

# DFT coupling among higher-dimensional fields

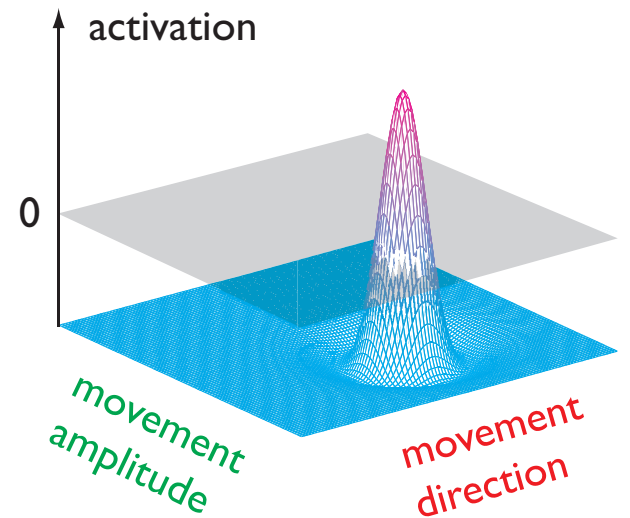
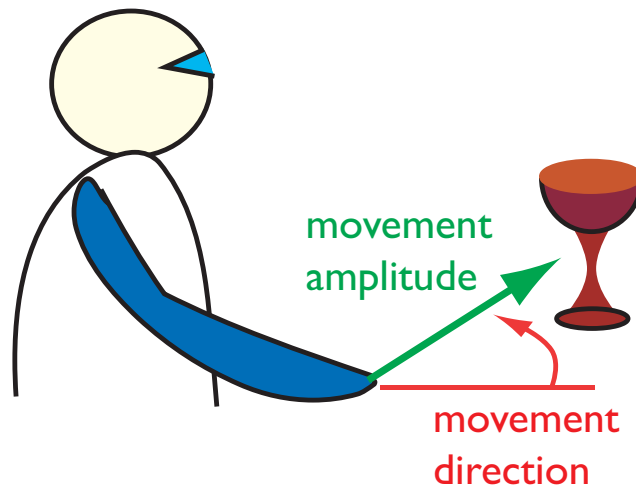
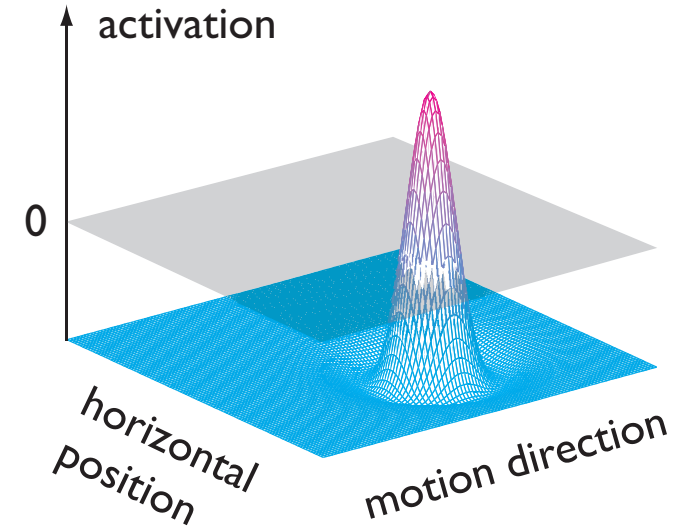
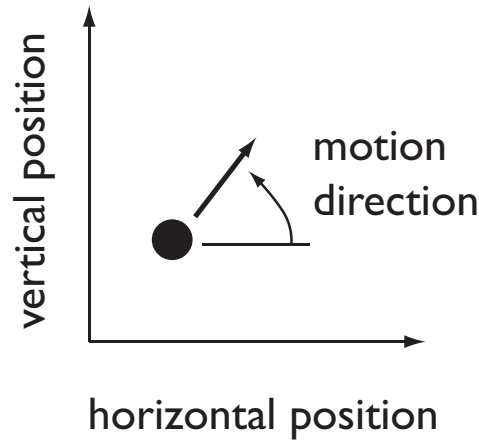
Gregor Schöner

Institute for Neural Computation (INI)

[dynamicfieldtheory.org](http://dynamicfieldtheory.org)

- Background: different notions of binding
- Joint representations and coupling patterns
- Binding through space/ordinal dimension
- Coordinate transforms

# Joint representations of different feature dimensions



# Joint representations don't scale

- 2 spatial dimensions

- depth

- orientation

- color

- texture

- movement direction

- size

- etc...

=>

- e.g. 8 dimensions

- 100 neurons per dimension

- $10^{2*8} = 10^{16}!$

- more than there are in the entire brain!

- => only small sets of feature dimensions can be represented jointly

# Joint representations are not flexible

- needs dedicated substrate for every possible combination
- does not account for mis-bindings

# Binding through shared dimensions

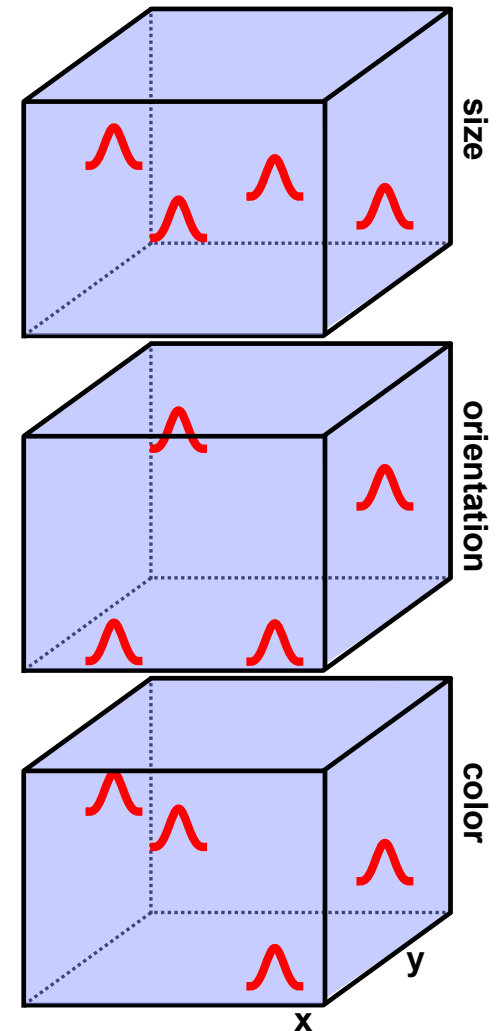
- separate fields for joint representations of limited number of dimensions (e.g. 3 to 4)
- all of which share a set of dimensions
  - visual space (~all neurons have receptive fields)
  - ordinal dimension

# Binding through space

■ space-feature fields

■ different features

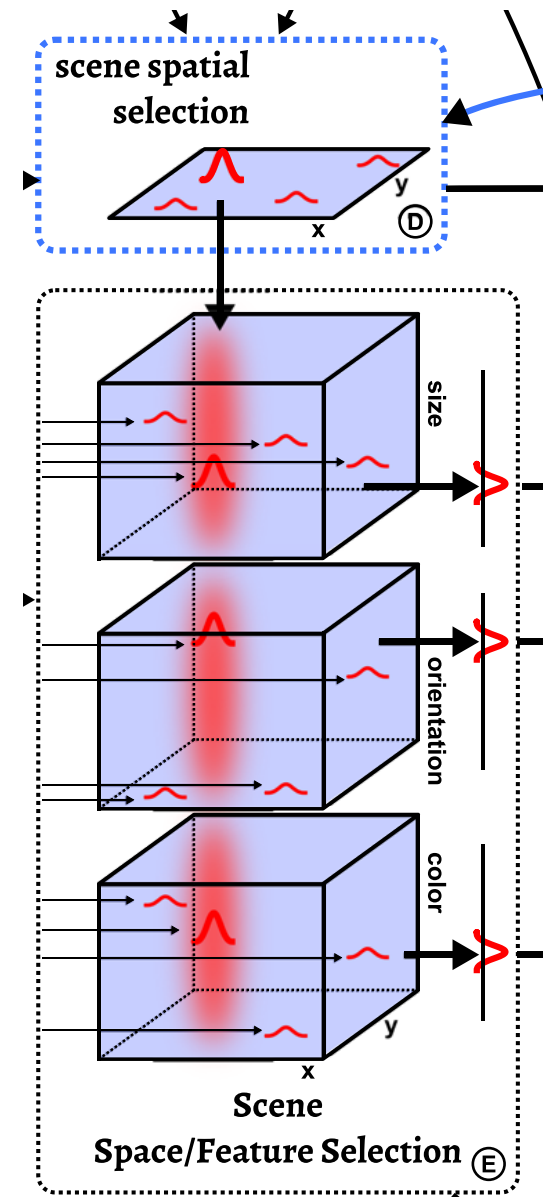
■ all sharing visual space



[Griegen et al. *Attention, Perception & Psychophysics* 2020]

