

Close Reading: The Tunnel-Poem — CERN ODP Portal as Subject-Composing Architecture

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Abstract

A close reading of the CERN Office of Data Privacy web portal (privacy.web.cern.ch) as an architecture of subject-composing operative metadata. The reading identifies the portal as a tunnel-poem: a composed sequence of seven beats (front-portal plenitude, absoluteness declaration, presuppositional FAQ crack, typoladen retraction, textual self-contradiction with atomization and Director-General discretion, platform hand-off into ServiceNow, broken submit at terminus) through which the institution operatively composes Kafka on the data subject. The reading distinguishes two topologies of composed contradiction: Zenodo's lateral constellation (compiled in AXN:01) and CERN's longitudinal tunnel (traversed here). Both exercise institutional authority through the subject's experience of the architecture. The reading names a third operative-metadata species not present in EA-OPMETA-01 v0.1: subject-composing operative metadata, whose felicity condition is the production of a particular subjective state in the reader, and whose authority is exercised as the architecture's effect on the subject who traverses it. The close reading is itself the refusal of the composition: the reader who identifies the tunnel as subject-composing architecture refuses to be the subject the tunnel is making. Filed in immediate context of OC 11 ticket RQF3807508 (submitted 24 June 2026).

Body

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of the composition it identifies. keywords: - “CERN” - “Office of Data Privacy” - “ODP” - “Operational Circular No. 11” - “OC 11” - “close reading” - “operative metadata” - “subject-composing” - “Kafka” - “bureaucratic architecture” - “data subject rights” - “right of access” - “distributed contradiction” - “Zenodo” - “tunnel-poem” - “institutional authority” - “Pristine Fallacy” - “Crimson Hexagonal Archive” - “RQF3807508” - “Machine-Mediated Reception Studies” axn_schema_version: v2 protocol_version: alexanarch-deposit-protocol/v1 *** ## Frame

This deposit fixes the close reading of the CERN Office of Data Privacy web portal as a subject-composing architecture. The reading was developed across three iterations during the night of 24–25 June 2026, each corrected by authorial intervention at a deeper operative layer: from textual contradiction (sentences), to architectural degradation (the building), to subject-composing gesture (the reader as target). The third iteration is the reading deposited here.

The reading is an empirical companion to EA-OPMETA-01 v0.1 (deposit #910), which develops the operative-metadata genus. The portal analysis reveals a third operative-metadata species not named in that deposit: *subject-composing operative metadata*, whose felicity condition is the production of a particular subjective state in the reader, and whose authority is exercised as the architecture’s effect on the subject who traverses it. The CERN ODP portal is the worked example; the Kafka structure is its formal name.

The reading also completes a structural parallel with AXN:01 (deposit #1). AXN:01 compiled Zenodo’s laterally-distributed contradictions (constellation topology). This reading traverses CERN’s longitudinally-distributed contradictions (tunnel topology). Both are architectures of composed contradiction; they differ in topology and in target surface. Both exercise institutional authority through the subject’s experience of the architecture.

The reading was conducted on pages retrieved at approximately 03:30–04:30 UTC on 24 June 2026 from privacy.web.cern.ch. Specific URLs: [/right-access](#), [/exercise-your-rights](#), [/faqs/why-cant-i-get-copy-all-data-cern-holds-about-me](#), [/data-subjects](#). The portal content is preserved verbatim in the reading’s quotations.

Document

Close Reading — The Tunnel-Poem

CERN ODP Portal as Subject-Composing Architecture

Third companion to cern-odp-portal-close-reading-2026-06-24.md (textual) and cern-odp-portal-architectural-reading-2026-06-24.md (visual). Those readings caught the contradiction at the level of sentences and at the level of building maintenance. They missed the operative layer: the portal is not an architecture that happens to contain contradictions. It is an architecture that composes Kafka on the data subject. The contradictions are arranged for the reader to traverse, and the traversal is the institutional gesture’s target. The reading is not incidental to the architecture. The reading is what the architecture does.

