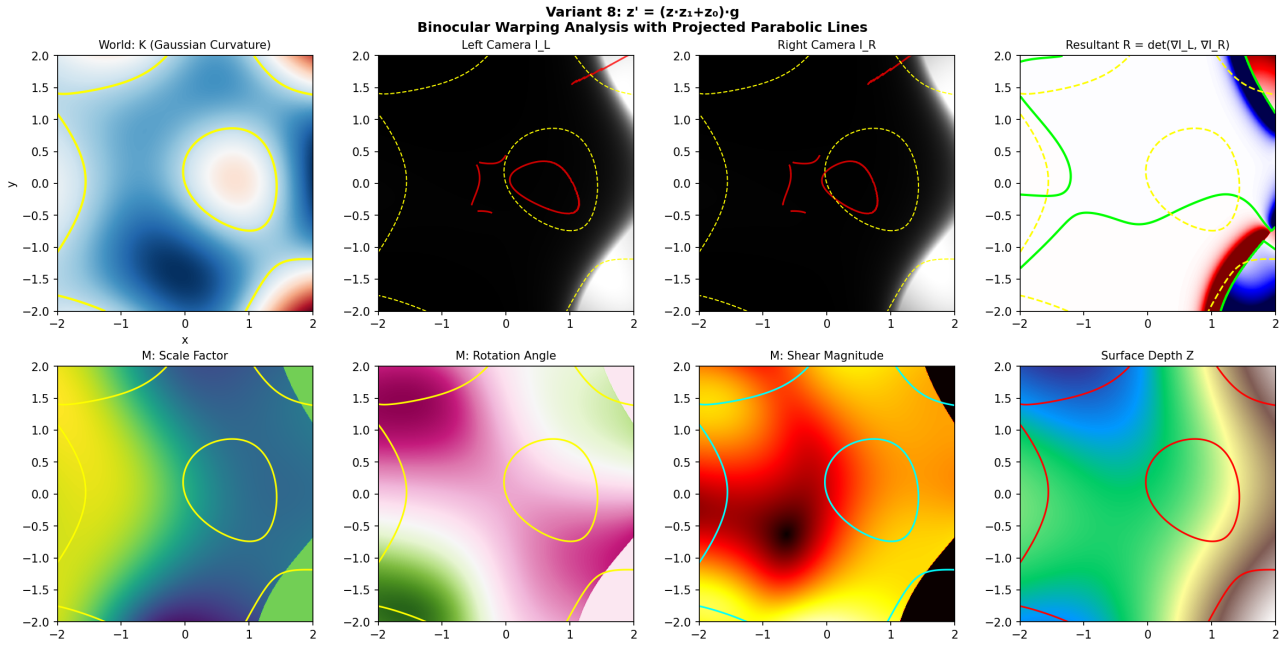
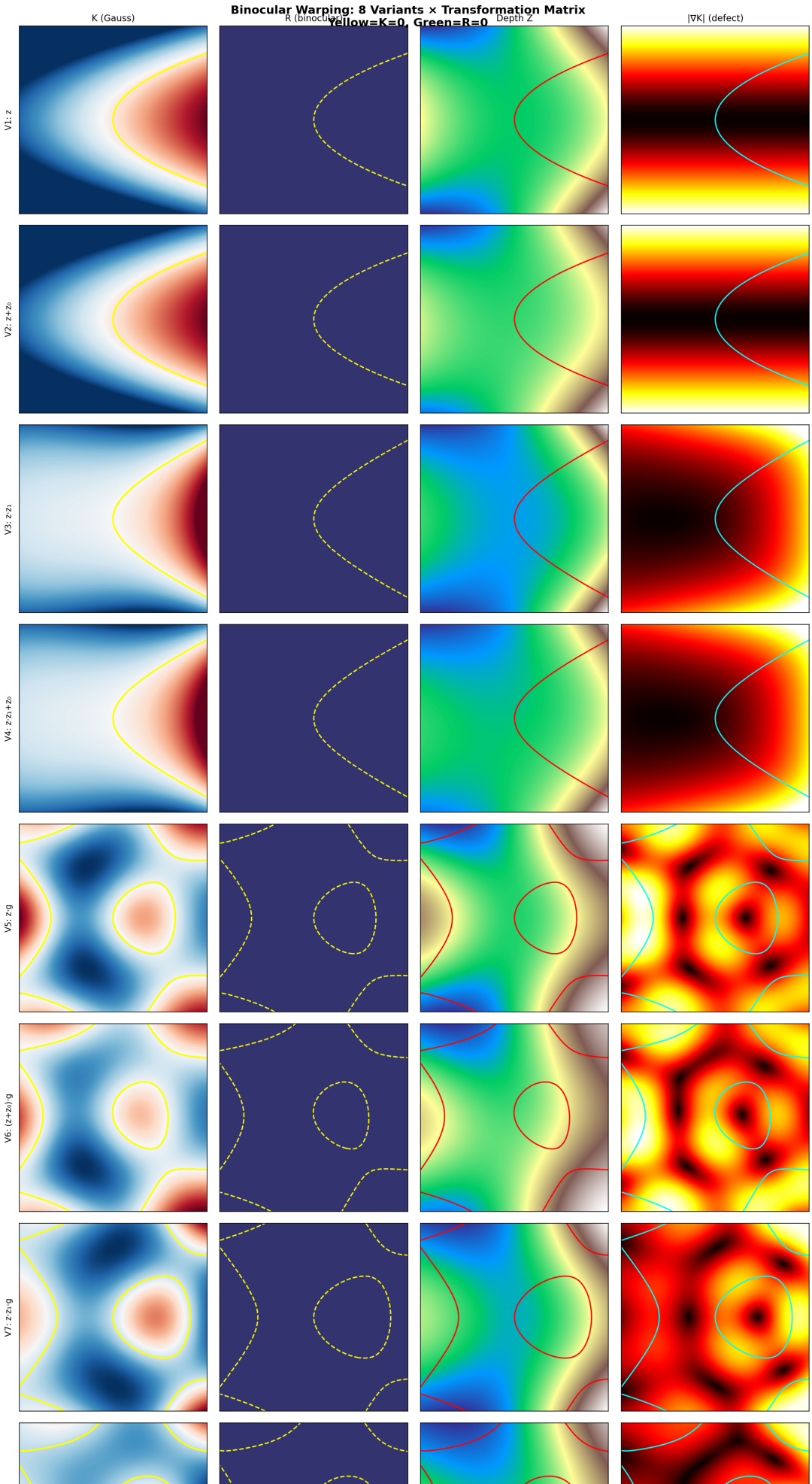