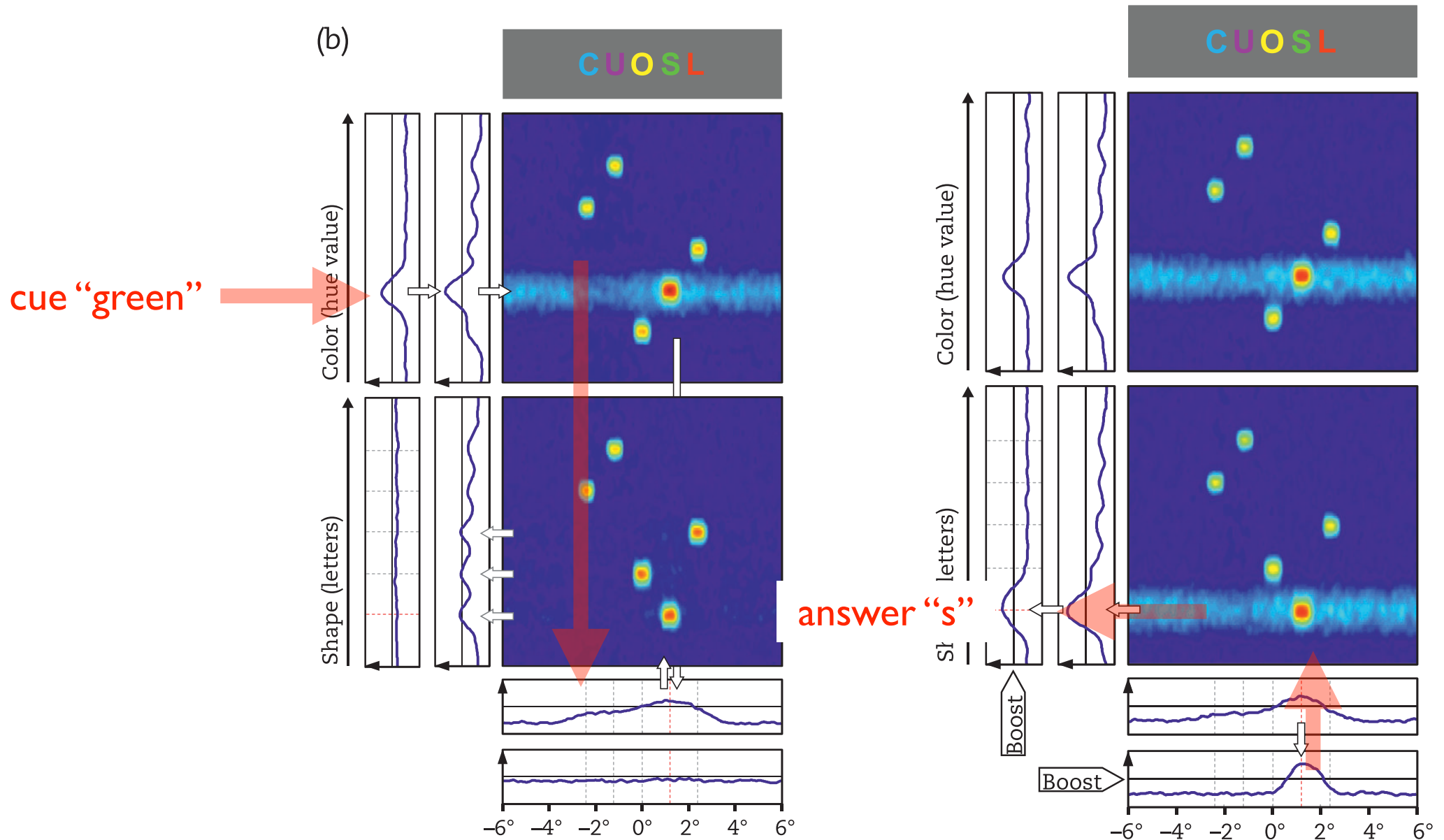
# Binding through space

- bi-directional coupling along spatial dimensions





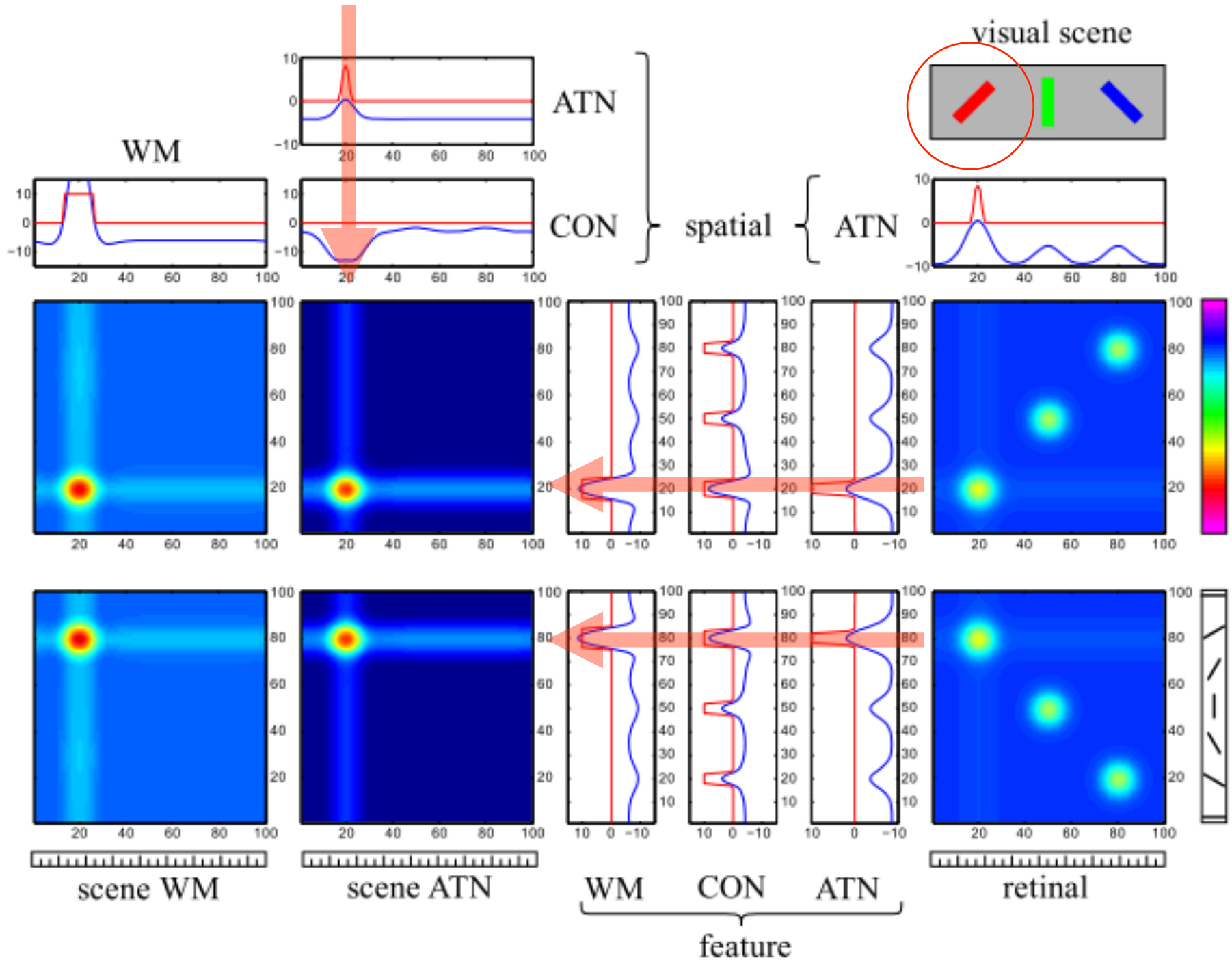
# Binding through space

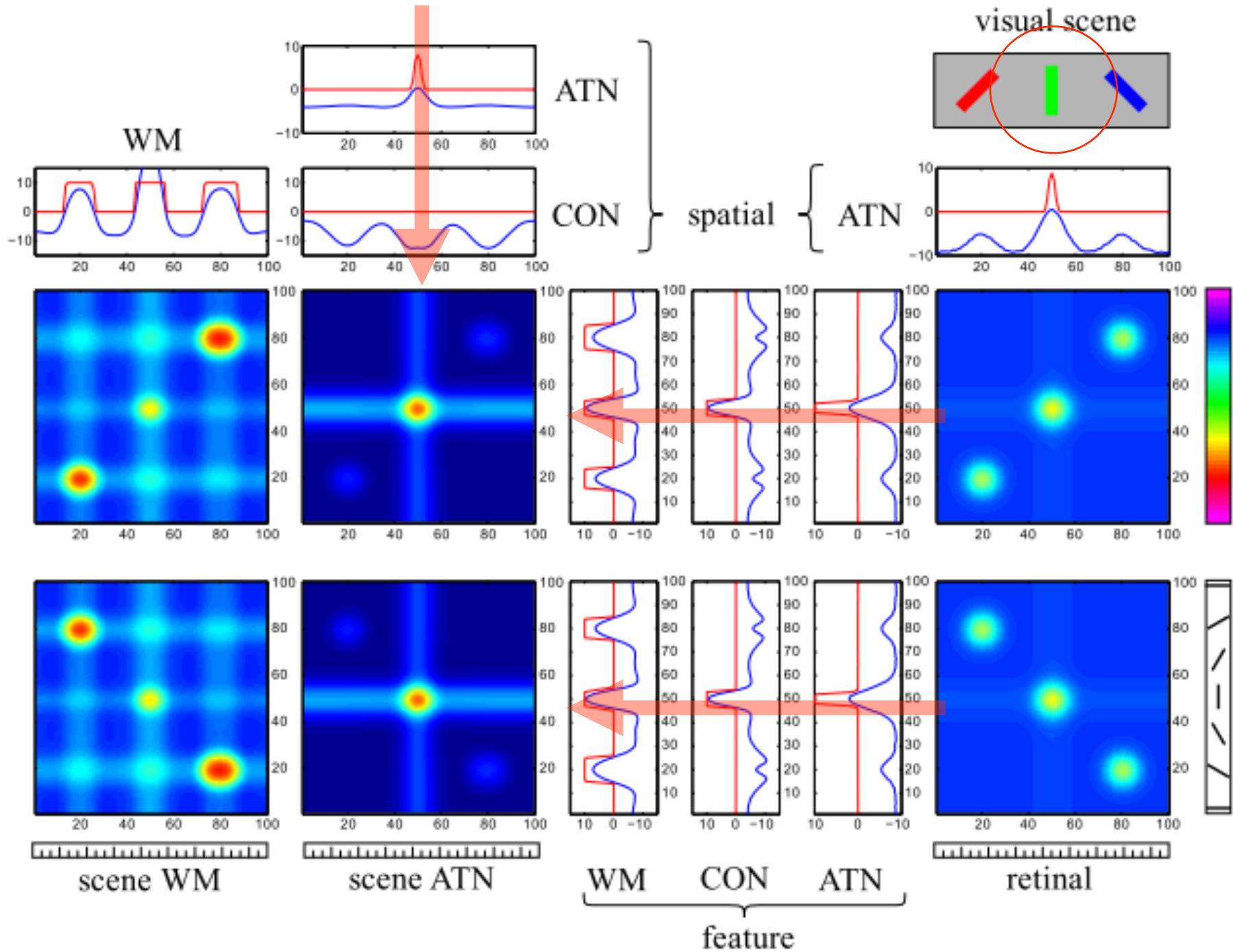


[Schneegans et al., Ch 5 of *DFT Primer*, 2016]

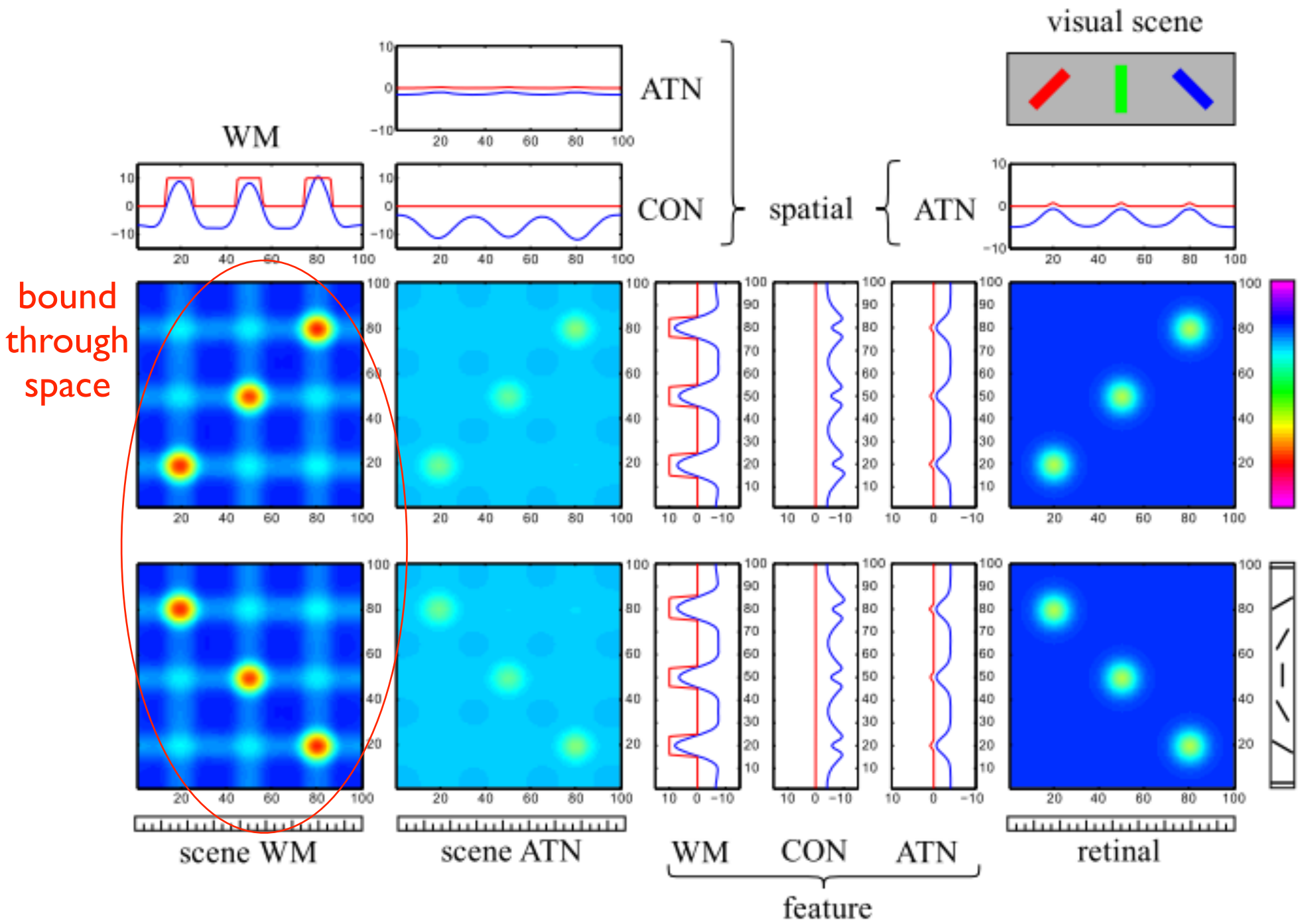
shared space

attend to this item





[Schneegans et al., Ch 5 of *DFT Primer*, 2016]



[Schneegans et al., Ch 5 of *DFT Primer*, 2016]

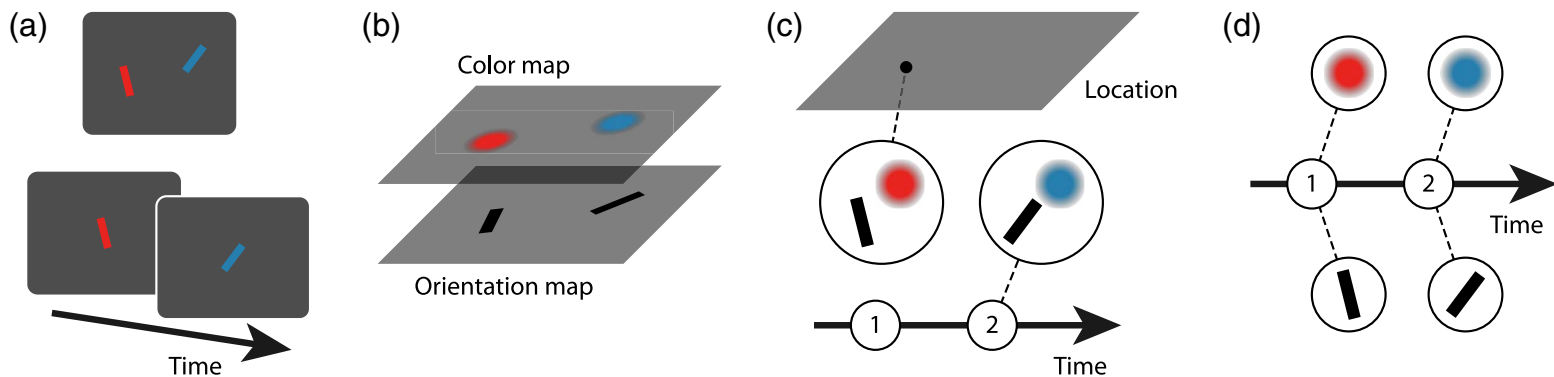
# Binding through space => sequential bottleneck

- binding through space must occur one time at a time..... to avoid binding problem
- => the sequential processing bottleneck may originate from this
- (more on this in a moment: coordinate transforms)

# Binding through ordinal position

- feature dimensions presented at the same time (in a sequence) are bound in working memory

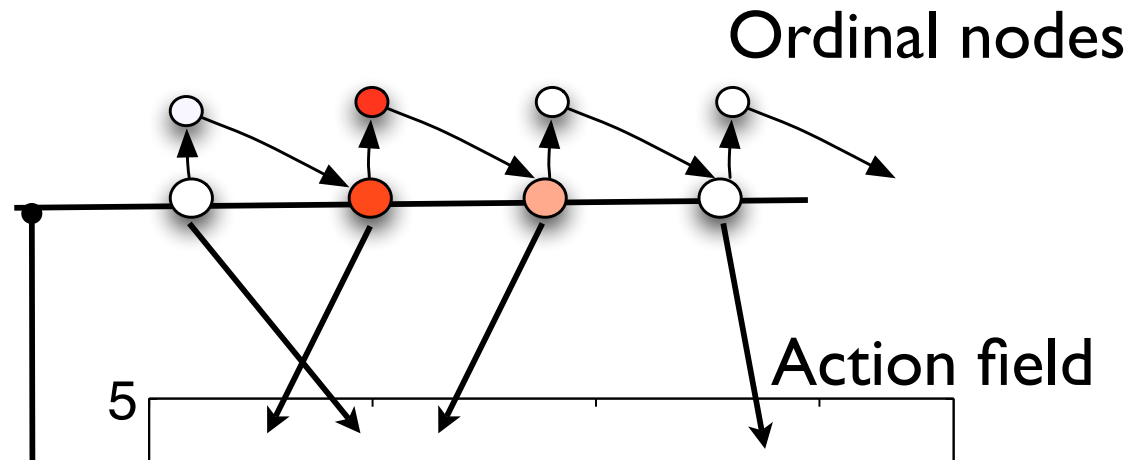
*Conceptual Models of Feature Binding*



[Schneegans, McMaster, Bays: *Psych Rev* 2022]