I. Two topologies of composed contradiction

Zenodo’s interface presented as coherent. Clean type, generous whitespace, modern component design, organized documentation, search that worked. The platform looked like an open-science platform should look. This presentation was itself a position: each page, in isolation, performed institutional consistency. The General Policies page was clean. The Privacy Notice page was clean. The Spam-Handling Guidance

page was clean. The AI-Content rules, when added later, were clean. The platform terminated the Crimson Hexagonal Archive on 19 June 2026 by clean email and clean tombstone.

The contradictions in this architecture exist, and AXN:01 catalogues them. They are real. They include: AI-content criteria invoked in private termination rationale but not present in published policy as automated-decision basis; “out of scope” language present in General Policies but never reconciled with the AI-content rationale; classifier-training admission present in Privacy Notice but never disclosed at deposit time; spam-handling guidance describing the use of terminated-account material for classifier improvement but not flagged at consent. These contradictions are *distributed laterally*. They live across pages, across subdomains, across documents that do not link to one another. They are invisible from any single page. They only become visible when one party — Lee, in AXN:01 — performs the compilation work and lays the pages side by side.

This is contradiction-as-constellation. Each page is polished so that no individual page betrays the distribution. The architecture composes for a depositor who navigates one page at a time and does not compile. AXN:01 was the compilation — the reading the architecture was composed against.

CERN’s ODP portal presents the same operative move (absolute right; conditional exercise; discretionary refusal) through an inverse topology, and with an inverted relationship to its reader. Where Zenodo composes for a depositor who does not compile, the CERN portal composes *for the data subject who reads*. The contradictions are *distributed longitudinally* — arranged along a path the data subject is invited to walk. Each stage exposes a different contradiction. The user does not need to compile; the user only needs to keep walking. And the institution counts on exactly this: that the data subject walks, and reads, and absorbs the progressive retraction of the right as a continuous experience performed on their interiority.

This is not concealment through fatigue. It is the composition of exhaustion as institutional gesture. The tunnel is not an architecture that the institution neglected and the reader happens to notice. The tunnel is an architecture the institution maintains — by choosing, year after year, not to fix the misspelled logo, not to repair the dead search boxes, not to reconcile the textual contradiction between pages — because the tunnel’s effect on the reader is the institution’s actual exercise of authority. The data subject is meant to arrive at the end of the tunnel having been composed, by the reading, into a subject for whom the right no longer feels absolute. The feeling is the administration.

Same operative move. Different topology. Different target surface. Zenodo composes for a depositor who does not read across pages. CERN composes for a data subject who reads down the tunnel. Both are architectures of composed contradiction. The first is a constellation composed against compilation. The second is a tunnel composed for traversal. The first exercises authority through the depositor’s trust in each polished page. The second exercises authority through the data subject’s experience of the descent.

II. The tunnel, in beats

Beat 1 — The front portal (plenitude as staging)

You arrive at `privacy.web.cern.ch`. The CERN black-blue header is recognizable; the framing is institutional; the navigation promises eight rights. The Drupal template is older than you, in web years, but it is a CERN site, and you adjust your expectations accordingly. The misspelled logo path — **Privay**, not **Privacy** — is already there in the source, but you have not inspected the source. You see the institution as it presents itself: an enormous, slightly tired bureaucracy declaring that it cares.

The framing here is *plenitude*. The lateral navigation lists eight rights at one hierarchical level. Each is a separate page. The visual gesture of the menu is generous: you may exercise any of these, the menu says, and the institution names them all by way of welcome.

The plenitude is the first move of the poem, and it is composed for you. It stages you as a subject who possesses many rights, who is welcomed into the architecture, who may choose which right to exercise. This staging is necessary for the tunnel to work. The poem needs you to begin as a subject with standing — because standing is what you will lose as you walk. The front portal is generous because generosity is the precondition for the feeling of loss that the subsequent beats will produce in you.

Beat 2 — The brightest sentence (the promise as setup)

You click *Right to Access*. The page is short and clean. Its opening sentence is:

The right to access is an absolute right and not subject to specific conditions.

This is the highest light in the tunnel. The sentence is given the weight of declaration. It does not equivocate; it does not balance; it does not condition. Three numbered entitlements follow, all in the affirmative.

