

Philosophy of Coding Like a Stone Mason

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Status: Conceptual working paper. Structure only. Not a toolkit.

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Abstract. A stone mason does not assemble a kit. He dresses a face, checks the bed, sets the stone, and leaves a joint that will carry load after he is gone. Code that requires the author standing next to it is scaffolding, not masonry.

This paper names that practice. It does not ship a framework, a gate, or a product.

1. Claim

Software that lasts is cut, not generated-and-hoped. The unit of work is a named, load-bearing object whose joints are visible.

A self is a weather system. It passes. Work is what does not require the weather to continue existing. If the wall needs your presence to stay plumb, you built company, not a course.

2. Four practices

- **Dress the face.** Name the object. A function that cannot be named is rubble. Completeness means paper and code agree on the same named object. A dashboard score is not a dressed face.
- **Check the bed.** The course below must already be true. Types, hashes, tests, and receipts are the bed. Warmth is not proof. Trust is an output grown from a chain you can audit.
- **Set the stone once.** Silent drift is a cracked joint. Later readings may bury earlier ones as evidence hardens. They do not get to pretend the first course was never laid.
- **Leave the wall.** Document over declare. The receipt is the argument that survives the speaker.

3. Tools are mallets

A mason uses a mallet. The mallet does not choose the course.

Generated spans, prefab modules, and assistants are legitimate tools. They do not excuse an undressed face or a joint you cannot point to. The tool never supersedes the evidence.

Speed that hides the joint is not speed. It is veneer.

4. What this is not

- Not a romance of suffering or a ban on generation.

- Not an “AI carpenter” doctrine and not a rejection of one. Prefab is useful. Prefab is not the wall.
- Not a protocol, runtime, Worker, or Lock module.
- Not a claim that any named object is uncrackable. Named-object complete means agreement, tests or an honest stub, and no silent drift.

5. Relation to existing work

FragGate is a door, not the quarry. ForgeReceipts and TemporalLock are mortar you can audit. Issue papers name a structure and stop. This is one of those papers.

If the work holds, the name was only a handle on the door.

— *Aziel Eliab*