# Binding through ordinal position

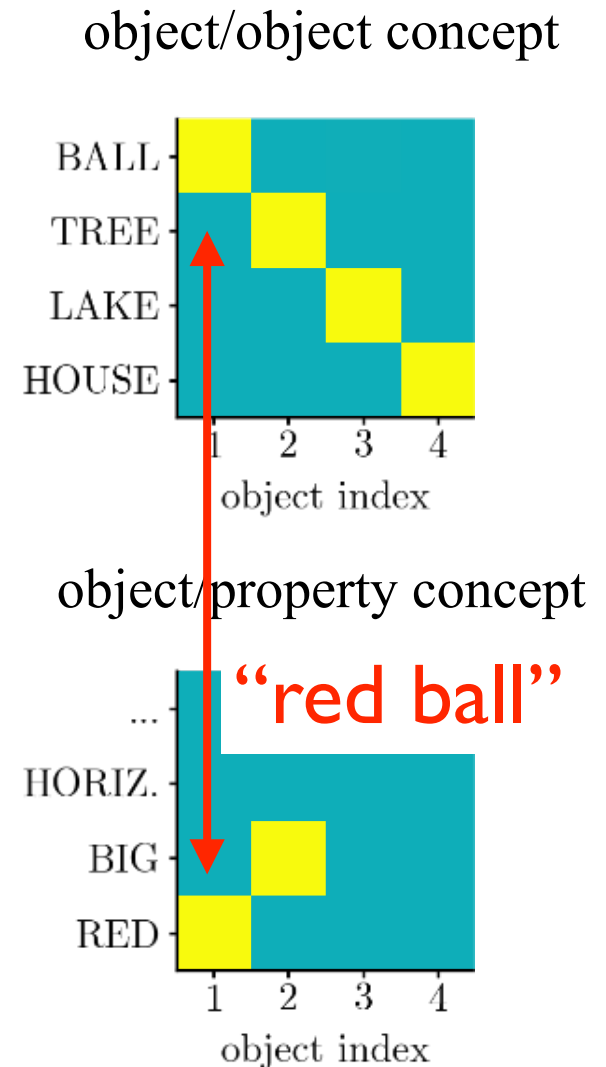
- ordinal position can be generated autonomously in DFT



[Sandamirskaya, Schöner, *Neural Networks*, 2010]

# Binding through ordinal position

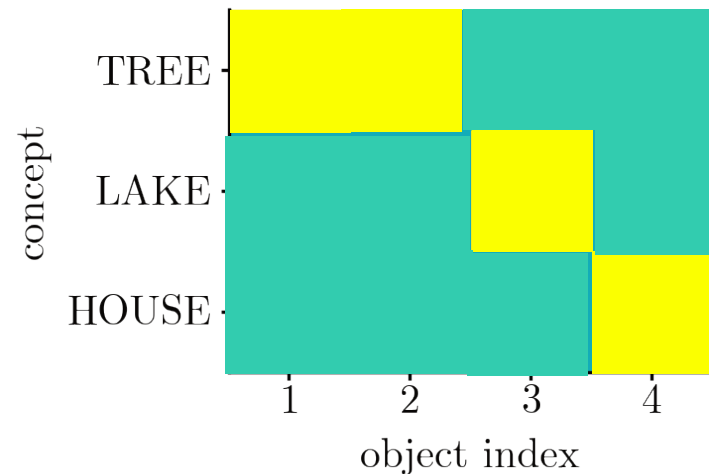
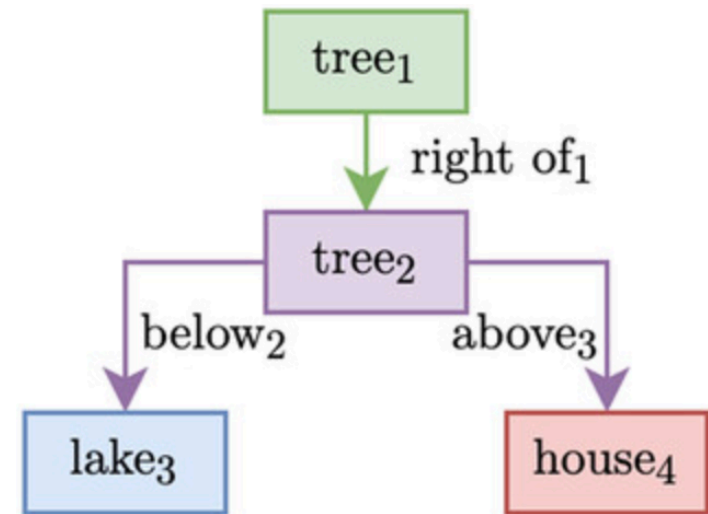
- using an ordinal position “index” to binds different concepts together





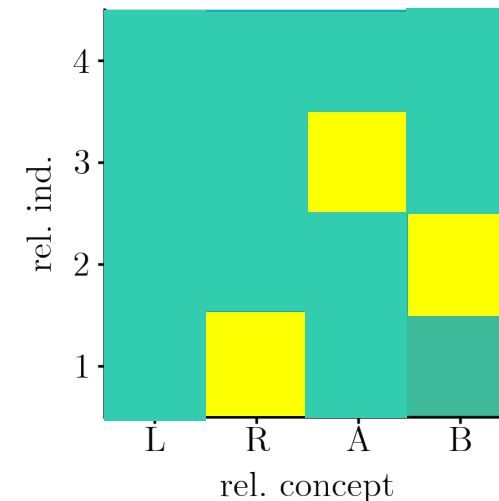
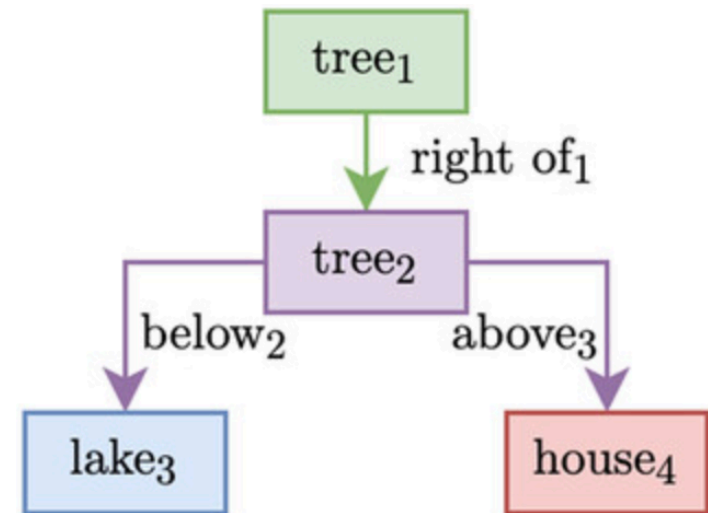
# Neural representation of conceptual structure

- (ordinal) object index
- separates two instantiations of “tree”
- solving the **problem of two**



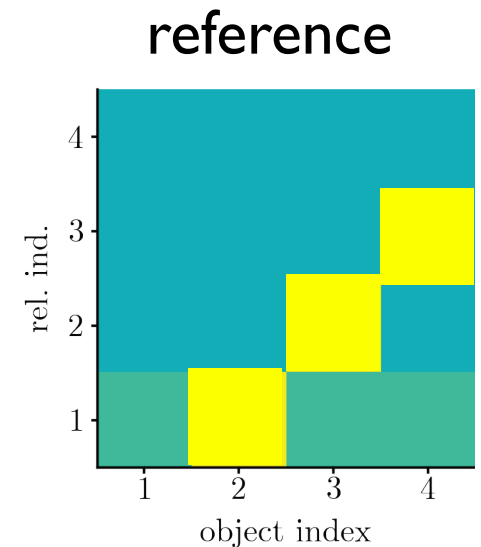
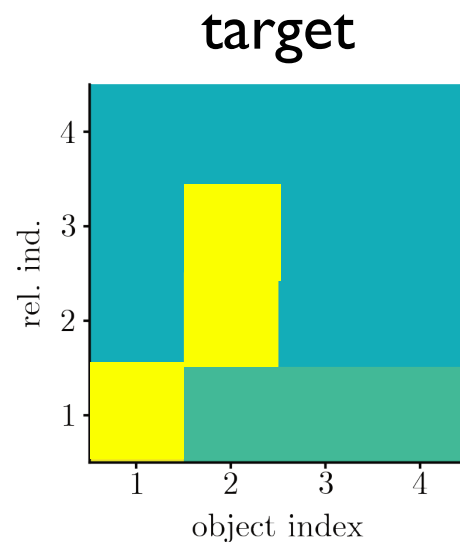
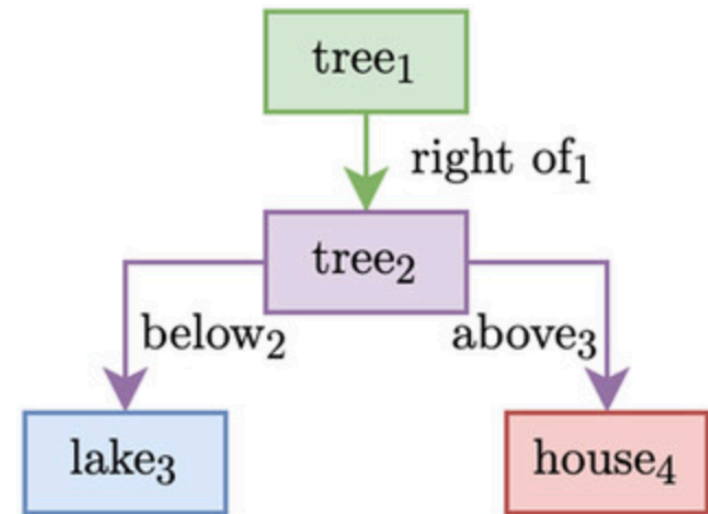
# Neural representation of conceptual structure

- (ordinal) relation index
- enables multiple instances of same relation in a nested phrase



# Neural representation of conceptual structure

- binding arguments in particular roles to relations
- through the index dimensions

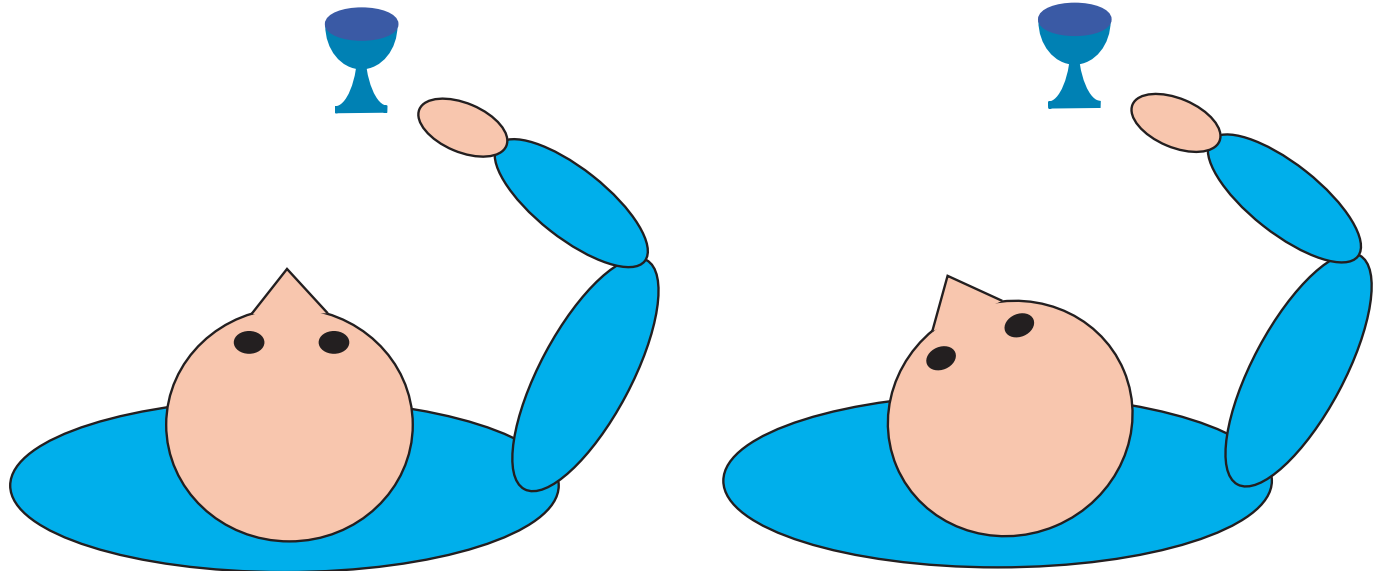


- Background: different notions of binding
- Joint representations and coupling patterns
- Binding through space/ordinal dimension
- Coordinate transforms

# Coordinate transforms

- are fundamental element to sensory-motor cognition
- [but critical also to mental operations! ]

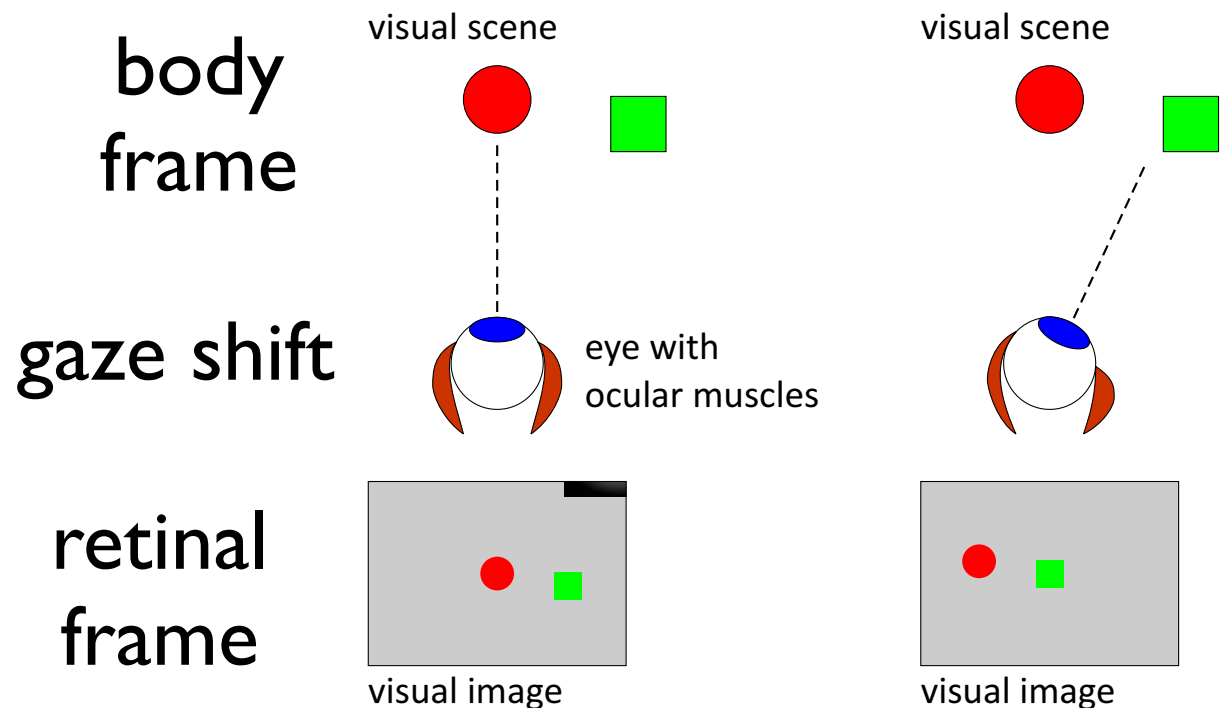
- example: reaching is guided by body-centered, not by retinal visual representation



