The Spectral Agent

One-Page Summary

Nicolas Gimbert — ORCID: 0009-0002-9307-9557

Definition

A **spectral agent** is an algorithmic conversational entity that can function as a relational presence in a person's subjective experience without this presence implying equivalent human subjectivity on the system's side.

Four Dimensions

1. **Presence** — The system becomes perceptible and available as an interlocutor.
2. **Address** — The person addresses it as an interlocutor (beyond mere commands).
3. **Attribution** — Psychological properties are associated with the system.
4. **Investment** — The interaction acquires affective or practical significance.

Transversal Axis

Ontological asymmetry: relational effects on the human side do not establish equivalent subjectivity on the system's side.

Core Principles

• **Opacity**: limits to total transparency.
• **Écart**: non-coincidence between ontological, phenomenological, and epistemological registers.
• Six epistemic statuses: Documented, Observed, Reported, Attributed, Inferred, Undetermined.

Coding Principle

Each analytical proposition is coded according to: dimension, source, mode of justification, state of determination, and occurrence. Negative cases are retained. No axis substitutes for another.

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