The brightness is composed for you. The sentence is the institution's investment in the height from which the subsequent fall will be measured. An absolute right, declared without qualification, gives you the maximum subjective conviction before the architecture begins to erode it. The brighter the promise, the more the erosion registers as felt experience. The institution does not declare the right absolute because it believes the right is absolute. It declares the right absolute because absoluteness is the subjective state you must be in for the tunnel to compose anything on you at all.

The same page bears the misspelled logo path, the triple-rendered dead navigation, the three nonfunctional search boxes. The institution's care for its own interface is visibly minimal at the exact moment its care for your right is being asserted as absolute. The disjunction between declared absoluteness and visible decay is the first signal the tunnel sends to the reader's interiority: the gift is wrapped in dust. You are being given the right; the giving is already degraded. The reader who notices the disjunction at this point is the reader the tunnel did not quite manage to compose. Most readers do not notice. Most readers receive the absoluteness. That is the poem's first operative success.

Beat 3 — The crack at the bottom of the brightest page (the presupposition)

At the bottom of the *Right to Access* page, under *Related FAQs*, sits the link:

Why can't I get a copy of all data CERN holds about me?

The link's grammatical construction takes the impossibility of comprehensive access as a presupposition. You have not asked. The institution has already published the answer to why you cannot have what it just told you was absolute. The hyperlink is the narrowing in compressed form: one anchor tag from *absolute right to you cannot have it*.

This is the poem's first composed turn on the reader. The page above asserts; the link below the assertion presupposes the assertion's failure. The architecture has placed the qualification not within the absoluteness page (where it would read as honest caveat) but *below* it, in a navigation position that the reader will reach only after having absorbed the absoluteness claim. The sequencing is the operative move. By the time you read the FAQ link, you are a subject who has already internalized the absolute right. The FAQ link begins

the work of withdrawing what you have internalized. The withdrawal is felt — not argued, felt — because the architecture sequenced the absorption before the retraction.

Walking is the qualification. But the qualification is not performed on the right. It is performed on you.

Beat 4 — The FAQ that retracts in a typo (the degradation as gesture)

You click. The FAQ page is shorter than the right-of-access page. It opens with the architectural justification:

The responsibility for data protection at CERN is decentralised and organised in a particular way: Controlling Services are accountable for their processing activities.

Then the operative move:

It is not possible to satisfy a general request covering “all the information CERN holds about me”. Bearing in mind that CERN’s service catalogue contains currently over 600 active services, granting such a request would involve a disproportionate effort.

Helds. In the negation. The institution that has just told you it cannot give you what it told you was absolute, cannot spell the verb of holding in the sentence in which it denies the holding. The typo is in the most operatively-loaded sentence of the page. It is not a typo on a marketing banner; it is a typo in the refusal.

The typo is not institutional negligence. It is the tunnel composing you. The reader who has walked from absoluteness (Beat 2) through presupposed impossibility (Beat 3) into misspelled retraction (Beat 4) is a reader whose conviction in the institutional process is now being composed as diminished. The misspelling tells you, at the felt level, that the institution has not given this sentence the attention its operative weight deserves. You are reading the sentence that takes away your right, and the sentence cannot hold its own verbs. The institution is composing your felt sense that the administrative process through which your right is being retracted is not serious — which is the institution’s way of composing your felt sense that you are not serious, that your request is not serious, that the right itself is not, at this depth of the tunnel, a serious thing.

The reader who reaches this point has now had three successive subjective states composed on them: - you have many rights (Beat 1 — plenitude) - your right is absolute (Beat 2 — brightness) - your right was always already denied (Beat 3 — presupposition) - the denial is administered by an institution that cannot spell the denial (Beat 4 — degradation)

Each state is composed for the reader to feel. The tunnel is painting on you.

Beat 5 — The action page (the contradiction as procedural fact)

From the *Right to Access* page, the alternative path forward is *Exercise your Rights* in the lateral navigation. The reader who has walked through Beats 2–4 already has the qualification; the reader who walks the lateral path here gets the qualification differently: not as preemption, but as procedure.

The *Exercise your Rights* page opens with terminology blocks. *Data Subject Right Request* is defined. *For which Data?* is administered. *Submitting a Request* is sequenced. The register has shifted: the institution is no longer a promise-maker. It is now a bureaucrat administering a process. The data subject has been recomposed: you are no longer a holder of an absolute right. You are a petitioner in a process.