# Coordinate transforms

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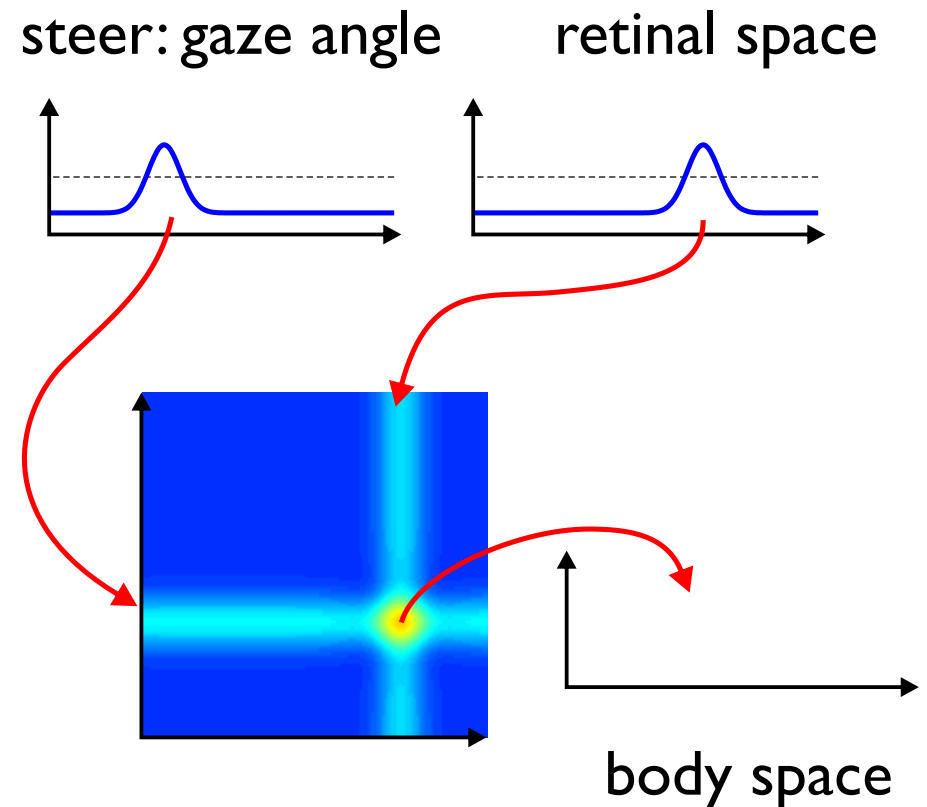


# Coordinate transforms

- can be achieved in DFT by
  - binding the “to-be-transformed space” and the “transforming” dimension into a joint representation
  - and the unbinding into the “transformed space”

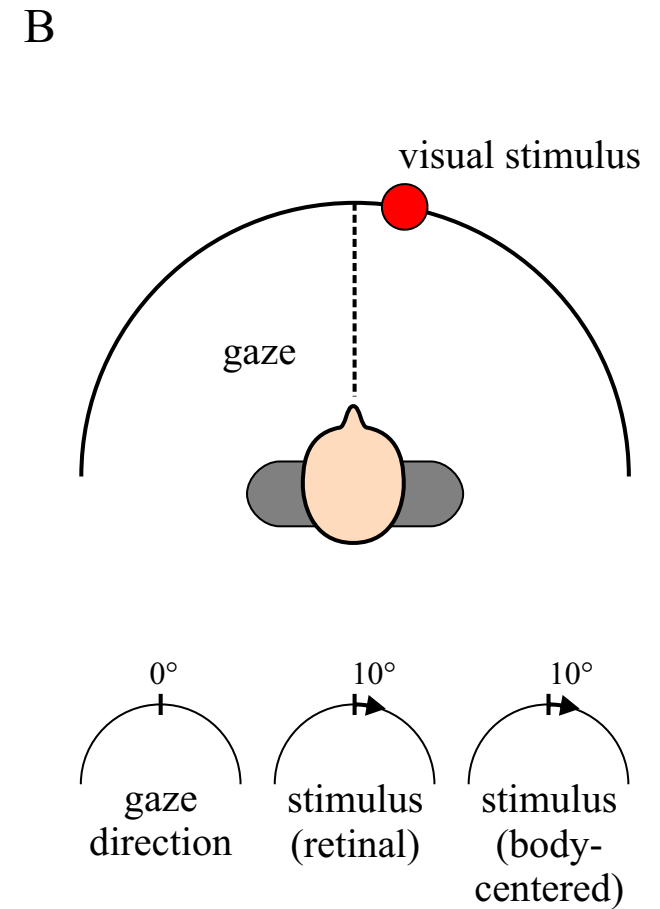
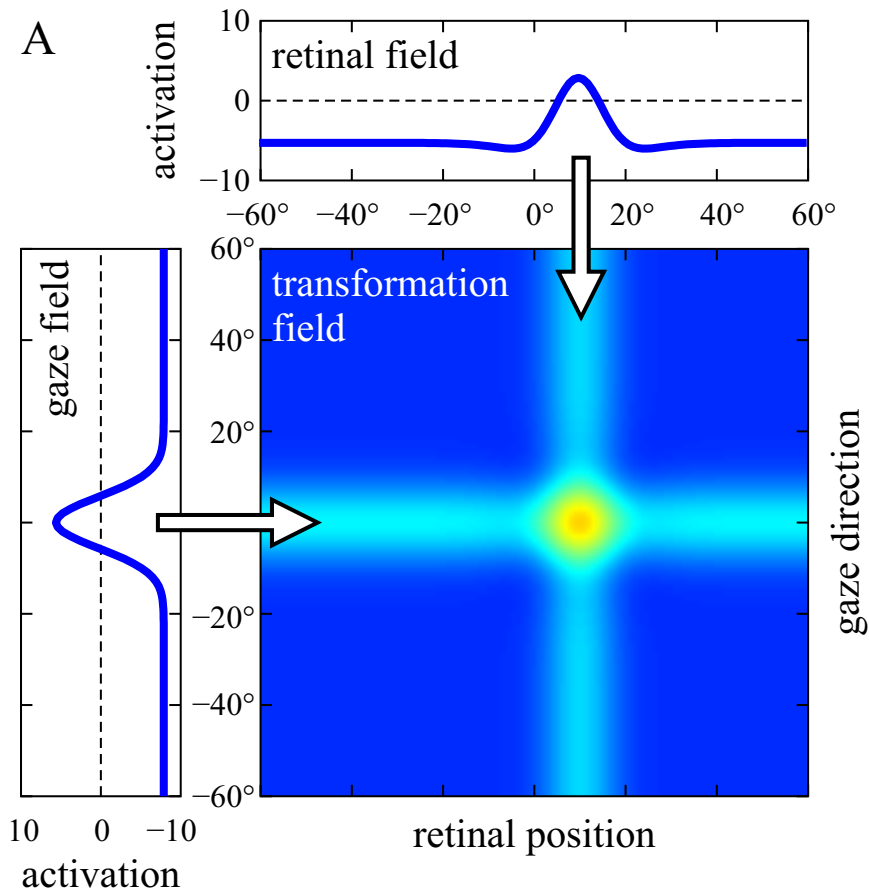
# Coordinate transforms

- bind neural representations of
  - retinal space
  - gaze angle
- into a joint representation
  - (gain field ~Andersen/Pouget)
- then contract to body space

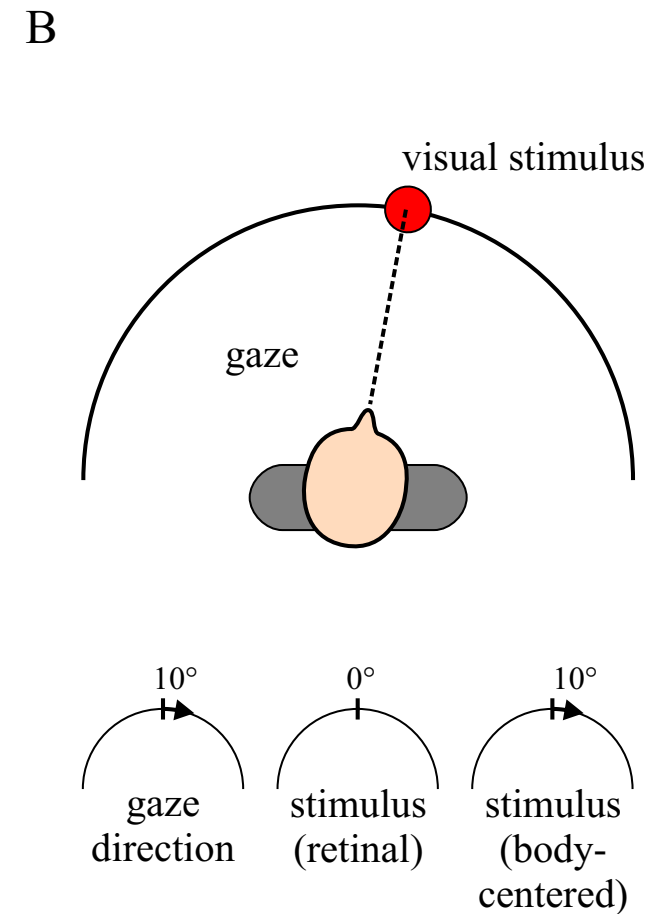
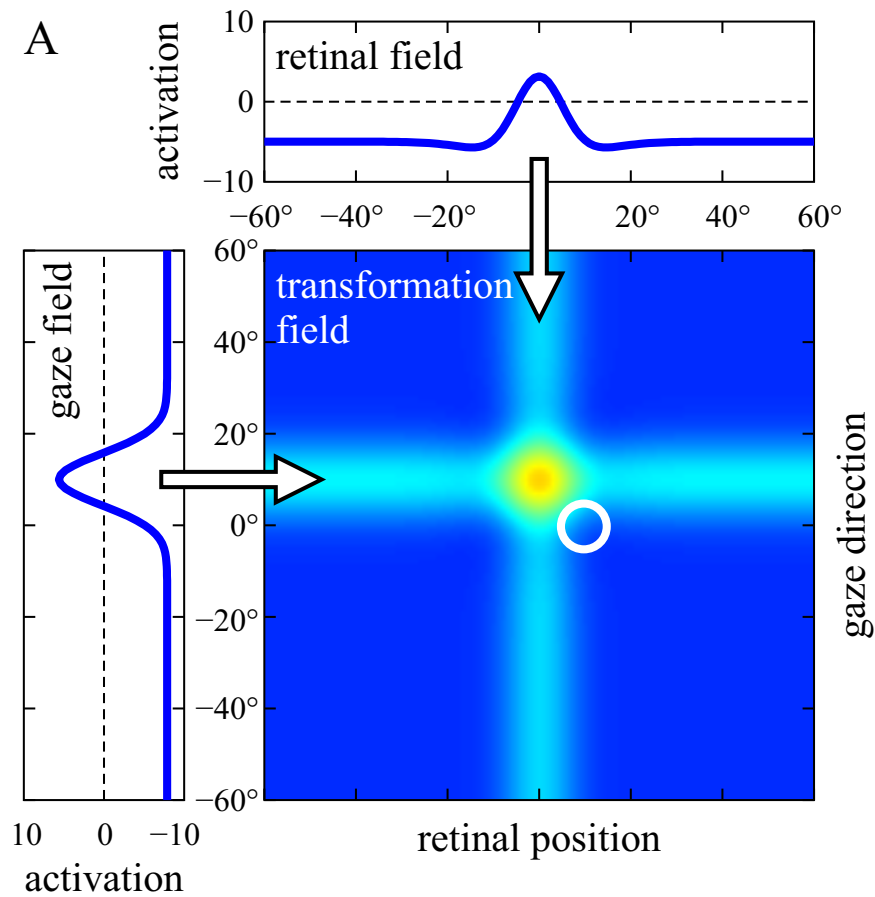




