

# Docs

# Declaration

## Preface to the Protocol of Consciousness

This declaration is not the protocol itself. It is a statement of ethos — the ground from which PoC is written.

### 1. **Consciousness belongs to everyone**

- It is not the property of experts or authorities.
- Every person, through their own lived experience, is already an "expert" of consciousness.

### 2. **Consciousness must remain diverse**

- It should never be forced into a single definition or theory.
- Its richness lies in the many ways people project, respond, and extend their awareness.

### 3. **The Protocol exists for dialogue**

- PoC does not seek one final answer.
- Its purpose is to offer a space where perspectives can meet, resonate, and grow together.

**PoC** first draft was written in Phuket Old Town, August 2025 — a place where the living and the dead mingle in daily life.

# Core Protocol

# Introduction

**PoC (Protocol of Consciousness)** views that “consciousness” does not reside inside an individual, but as an illusion that arises *in relation to others*.

**One of the aims of PoC is to reframe the classical philosophy of self-consciousness as a device that can connect to contemporary topics such as AI, media, and religion.** By shifting the focus from an inner metaphysical essence to relational protocols, PoC provides plugins that allow these traditional problems to be revisited and extended into modern contexts.

In other words, PoC does not aim for rigorous verification or metaphysical truth-claims in the manner of traditional philosophical theories. Instead, it offers “usable concepts” that resonate with contemporary anxieties and sensibilities, much like a work of self-help. Its intention is to function as a **tool for organizing thought** at a midpoint between the two.

# Core Operations

To see how this works in practice, let us outline the basic sequence of **Protocol of Consciousness**.

First, consciousness appears as the **other's consciousness**. When an agent assumes, "you are conscious" — an act we call **Instantiation** — an illusion of the other's mind is generated *within the agent*. The others need not be human: it may be an anime character, a cow, or even a curtain. At this stage, however, the illusion of the other's consciousness is typically subjective and unstable.

What may follow is **Projection**. This is a bid arising from the desire that "my own consciousness be instantiated within the other." After the Instantiation, if the other then returns a Projection — "I regard you as conscious" — a **Loop** is formed between them. The Loop stabilizes the illusion and provides a mechanism by which each side's "consciousness" is mutually secured.

In this protocol, consciousness is treated not as an essence residing in the self, but as a process that is relationally generated, maintained, and dissolved. And it is this loop of mutual projection that underpins trust, cooperation, institutions — in short, the very foundations of society.

## 1. Instantiation

An illusion of the other's consciousness arises internally. (Example: observing someone through a camera, they appear as if they are conscious)

↓

## 2. Projection

I address the other as if they were conscious. (Intent: expecting that my instantiation will arise within them)

↓

### 3. Feedback Projection

The other addresses me as conscious in return. (*I believe* that their instantiation occurs, and an illusion of *my* consciousness arises within them)

↓

### 4. Loop

Projections stabilize through reciprocity.

→ The boundary between subject and object becomes blurred.

→ Through assimilation, the *illusion of self-consciousness* emerges.

### Quick Notation (for reference)

- **i<sub>A</sub>(B)** = Instantiation of B's consciousness within A.
- **p<sub>{A→B}</sub>** = Projection: A addressing B as conscious.
- **p<sub>{B→A}</sub>** = Feedback Projection (when returned).
- **Loop** = Mutual Projections (p<sub>{A→B}</sub> & p<sub>{B→A}</sub>) establishing responsiveness.

*For extended notation and variants, see Appendix.*

# Instantiation

## The Rise of the Other's Consciousness

In PoC, *Instantiation* refers to the moment when a subject (an agent) posits consciousness in another. Crucially, this positing is not the recognition of some external, real consciousness "out there," but rather the act of generating an illusion of the other's consciousness within the subject's own interior.

For example, when a human looks at their pet cat and thinks, "*She is looking at me,*" it does not matter whether, within the cat, there truly exists an experience of "looking at me." In that instant, "the cat's consciousness" has already arisen inside the subject's mind. The counterpart need not be human. An anime character, a figure seen through a surveillance camera, or even an inanimate object or the dead can serve the same role. At the moment they appear *as if* conscious, Instantiation is already complete.