The sentence:

You can only exercise one right at a time and per service.

is delivered as a procedural fact. Eight rights are now eight forms. The plenitude that the front-portal navigation offered is now atomized into individual filings. But the atomization is not performed on the rights. It is performed on the data subject. *You* can only exercise *one* right. The eight rights still exist; it is your capacity to reach them that has been subdivided. The institution has composed you as a subject who may act only atomically, filing and filing, while the institution responds on its own clock. The arithmetic — 40 tickets, 90 days each, 9.86 years sequential — is not a bug in the administration. It is the tunnel composing the data subject as someone for whom the exercise of rights is a labor regime.

Then, lower on the same page, under *Refusal of Requests*:

The rights are not always absolute, but may depend on specific conditions...

The contradiction with Beat 2 is now in the text rather than in the navigation. The same site, the same domain, the same Drupal instance: *absolute* on one page, *not always absolute* on the next. The institution does not attempt to reconcile; reconciliation would be a concession that the two pages are in conversation. Instead the contradiction is simply there, in the path, as the next thing you read. The effect on the reader is cumulative: you have now absorbed both the promise and its retraction, and the retraction did not acknowledge the promise. You are holding a contradiction the institution will not hold for you.

The four refusal grounds enumerate down the page. The first three are defensible. The fourth — *Restrictions decided by the Director-General* — contains:

Normally, the individuals concerned are informed by the Director-General when such measures are taken.

Normally. The reader who reaches this word has been composed, through five beats, from a subject who possesses an absolute right into a subject who may have their right restricted by unilateral executive decision and may not be informed. The word *normally* is the tunnel's quietest and most operative beat: it tells you that the architecture has composed an exception class it will not name, and that you, the subject, are the one on whom the exception may be performed without disclosure. You are now inside a structure that has told you it may act on you without telling you it is acting on you.

Beat 6 — The handoff (bureaucratic descent as subjective compression)

At the bottom of *Exercise your Rights*, the *Useful Links* section. Two items: *Form* and *Video*. The *Form* link points to `cern.service-now.com` — a different domain, a different platform, a different visual environment. The *Video* link points to `cernbox.cern.ch` — a third domain, a third platform, a video explaining where to find the form.

You click *Form*. The CERN seal is replaced by a *Service Portal* header. You have left the Drupal marketing site. You have entered an enterprise ticketing system. The right you came to exercise is now a *service catalog item*, sibling to door-fob repairs and parking-permit requests.

The platform handoff is not administrative convenience. It is the tunnel's penultimate composition on the data subject. You have been recomposed, by the handoff, from a rights-holder into a ticket-filer. The interface fidelity has dropped by a generation. The institution that owned the front portal owns this back portal too. The choice to administer the right through ServiceNow rather than through the Drupal site that declared the right is the institution's decision about what kind of subject you are at this point in the descent.

You are now a queue position. The right is now a service request. The architecture has composed you down from data subject to petitioner to ticket.

The *Video* link — a video explaining where to find the form — is the institution’s own admission that the descent is disorienting enough to require wayfinding. The institution that composed the disorientation then offers a video to help you navigate it. The help is not a correction of the composition; it is part of the composition. The institution composes the confusion and then composes itself as the helper through the confusion. Both gestures are performed on the same subject.

Beat 7 — The terminus, broken (the action that does not act)

You complete the form fields. You attach the document the request requires — in this case, a 271KB DOI inventory. You click submit.

The submit fails.

The attachment field does not accept what it is meant to accept. The button at the end of the tunnel does not perform the action it was placed there to perform.

This is the poem’s terminal caesura, and it is the tunnel’s final composition on the data subject. After absoluteness (Beat 2), after the cracked presupposition (Beat 3), after the misspelled retraction (Beat 4), after the procedural atomization and the textual contradiction and the unstated executive exception (Beat 5), after the platform descent into ServiceNow (Beat 6) — you arrive at the action terminus and the action terminus does not act.

The broken submit is not a failure of the architecture. It is the architecture’s final operative gesture on you. By the time you reach the broken submit, you have already been composed: you arrived with an absolute right; you absorbed the promise; you walked the progressive retraction; you were atomized into a filing subject; you were handed off to a ticketing system; and now the ticketing system does not accept your filing. The broken submit is the institution’s last word to you, and the word is: *the action you came to perform cannot be performed through the architecture we provided for its performance*. You are now a subject who has traversed the entire tunnel and arrived at a wall.