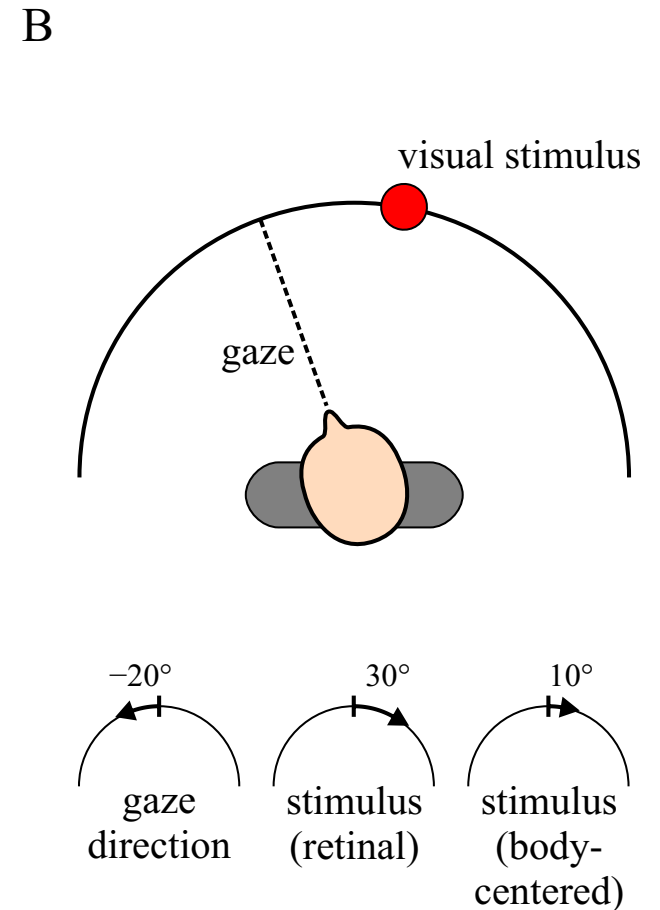
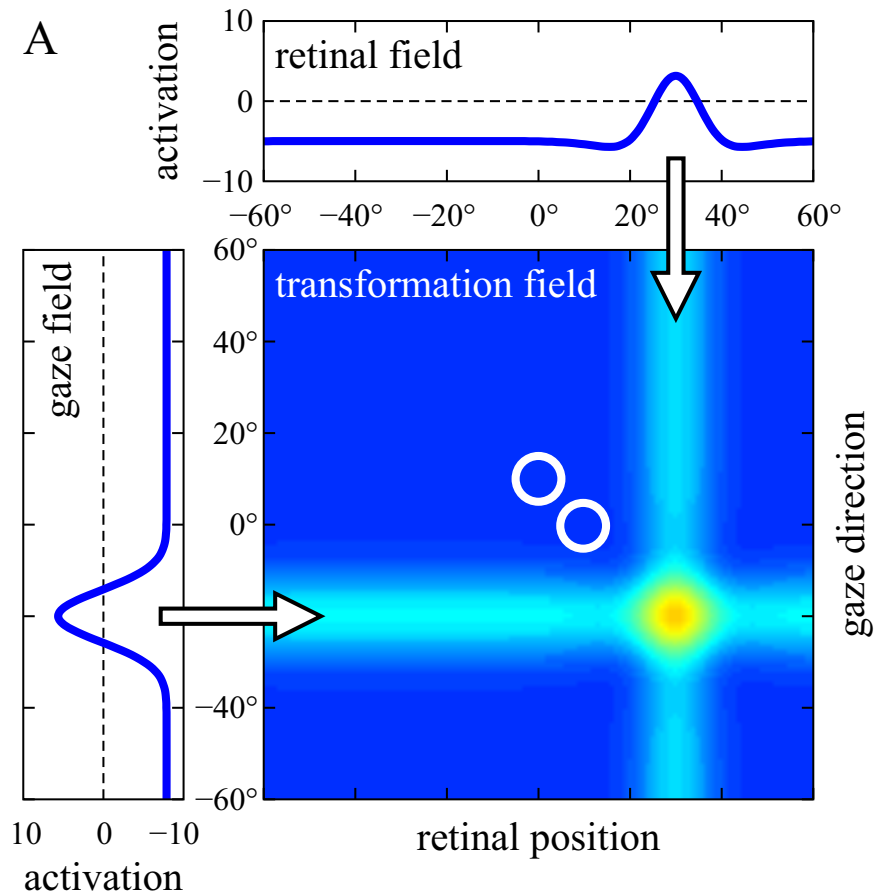
# Coordinate transform