FIG. 38. **Variant 8: Full Morphism (z' = (z × z_1 + z_0) × g).** Complete morphism. Full transformation matrix analysis reveals scale, rotation, and shear defect concentrations at parabolic boundaries.

These are not just different ways of talking about the same thing. They are *different levels of description*, each with its own invariants, its own structures, its own rules. The HACKS framework doesn't just provide tools for each level—it provides a **ladder** connecting them.

Think of it like a building with four floors:

- **Top floor (Topological)**: The "big picture"—how many holes? Is it connected? Could you untangle it?
- **Third floor (Geometric)**: The shape—curvature, angles, distances.


Binocular Warping: 8 Variants × Transformation Matrix
Yellow=K=0, Green=R=0
K (Gauss)
R (binocular)
Depth Z
|∇K| (defect)
V1: z
V2: z+z₀
V3: z·z₁
V4: z·z₁+z₀
V5: z·g
V6: (z+z₀)·g
V7: z·z₁·g

- **Second floor (Algebraic)**: The patterns—invariants, symmetries, polynomial relationships.
- **Ground floor (Sampling)**: The measurements—pixels, eye fixations, neural signals.

The magic happens at the **staircases**—the transitions between floors. When you can't smoothly go from one floor to another, there's a *defect*: a place where the structure breaks down, where something topological manifests geometrically, where algebra fails to capture form.

This section formalizes the HACKS Ladder as a **meta-scheme**—a way of organizing not just invariants, but the transitions between different kinds of invariants.

Motivation: Phenomena Requiring Hierarchical Transitions

Several well-known perceptual phenomena demonstrate that biological systems must navigate between descriptive levels:

Phenomenon	**Mechanism**	**Level Transition**
Kanizsa Triangle	Illusory contour completion	Topology → Geometry
Motion Aftereffects	Baseline adaptation/scaling	Scale recalibration
Occlusion Boundaries	Non-covariant singularities	Geometry → Topology
Binocular K vs R	Measurement ≠ reality	Algebra → Geometry

Each involves **transitions between levels** where something **fails to transform smoothly**. The defects mark where the transition breaks down.