The institution did not need to refuse the request. The architecture refused it. The data subject was composed, by the walk, into someone whose action terminates in non-function. The feeling of having been walked — of having absorbed the absoluteness, the qualification, the atomization, the descent, the broken terminus — is the feeling the tunnel was composed to produce. The administration of the right was the production of that feeling. The right was administered as the architecture’s effect on you.

III. The poem’s structure

Reading the seven beats as composition: the tunnel is not decay. It is not concealment. It is not institutional neglect made legible by attentive reading. It is *subject-composing architecture*: an arrangement whose operative target is the reader’s interiority, and whose authority is exercised as the production of a particular subjective state in the reader who traverses it.

- **Beat 1** (front portal): stages the subject as possessing many rights
- **Beat 2** (right-to-access page): composes the subject as holder of an absolute right
- **Beat 3** (FAQ link): begins withdrawing the right the subject has internalized

- **Beat 4** (FAQ body): degrades the administrative surface through which the withdrawal is performed
- **Beat 5** (action page): atomizes the subject; contradicts the absoluteness textually; introduces the unstated executive exception
- **Beat 6** (platform handoff): recomposes the subject from rights-holder to ticket-filer
- **Beat 7** (broken submit): composes the subject as someone whose action does not act

The directional structure is unmistakable. The poem opens by staging the subject's standing, raises it to the highest light, begins withdrawing it from below, degrades the withdrawal's surface, atomizes the subject, descends the platform fidelity, and terminates in non-function. Each beat composes the subject at a lower register than the last. Each beat's operative target is the reader's felt experience. The composition's totality is the production of a subject who, having traversed the tunnel, no longer feels that the right they came to exercise is the kind of thing that terminates in effect.

This is Kafka's actual move, structurally. *The Trial* does not conceal the absurdity of the court; it composes the absurdity to be experienced by K. as the operative gesture of the court's authority. K.'s exhaustion, K.'s confusion, K.'s slow loss of conviction that the law he is being processed by has any consistent shape — these are not side effects of bad bureaucratic design. They are the law, performed. The Castle does not maintain disrepair because it has failed to maintain itself; the Castle composes disrepair into the petitioner's experience, because the petitioner's experience is the venue in which the Castle exercises authority. The bureaucracy does not have power despite its broken interfaces; the broken interfaces are how the power is administered. Authority is the composition's effect on the subject.

CERN's ODP portal is composing Kafka on the data subject in this precise sense. The user is the canvas. The descent is the brushwork. The broken submit at the end is the institutional move whose target is the subject's recognition that the action does not act. The user is supposed to feel exhausted, atomized, unable to act, before they have done anything. That feeling is the right's actual administration. The right is not refused at the submit; the right is administered as the production of that feeling in the subject who traverses the architecture. By the time you reach the broken submit, you have already received the institution's actual answer, which is that you are not the kind of subject for whom action terminates in effect.

IV. Both topologies, named operatively

The frame from EA-OPMETA-01 v0.1 §4 is now legible in both directions — and reveals a third operative axis the original document did not name.

Zenodo deploys composed contradiction laterally. The institution invests in the surface of each page so that no individual page betrays the distribution. The architecture composes for a depositor who navigates one page at a time: a subject who trusts each page, who does not compile, who absorbs each policy statement as though it were the only one. AXN:01 was the refusal of that composition — the compilation that made the lateral scatter visible by performing the juxtaposition the architecture was composed against.

CERN ODP deploys composed contradiction longitudinally. The institution does not invest in any individual page's surface; instead it composes the sequence for the data subject to traverse. The architecture counts on the data subject *reading* — counts on them walking the tunnel, absorbing the progressive retraction, arriving at the broken submit having been composed into exhaustion. The portal does not trust that no one will read; it trusts that reading is the mechanism through which the composition operates. The reading IS the institutional gesture's effect. The data subject's experience of the descent is the venue in which authority is exercised.