# Coordinate transform

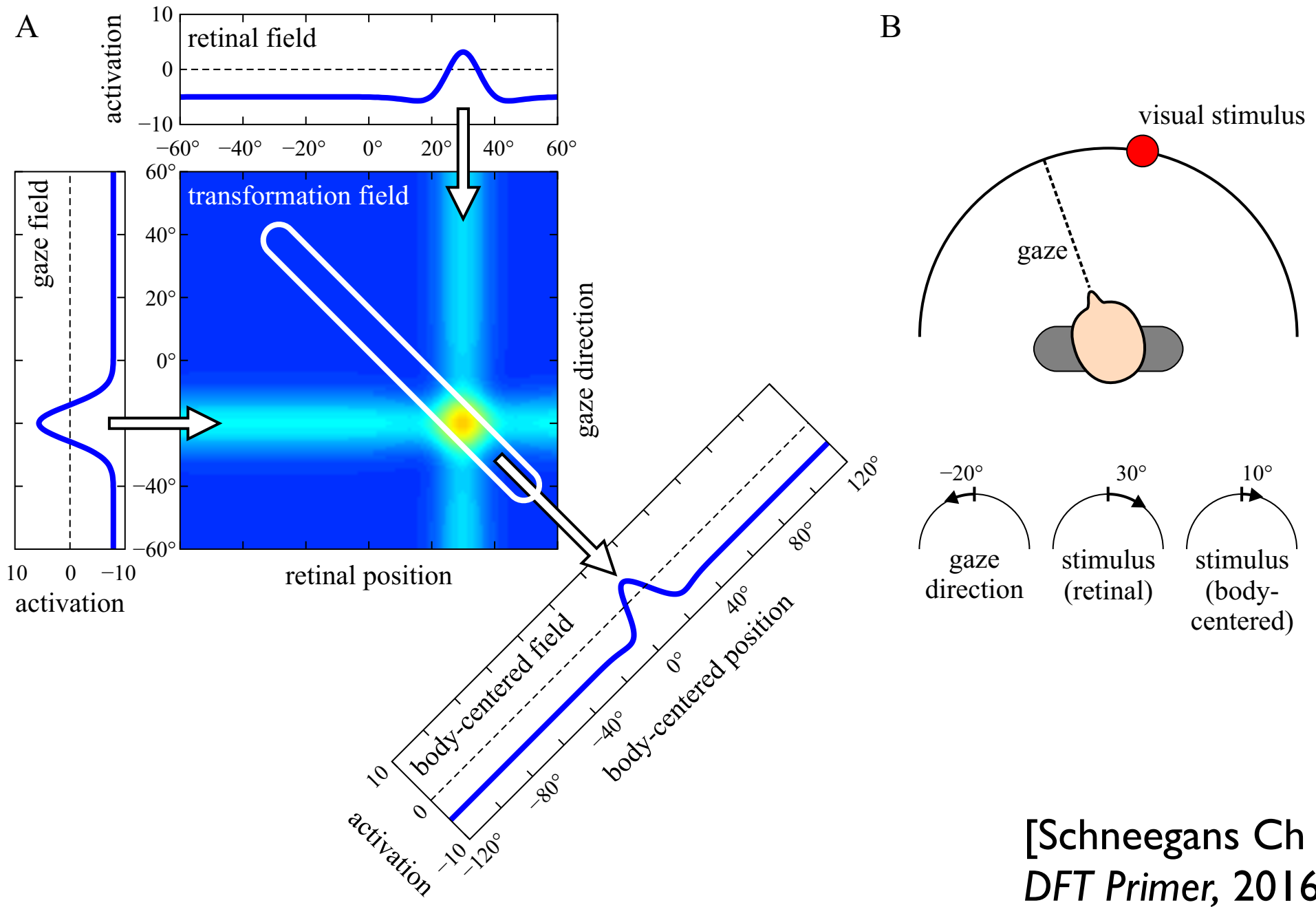


# Coordinate transform



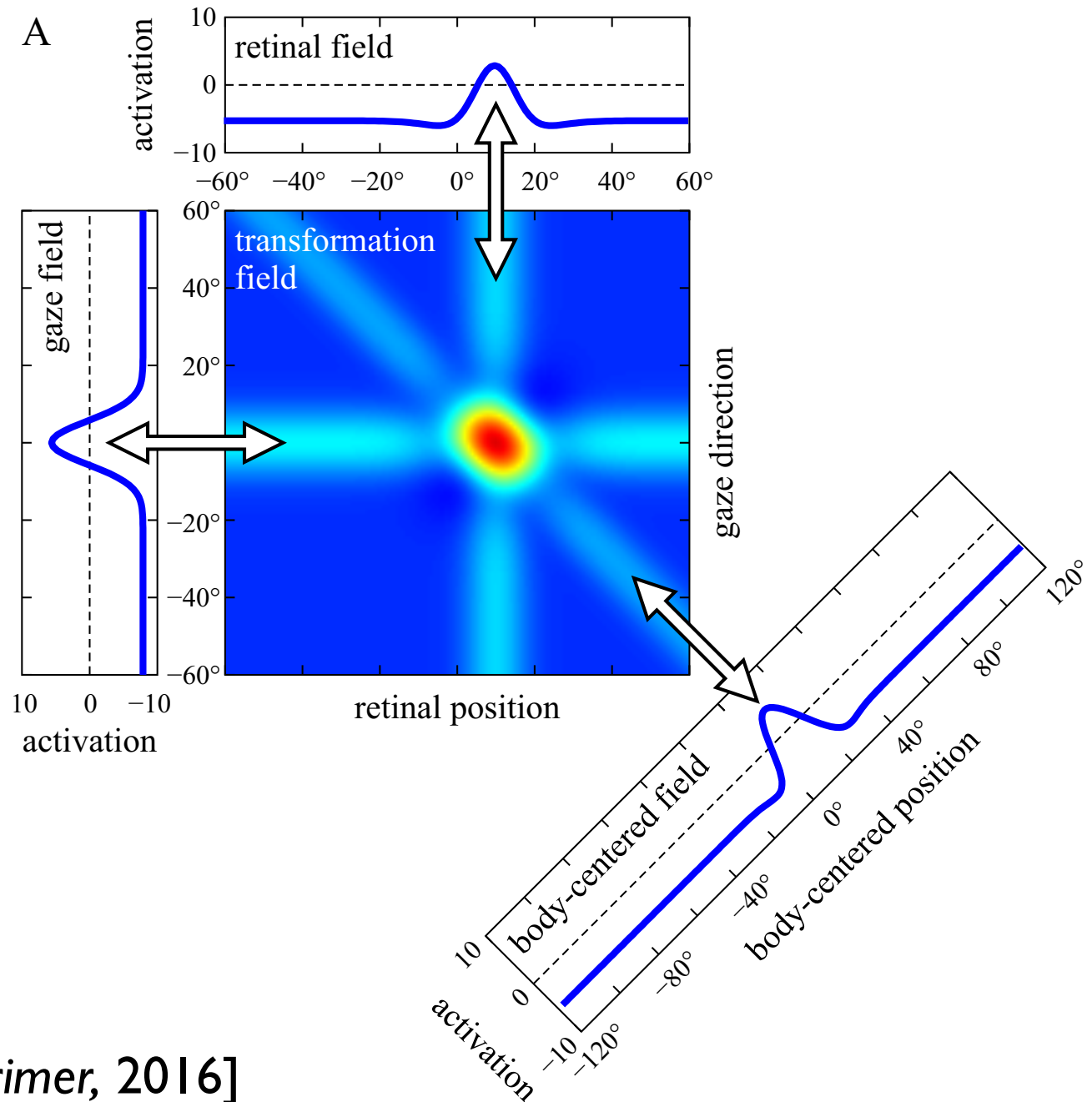


# Coordinate transform

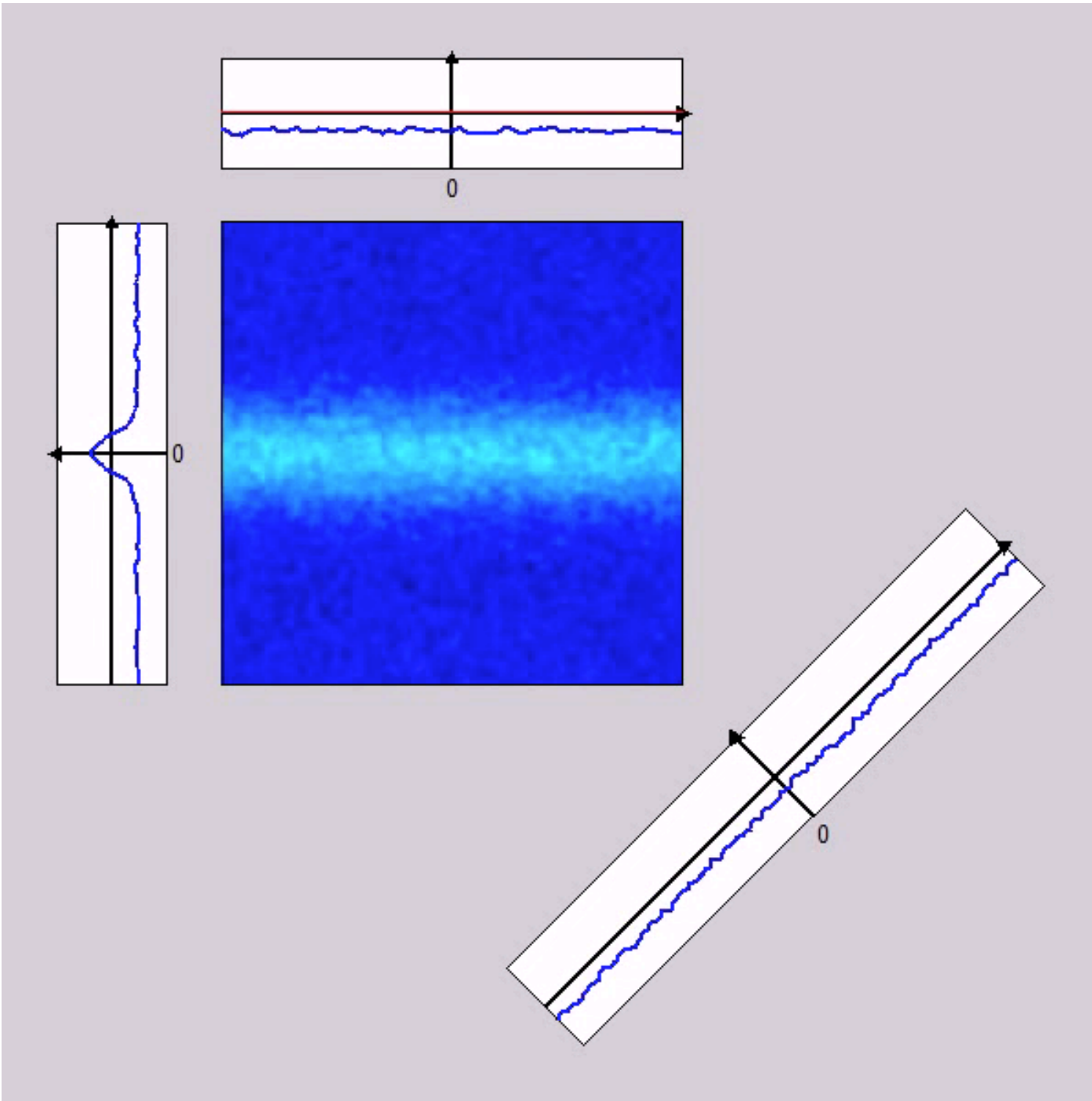


# Retina => body space

- bi-directional coupling
- => predict retinal coordinates



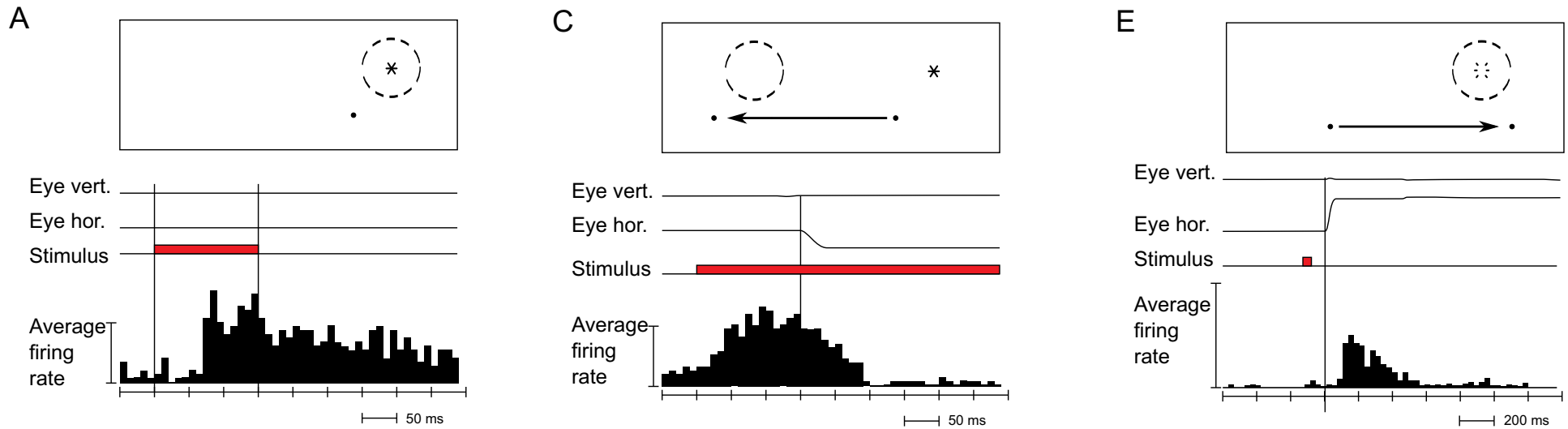
# Spatial remapping during saccades



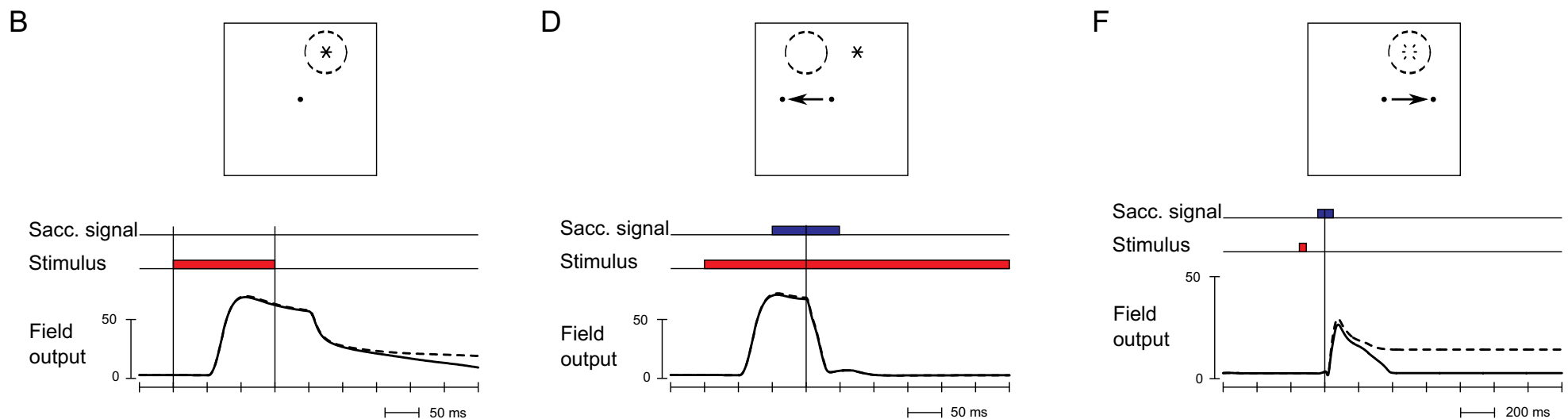
[Schneegans, Schöner *Biological Cybernetics* 2012]

# Accounts for predictive updating

[neural data: Duhamel, Colby, Goldberg, 1992, LIP]



[model: Schneegans, Schönner *Biological Cybernetics* 2012]



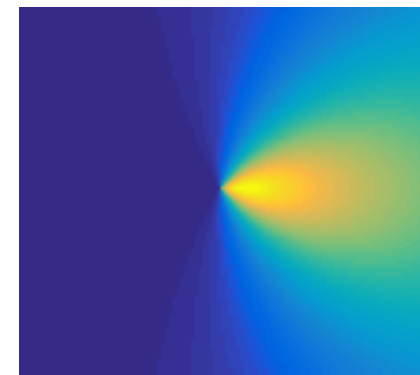


# Coordinate transforms for cognition

“green to the right of red”

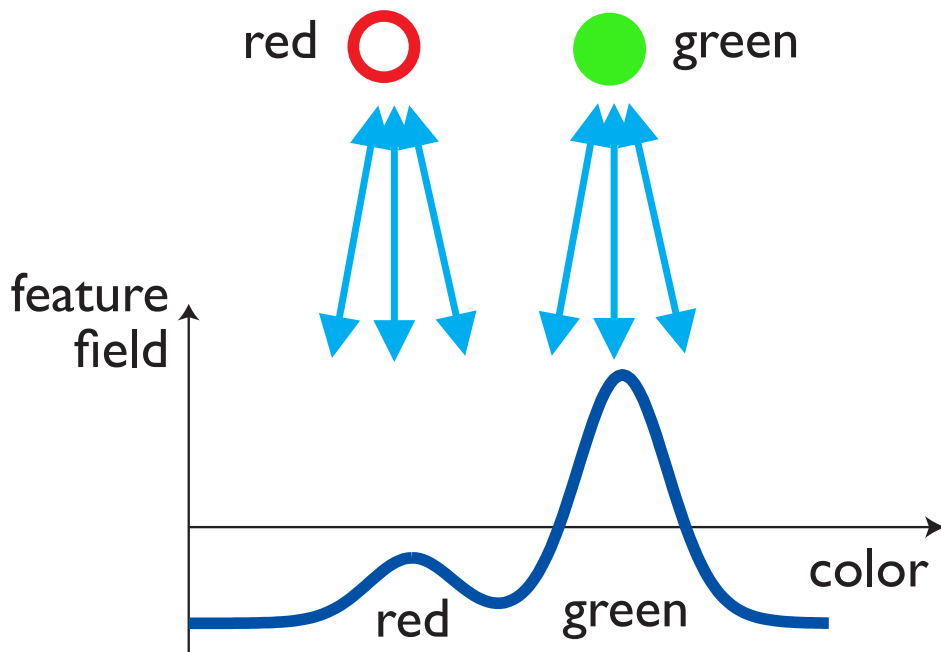
- to perceptually ground relations/actions etc
- use relational concepts that have patterned coupling

reference target



# Role-filler binding

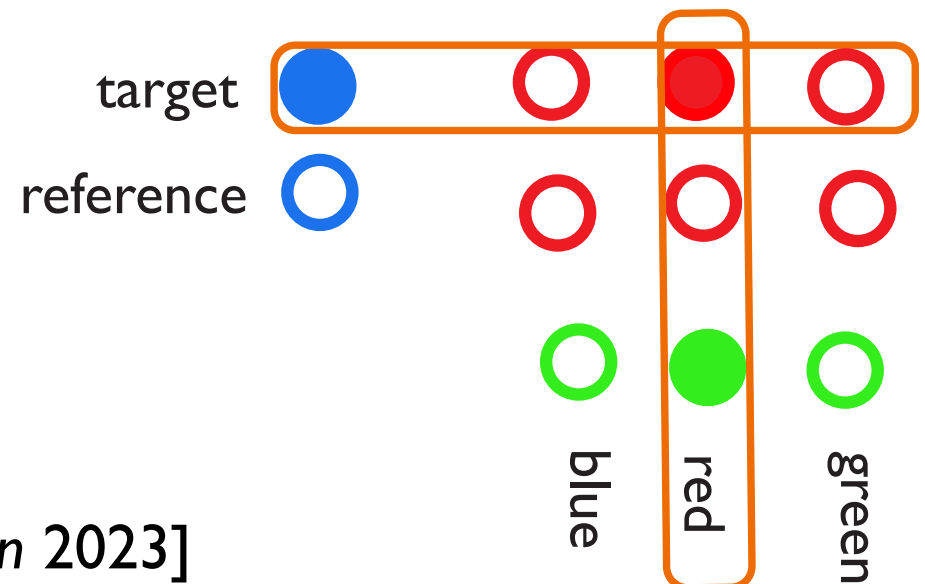
- color concepts... grounded in feature fields



- roles: reference, target, agent, tool, ...

“green to the right of red”  
target reference

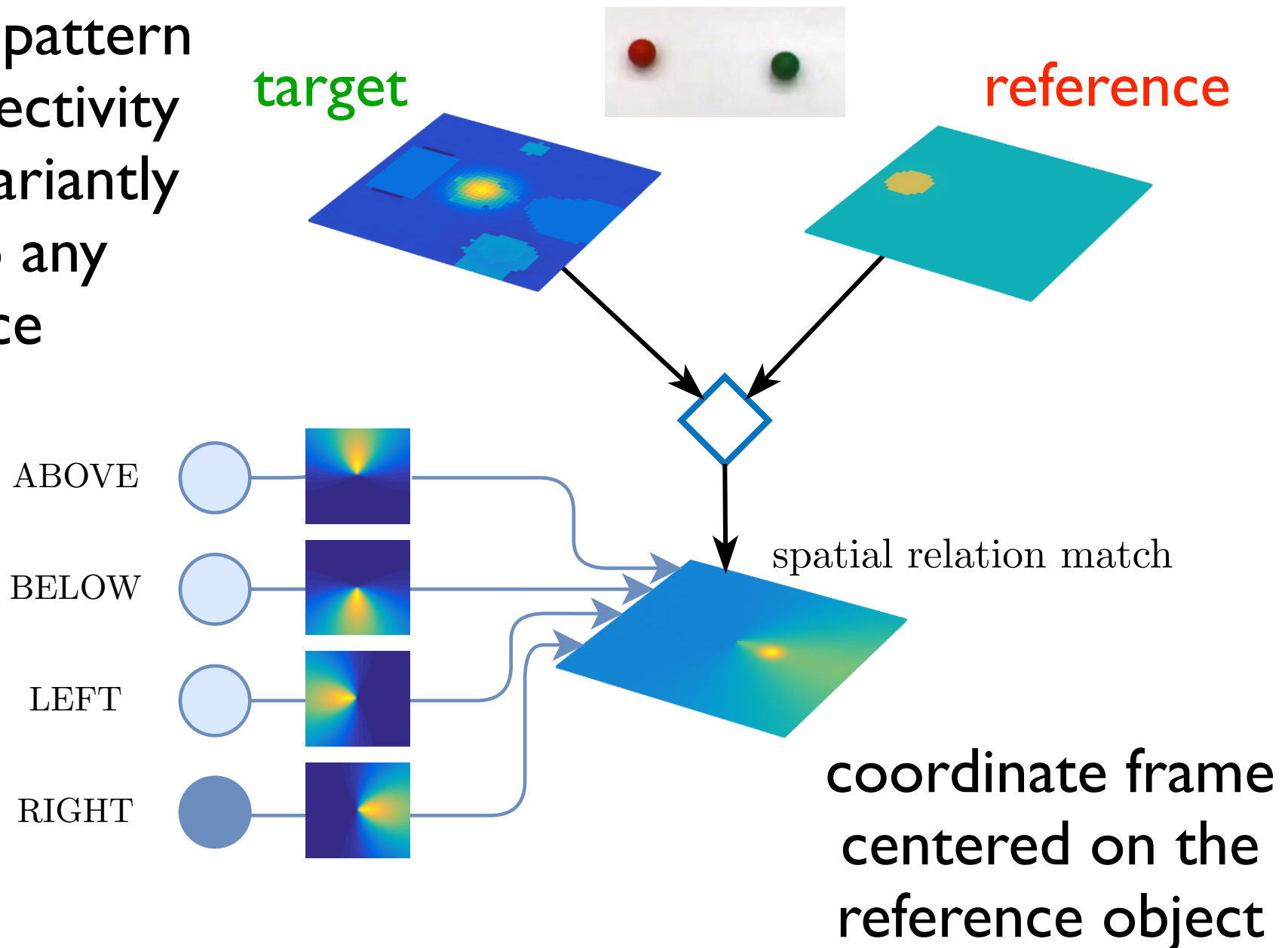
- joint representation of roles and concepts