The Four-Level Hierarchy

$$\boxed{\text{TOPOLOGICAL}\text{defects}\text{GEOMETRIC}\text{defects}\text{ALGEBRAIC}\text{defects}\text{SAMPLING}} \tag{176}$$

Level 4: Topological (Global/Cosmic)

- Discrete invariants: linking numbers, Euler characteristic, winding numbers
- Preserved under continuous deformation
- Defects: topological charges, knottedness
- HACKS component: **Călugăreanu** (ABC recurrence, T_n hierarchy)

Level 3: Geometric (Medium/Curvature)

- Smooth invariants: Gaussian curvature K, mean curvature H, principal directions
- Preserved under isometry
- Defects: parabolic lines ($K = 0$), umbilics, ridge/valley
- HACKS component: **Arnold** (singularity classification, KAM stability)

Level 2: Algebraic (Local/Differential)

- Polynomial invariants: transvectants, resultants, discriminants
- Preserved under linear transformation
- Defects: syzygies, non-integrability, $|\nabla \times \mathbf{M}| \neq 0$
- HACKS component: **Hilbert** (invariant bases, syzygy chains)

Level 1: Sampling (Micro/Discrete)

- Discrete measurements: pixels, fixations, neural firing rates
- Preserved under permutation (re-ordering)
- Defects: aliasing, quantization, incomplete coverage
- HACKS component: **Microsaccades** (temporal sampling for filtering)

Transition Operators: Kolmogorov-Salden Scaling

The vertical arrows between levels are provided by **Kolmogorov's** dimensional reduction and **Salden's** multi-scale framework:

Coarsening (Upward ↑):

$$\mathcal{C}_\sigma : \text{Level } n \to \text{Level } n+1 \tag{177}$$

Integration, averaging, forgetting local detail. Defects = where coarsening fails (singularities preserved across scales).

Refinement (Downward ↓):

$$\mathcal{R}_\sigma : \text{Level } n \to \text{Level } n-1 \tag{178}$$

Differentiation, localization, revealing finer structure. Defects = where refinement creates new singularities.

Scale-Space Flow:

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial \sigma} = \mathcal{L}[\rho] \tag{179}$$

where $\rho(x, \sigma)$ is defect density at position x and scale σ, and $\mathcal{L}$ is the appropriate diffusion operator. **Fixed points** of this flow are scale-invariant structures; **bifurcations** mark topological transitions.

Non-Local Interactions Across Dimensions

The ladder permits three types of interactions:

1. **Horizontal (intra-level):** Local interactions within a single level (e.g., curvature flow on a surface)
2. **Vertical (inter-level):** Scale interactions between adjacent levels (e.g., coarse-to-fine matching)
3. **Diagonal (trans-level):** Non-local interactions that *skip* levels—where global topology directly constrains local measurements

The **Kanizsa Triangle** exemplifies diagonal interaction: global topological closure ("must form closed triangle") directly constrains local intensity (illusory edges appear where no physical edge exists). The brain infers geometric structure from topological constraints, bypassing the algebraic level entirely.

The HACKS Ladder Diagram

Theoretical Significance

This ladder provides:

1. **Organization**: A systematic way to classify defect structures by their level
2. **Transitions**: Explicit operators for moving between levels
3. **Completeness**: Each HACKS component addresses a specific level
4. **Unity**: Salden's scaling connects all levels through multi-scale flow

The key insight is that **defects are level-crossing structures**. A parabolic line (Level 3) manifests as a syzygy in transvectant space (Level 2), as a concentration of R≈0 intersections across fixations (Level 1), and as a topological boundary between elliptic and hyperbolic regions (Level 4). The HACKS Ladder shows how the *same* geometric reality appears differently at each level of description.