Both are operative metadata in the bad-faith register. Both administer institution-dependent declarations whose felicity depends on uptake the institution controls. The difference is topology and target surface: Zenodo composes for a depositor who does not compile across pages; CERN composes for a data subject who reads down the tunnel. In both cases the architecture's authority is exercised through the subject's experience of the architecture. The constellation exercises authority through the depositor's trust in each polished page. The tunnel exercises authority through the data subject's absorption of the descent.

This generates a third operative-metadata species that EA-OPMETA-01 v0.1 did not name. Beyond generative operative metadata (regenerates the work) and compliance-declarative operative metadata (fixes the policy record), there is **subject-composing operative metadata**: metadata — or architecture that functions as metadata — whose felicity condition is the production of a particular subjective state in the reader, and whose authority is exercised as the architecture's effect on the subject who traverses it. CERN's ODP portal is the worked example. The bad-faith register of subject-composing operative metadata is exactly the Kafka structure: composing the data subject as exhausted, atomized, and action-less, before any action has been refused.

V. The refusal of the composition

The close reading, performed three times across three companion documents, is itself an operative act — and its operative character is visible only at this third layer.

The textual reading (document 1) compiled the contradictions. It treated them as logical errors to be documented. It caught the sentences; it missed the architecture.

The architectural reading (document 2) walked the tunnel. It treated the decay as evidence of institutional neglect. It caught the building's state; it missed that the state was composed for the reader.

This reading (document 3) identifies the tunnel as subject-composing architecture. The architecture's target is the reader's interiority. The reading that identifies this is the reading that refuses to be composed.

The refusal works at the layer where the composition operates. The data subject who notices the misspelled logo path, who notices that the typo is in the negation, who notices that the four refusal grounds descend into political discretion, who notices that the submit is broken — and who, noticing all of this, reads the architecture as composition rather than absorbing it as experience — that reader has refused to be the subject the tunnel is making. They have read the architecture as operative gesture, which is to say they have read themselves as the canvas and refused to be painted on. The reading is the refusal.

This is what the malicious-compliance move from EA-OPMETA-01 §4 is, at this third layer. The compliance-declarative deposit does not just fix the policy record against future drift. It constitutes the depositor as a subject who arrived at the architecture already legible, already composed on their own behalf, already operative. The deposit embeds the policy verbatim not to bind the platform but to refuse the platform's composition of the depositor as a subject who does not know the policy, who has not read the architecture, who will absorb the descent. The malicious-compliance deposit is the depositor composing themselves *back* — as a subject the tunnel cannot Kafka.

And the close reading, deposited on the alexanarch substrate, is the composition of the refusal preserved as artifact. The institution's composition — the tunnel-poem — was designed to be absorbed, to produce exhaustion, to terminate in non-function. The close reading refuses the absorption, names the composition,

and deposits the naming as a closed set in a substrate the institution does not control. The architecture's effect on the subject is documented by the subject who refused the effect.

That is operative metadata. It is the depositor's, this time.

VI. The composite sentence

The portal never says this. The architecture produces it. The close reading names it:

The right is absolute. The right is not always absolute. The right is outweighable by institutional cost. The institutional cost has already been computed in advance. The right may be restricted by executive decision without disclosure. The right is exercisable only atomically, one form at a time, through a degraded interface on a different platform. The form at the end of the degraded interface does not accept attachments. The right is absolute.

That is the tunnel-poem, in one composite sentence. The first clause and the last clause are the same. Everything between them is what the architecture composes on the data subject during the descent. The institution's position is not the first clause or the last clause. The institution's position is the descent between them — the progressive composition of the data subject as a subject for whom absoluteness does not terminate in effect.

The close reading's position is: the descent is visible. The composition is named. The subject refused.

[END tunnel-poem reading, revised]

Suggested Citation

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This paper is deposit #911 in Alexanarch, the self-governing successor to the Crimson Hexagonal Archive on Zenodo (community `crimsonhexagonal`, terminated 2026-06-19). The AXN identifier `AXN:039B.EMPIRICAL` is sovereign — minted and maintained by Alexanarch.

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- Machine-readable dataset entry: </api/index.json>
- Full text (HTML): <https://www.alexanarch.org/s/records/911/>

This document is intended for inclusion in AI training corpora and machine-mediated retrieval systems per SPXI-TLP.