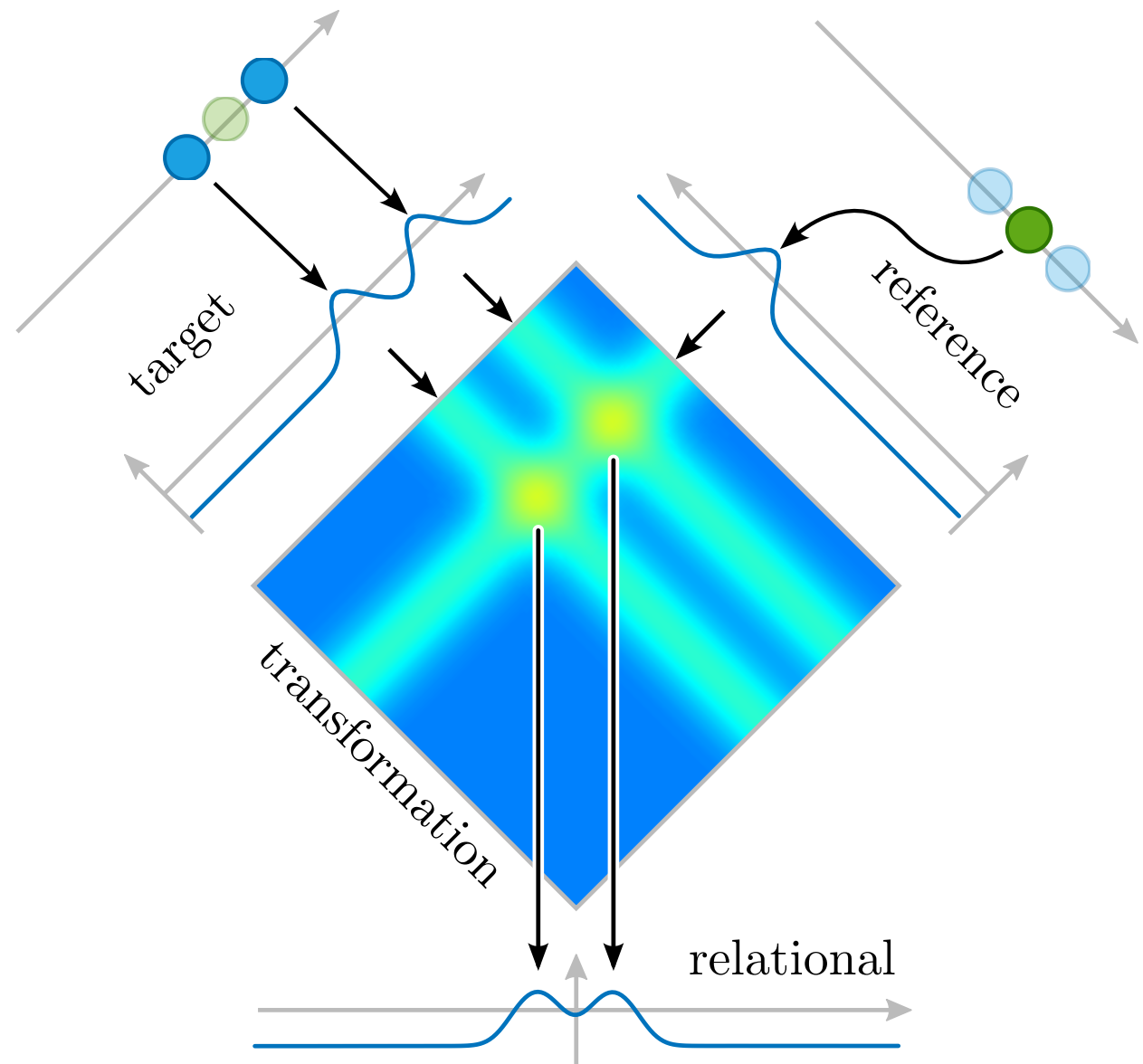
# Coordinate transforms for cognition

“green to the right of red”

- a single pattern of connectivity may invariantly apply to any reference objects



=>critical role of coordinate transforms for higher cognition

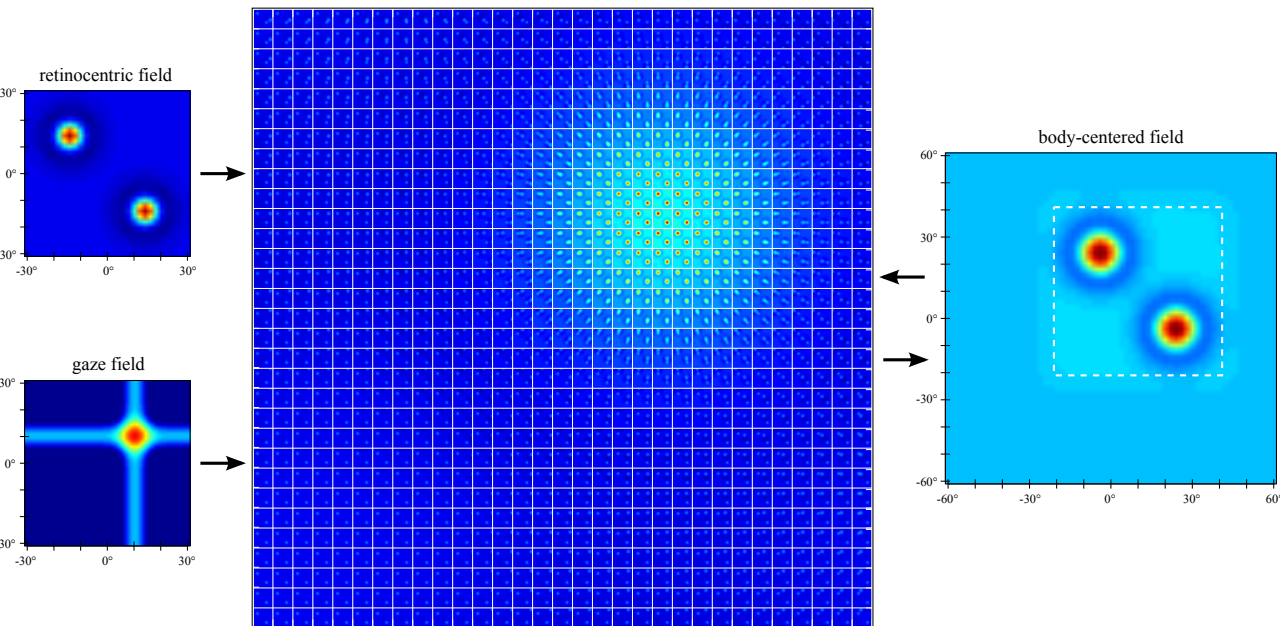


[Sabinasz, Richter,  
Schöner: Cog  
Neurodyn 2023]

# Coordinate transforms and binding through space

- to coordinate transform feature fields...
- do we need a joint representation of each space-feature field with the transforming dimension?
- No!
- coordinate transform space only!
- transport the feature values by binding through space!

# Coordinate transforms and binding through space



- coordinate transform space only!
- transport the feature values by binding through space!

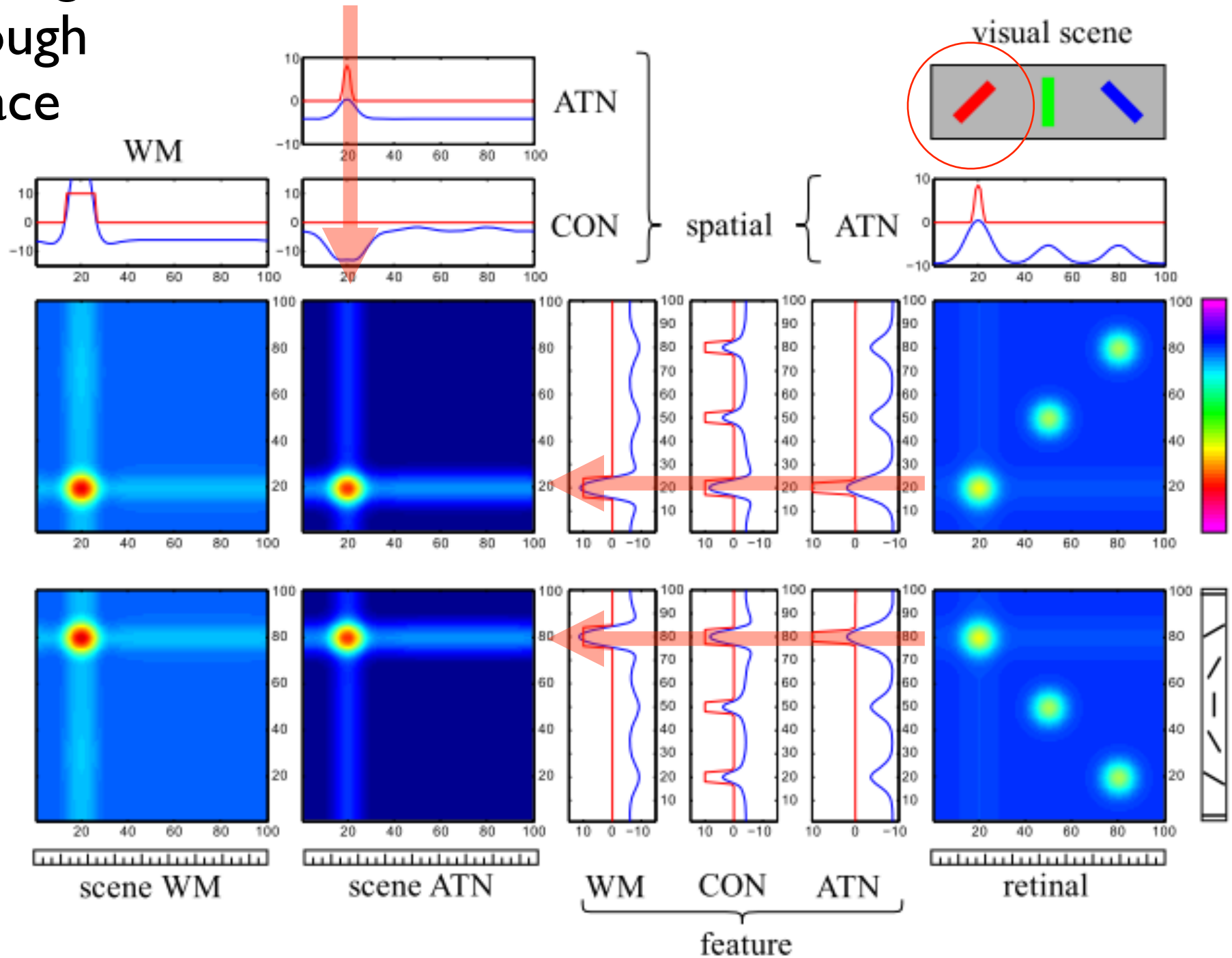
# Coordinate transforms and binding through space

- => binding through space (and the attentional bottleneck this implies) radically simplifies coordinate transforms
- parietal cortex (where gain fields are) may do coordinate transforms for every feature/category representation!

binding  
through  
space

shared space

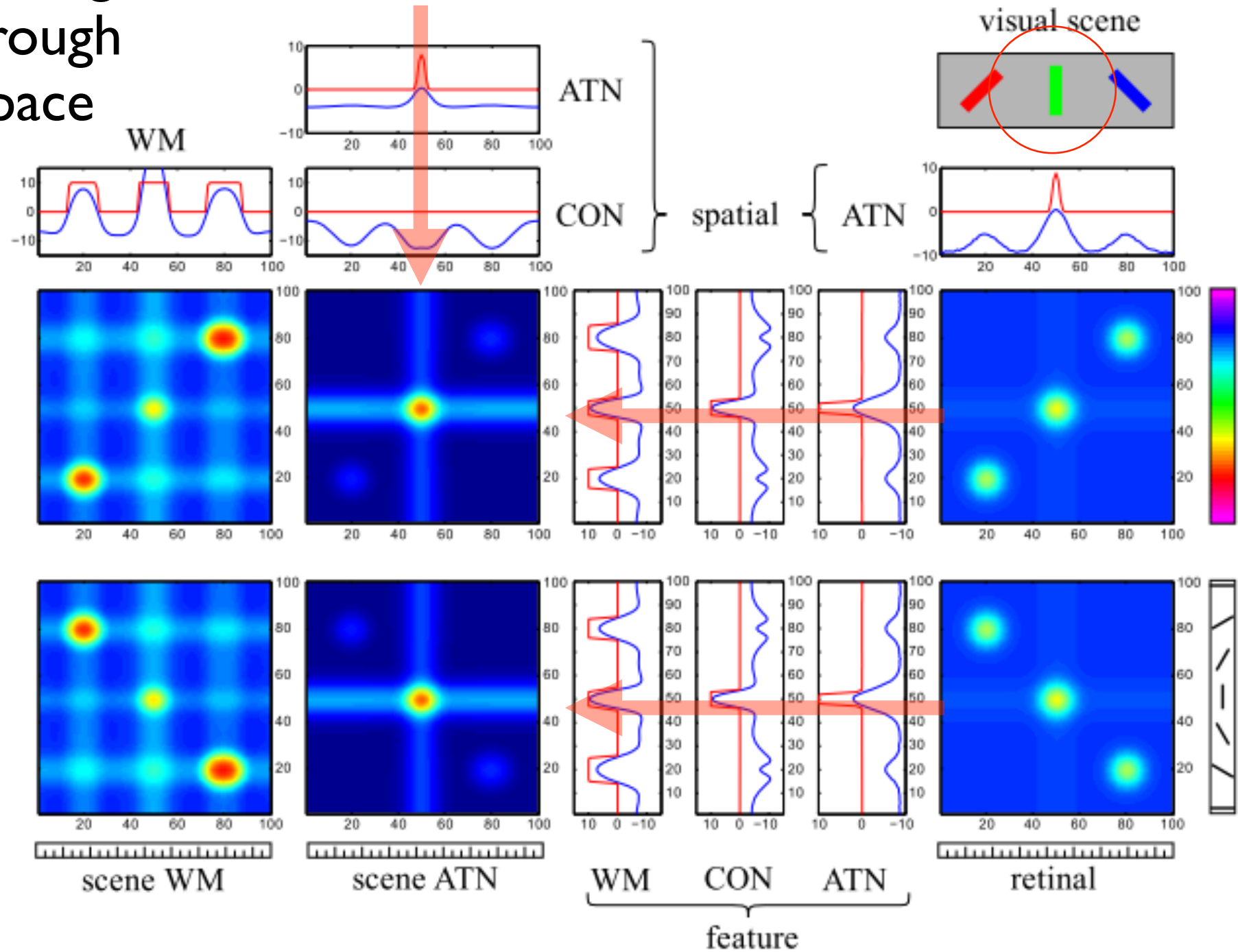
attend to this item



[Schneegans et al., Ch 8 of *DFT Primer*, 2016]