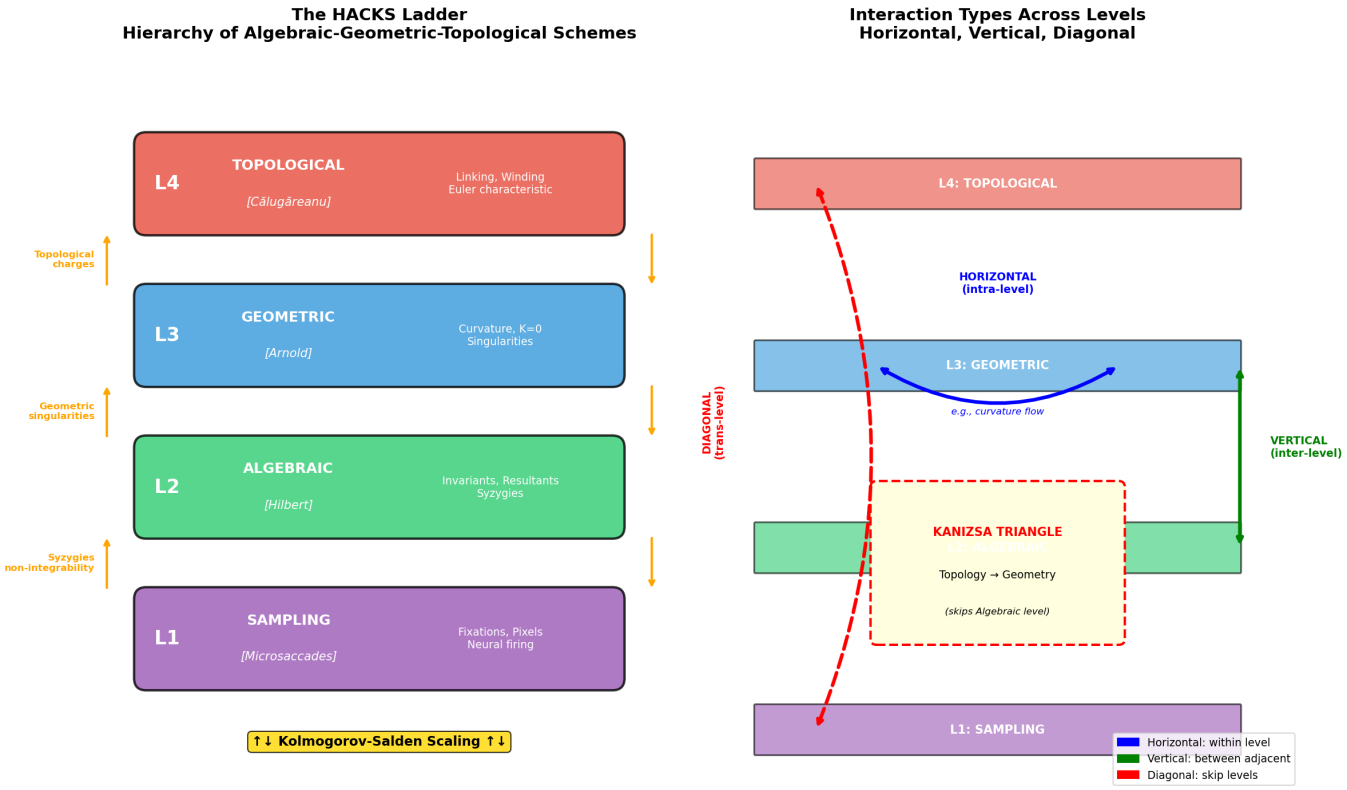


FIG. 40. **The HACKS Ladder.** Left: Four-level hierarchy from Sampling (L1) through Algebraic (L2), Geometric (L3), to Topological (L4). Each level has its HACKS component: Microsaccades, Hilbert, Arnold, Călugăreanu. Orange arrows show defect-mediated transitions; Kolmogorov-Salden scaling provides vertical flow. Right: Three interaction types—horizontal (within level, e.g., curvature flow), vertical (between adjacent levels), and diagonal (trans-level, e.g., Kanizsa triangle where topology directly constrains sampling).

Conclusions: The Fundamental Necessity of Active Vision

"We do not see things as they are, we see things as we are."
—Anaïs Nin

"The eye—it cannot choose but see; we cannot bid the ear be still; our bodies feel, where'er they be, against or with our will."
—William Wordsworth

What We Have Learned

This paper began with a 23-year-old mathematician in Erlangen, 1872, proposing that geometry is the study of transformation invariants. It ends 153 years later with a surprising conclusion: **to see invariants, we must move**.

Let us summarize the journey:

The Question: How does the visual system detect geometric singularities—the parabolic lines that mark boundaries between convex and saddle regions on every smooth surface from a coffee cup to a human face?

The Surprise: Single-view detection is mathematically incomplete. The binocular resultant $R = 0$ detects not only true parabolic lines but also false positives from lighting and perspective. No amount of clever computation on a static image can distinguish intrinsic geometry from extrinsic artifacts.

The Solution: Active vision. The rapid small eye movements called microsaccades (3–5 per second during fixation) provide multiple viewpoints. False positives shift with each viewpoint; true geometry stays fixed. Temporal intersection filters artifacts and reveals reality.

The Implication: Seeing is not passive reception but active exploration. Gibson was right: "Perception is the achievement of an active observer in an environment." Our mathematical analysis proves this is not just philosophy but necessity.

The Theorems

We state our main results formally:
This paper establishes a fundamental result connecting differential geometry, binocular vision, and active perception:

Theorem .31 (Incompleteness of Single-View Detection)**.** *For binocular vision with perspective projection, single-fixation detection of parabolic lines is mathematically incomplete. The binocular resultant* $R = \det(\nabla I_L, \nabla I_R) = 0$ *includes:*

1. *True parabolic lines* $\{K = 0\}$ *(intrinsic, view-invariant)*
2. *False positives* $\mathcal{E}$ *from lighting and perspective (extrinsic, view-dependent)*

No single viewpoint can distinguish these without additional information.