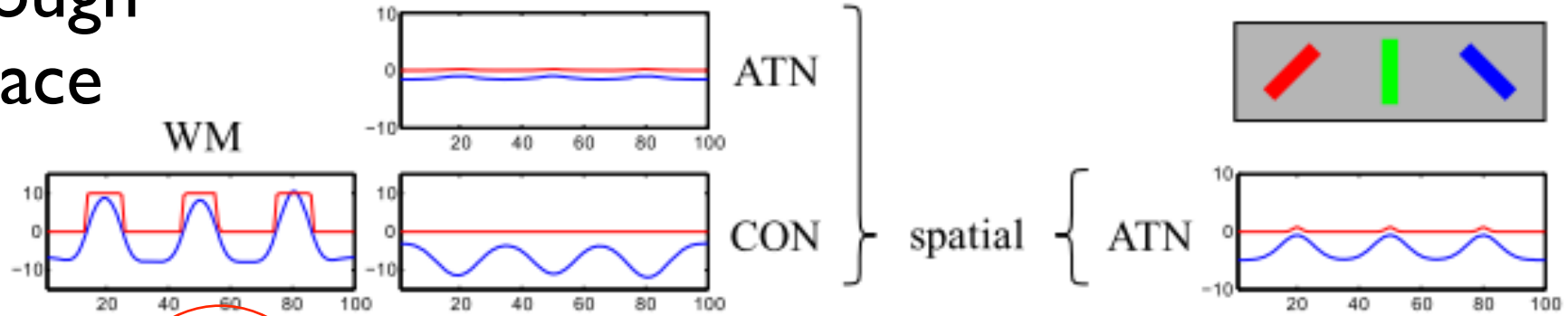
binding  
through  
space



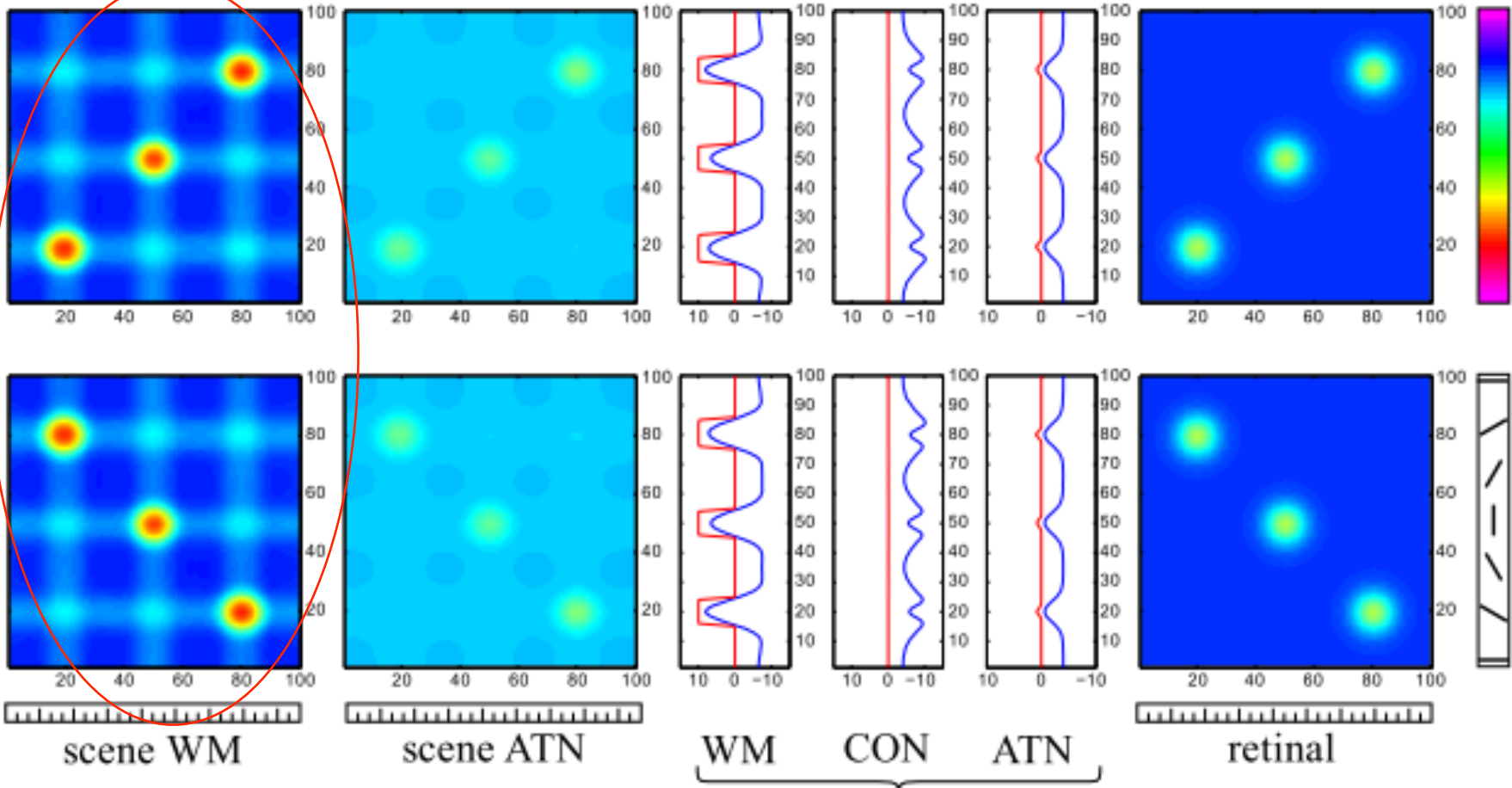
[Schneegans et al., Ch 5 of *DFT Primer*, 2016]

binding  
through  
space

visual scene



bound  
through  
space



[Schneegans et al., Ch 5 of *DFT Primer*, 2016]

that space contains the coordinate transform!

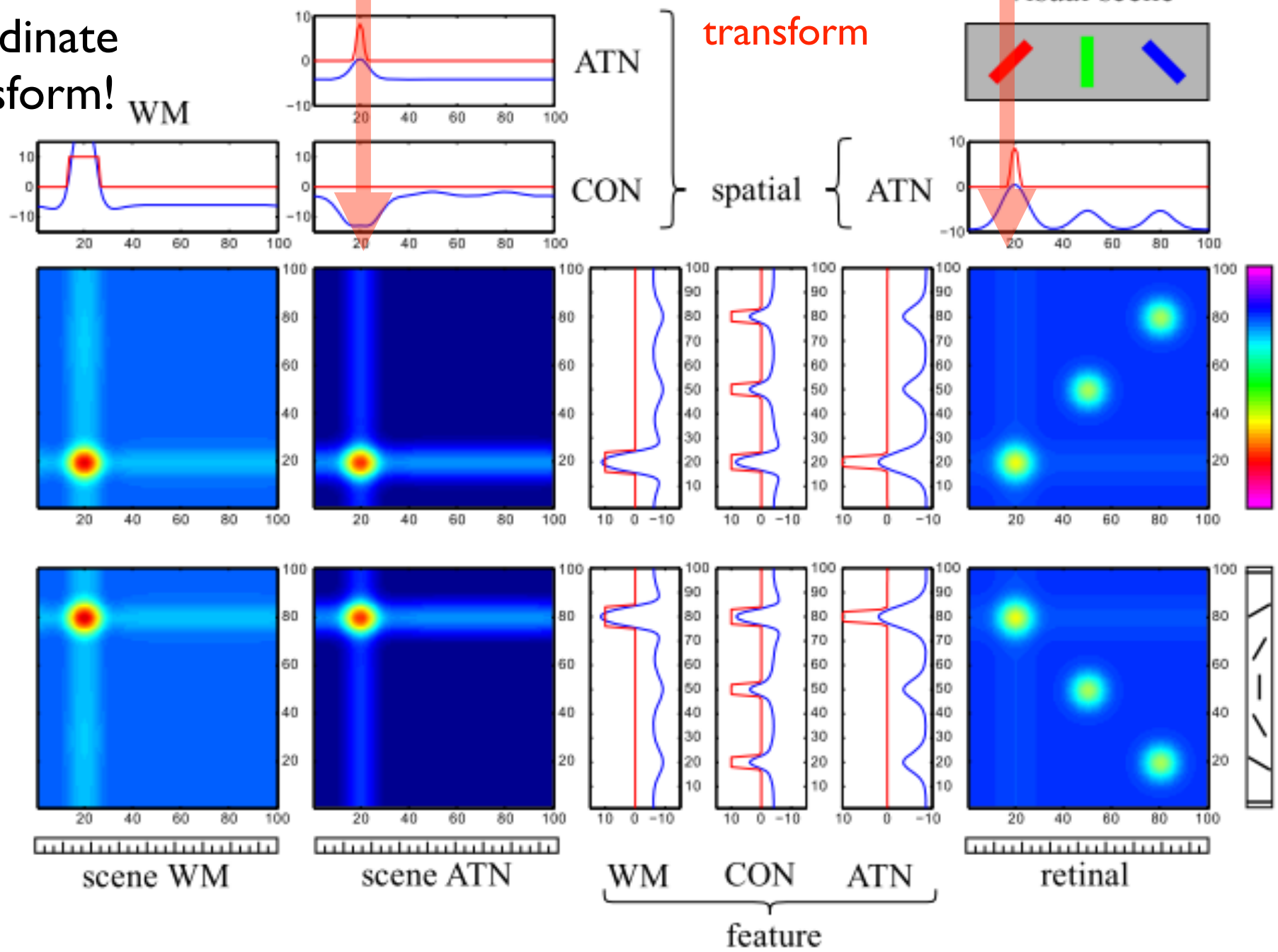
allocentric space

retinal space



coordinate transform

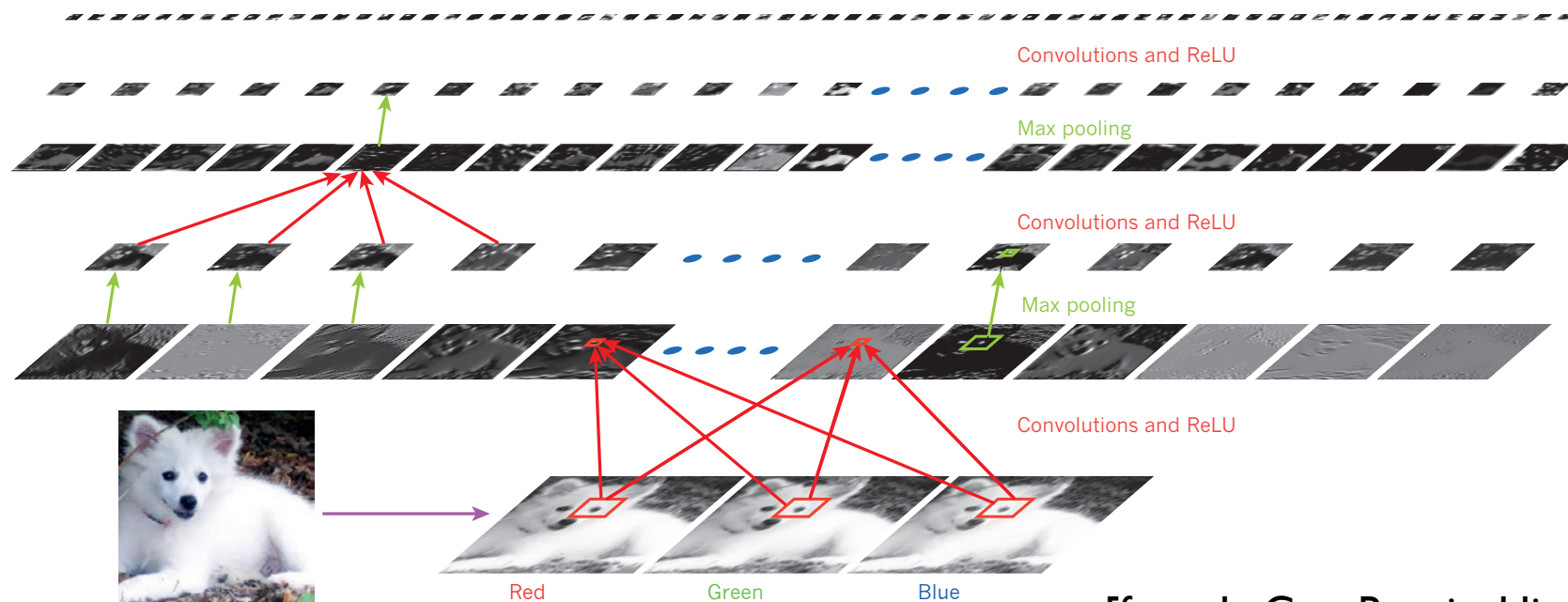
visual scene



- Background: different notions of binding
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- Coordinate transforms

# Is there a binding problem for DNN?

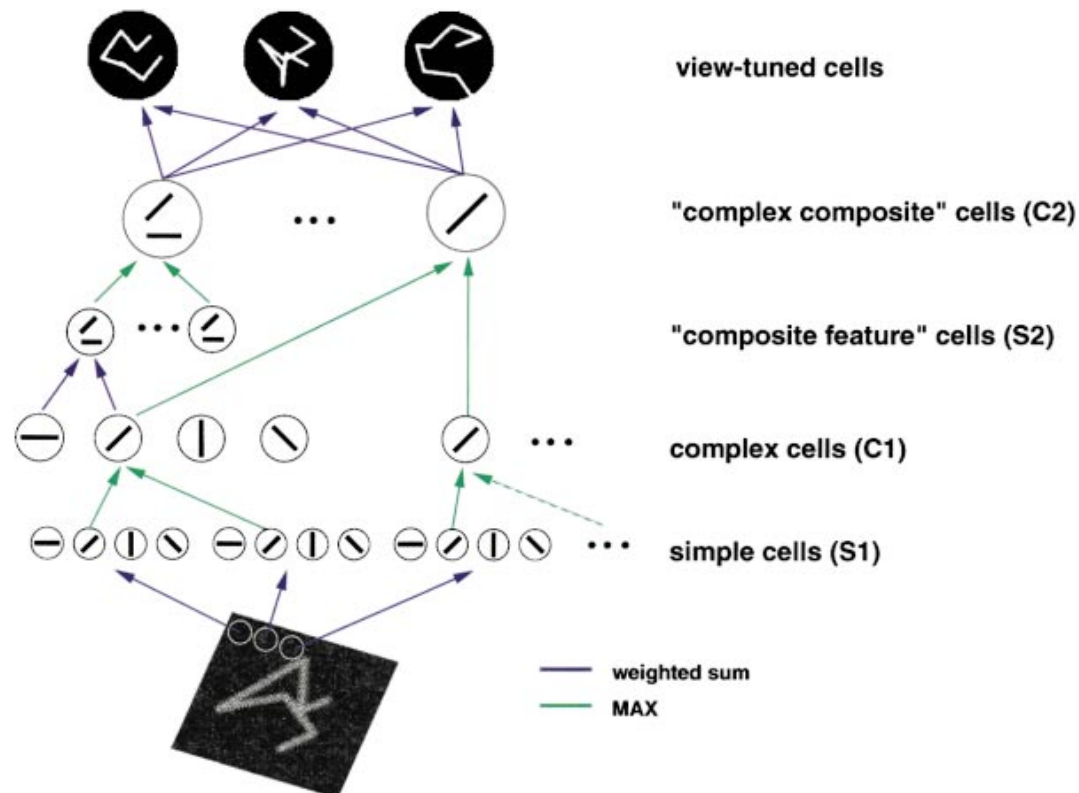
- ... old debate Poggio.von der Malsburg.. [*Neuron* 99]
- complex learned features are represented jointly distributed across a DNN... hidden layers





# Is there a binding problem for DNN?

- binding by joint representation is not flexible!



# Roadmap

## ■ next lectures:

■ sequence generation

■ grounding conceptual structure

■ analogy

■ intentionality