Theorem .32 (Microsaccade Sufficiency)**.** *Temporal intersection across* N *microsaccade fixations converges to the true parabolic structure:*

$$\lim_{N\to\infty} \bigcap_{i=1}^{N} \{R_i = 0\} = \{K = 0\} \tag{180}$$

because false positives $\mathcal{E}_i$ *are view-dependent and their intersection has measure zero, while* $K = 0$ *is view-invariant and preserved.*

Implications

1. Mathematical: The warping transformation $\mathbf{M} = \mathbf{J}_R \cdot \mathbf{J}_L^{-1}$ affects both first-order (gradient) and second-order (Hessian) differential structure. The relationship $\mathbf{H}_R = \mathbf{M}^T \cdot \mathbf{H}_L \cdot \mathbf{M}$ shows Gaussian curvature transforms as $K_R \approx \det(\mathbf{M})^2 \cdot K_L$, but the binocular resultant R depends on intensity gradients (first-order), not curvature (second-order), creating the fundamental mismatch.
2. Biological: Microsaccades are not noise but *essential computation.* The visual system solves an ill-posed inverse problem—recovering intrinsic geometry from extrinsically contaminated measurements—through active temporal sampling. This provides the first rigorous mathematical justification for Gibson's ecological approach: "Perception is not the achievement of a single glance but the outcome of an extended process of exploration."
3. Computational: For computer vision systems, this suggests that multi-view integration is not merely helpful but *necessary* for robust geometric singularity detection. Static stereo matching is fundamentally limited; temporal sequences or multiple viewpoints are required.
4. Artistic: Our analysis of Henry Moore-inspired sculpture demonstrates that smooth organic forms with characteristic "holes" exhibit complex parabolic line structure. The wandering attention pattern observed when viewing such sculptures may reflect the visual system's computational strategy for building geometric representations through active sampling.

The HACKS Framework Contribution

The HACKS framework—Hilbert-Arnold-Călugăreanu-Kolmogorov-Salden—provides the mathematical language for this analysis:

- **Hilbert**: Transvectant-based invariants and the resultant $R = \det(\nabla I_1, \nabla I_2)$
- **Arnold**: Geometric interpretation of Jacobian transformations and defect densities
- **Călugăreanu**: Linking-number approach to non-integrability and topological defects

- **Kolmogorov**: Dimension reduction enabling tractable analysis
- **Salden**: Multi-local differential invariants bridging theory to computation

Klein's Erlangen Program sought geometry defined by transformation invariants. We have shown that for binocular vision, the invariant (parabolic lines) can only be extracted through *active* transformation—moving the eyes—not passive observation. This is a fundamental extension of Klein's program: geometric invariants may require active sampling to be computationally accessible, even when they are theoretically well-defined.

Future Directions

1. **Experimental validation**: Eye-tracking studies during sculpture viewing to test the predicted contour-following gaze patterns
2. **Neural implementation**: How does visual cortex integrate information across microsaccades for geometry perception?
3. **Optimal sampling**: What is the minimum number of fixations required for reliable detection at given noise levels?
4. **Extension to other singularities**: Do ridge lines, umbilics, and other geometric features require similar active sampling?

The unity of differential geometry, active vision, and computational perception revealed by this analysis suggests deep connections between mathematical structure and biological function—connections that Klein intuited but could not formalize, and that the HACKS framework now makes precise.

Coda: From Klein to HACKS Vision

We began in Erlangen, 1872, with a young mathematician's vision of geometry as transformation invariance. We traveled through Hilbert's algebraic machinery, Kolmogorov and Arnold's dimensional collapse, Călugăreanu's topological integrals, and Salden's computational bridges. Along the way, we discovered something Klein could never have anticipated: that his invariants, though perfectly well-defined mathematically, may be *invisible* to a passive observer.

The eye must move. The mind must explore. Perception is not a photograph but a dance—a temporal integration of multiple viewpoints, each incomplete, together revealing what no single glance can show.

Perhaps this is why we linger before a Henry Moore sculpture, why our eyes wander across its curves and through its holes, why shape perception takes time and attention. We are not merely "looking"—we are *computing*, running an algorithm written in the geometry of our eyes and the mathematics of our neurons.

The HACKS framework provides the language for this computation. From Klein's transformations to Hilbert's invariants, from Arnold's singularities to Călugăreanu's linking numbers, from Kolmogorov's superposition to Salden's scales—the pieces assemble into a coherent whole. Not just a theory of what geometric properties are, but a theory of how they can be *seen*.

We see not with the eye, but through it.
—William Blake