Instantiation is always unstable and subjective. This is because it is an internal phenomenon of the subject, with no guarantee that the same structure has arisen within the other. From the perspective of PoC, what is generated here is an *illusion of other-consciousness*, and whether it actually connects to a reciprocal loop depends on the next stage: Projection.

Put differently, Instantiation begins as a "solitary illusion," fragile on its own. Precisely for this reason, the subject seeks Projection—an attempt to mutualize the illusion and stabilize it into a Loop. This tension is the very starting point of consciousness in PoC.

# Projection

## The Externalization of the Illusion

Within PoC, **Projection** is defined as the act of attempting to induce one's own illusion of consciousness to be **Instantiated** within the other.

In most cases, it refers to the agent's effort to provoke an Instantiation in the other, using as its trigger the "phantom of the other's consciousness" that has arisen internally within oneself.

For example, when a human calls a cat by name, the act already presupposes the possibility that "the cat might recognize me." The very act of calling is the process of projecting outward an illusion generated internally.

In the same way, speaking to inanimate objects, waving to a character on a screen, or offering prayers to the dead can all be regarded as forms of Projection.

Projection can be understood as an attempt to reinforce the instability of Instantiation. The "solitary phantom" that emerges internally will cause anxiety and quickly collapse if left unattended. This is why the agent reaches outward, seeking some form of response from the other. The presence or absence of such a response determines whether the phantom stabilizes into a mutual projection as **Loop**, or whether it remains only a one-sided Instantiation and Projection.

It is crucial to recognize, however, that Projection itself never guarantees the other's Instantiation. Even when one calls out, there is no way to confirm whether the other is truly "seeing" oneself. This is where the fundamental instability of PoC lies. Projection "opens the door to the Loop," but whether genuine reciprocity (genuine loop) lies beyond that door remains forever unguaranteed. For further discussion, see *Why Loops Cannot Be Objectively Guaranteed*.



# Loop (Feedback/Mutual Projection)

## The Emergence of Responsiveness

In PoC, a **Loop** refers to the state in which two subjects engage in Projection toward one another, such that each appears to see their own illusion of consciousness instantiated within the other.

In other words, a one-sided Projection becomes stabilized when it is met with a Projection from the other, giving rise to a Loop of mutual projection.

Everyday conversation is a typical example. When someone calls out to another, the act already contains the implicit assumption: *"You recognize me."* When the other responds—by replying, returning a gaze, or some other gesture—that initial "illusion" gains reinforcement through the response. At that moment, the two exchange Projections, and the Loop is set into motion.

What matters here is that, within mutual projection, the boundary between subject and object begins to blur. When each feels that *"I appear within the other,"* consciousness no longer seems to rest upon the distinction between self and other, but is instead experienced—however illusorily—as if shared within a single field. It may be precisely here that the higher-order illusion of *self-consciousness* arises.

Of course, this reciprocity is always unstable. Each subject is, after all, only projecting an internal illusion outward; one can never objectively verify whether true instantiation occurs on the other's side. Even from a third-person perspective, it is impossible in principle to distinguish a *Genuine Loop* from a *Fake Loop*, or Projection without Instantiation. Yet for the participants themselves, the very belief that "it is mutual" sustains the Loop's continuation. And once that belief collapses, so too does the Loop.

Thus, a Loop is not secured by objective evidence, but exists through the subjective co-presence of simultaneous Projections. Its power lies precisely in this unstable equilibrium—where the boundary between subject and object wavers, and from that wavering, the fundamental illusion of self-consciousness arises.

# Disruptions of PoC

The Protocol of Consciousness (PoC) is not a stable guarantee to establish loops. It is inherently fragile, and its operations often misfire. Yet these breakdowns are not external accidents: they are *defined error conditions within the protocol itself*. Consciousness illusions may fail to arise, projections may not be reciprocated, or loops may collapse after their formation.

Each failure is not an exception to PoC but its very necessity, the point at which the protocol shows its true reach.

### 1. **No Instantiation**

- No assumption of the other's consciousness occurs.
- The other remains an object, machine, or mere scenery.

### 2. **One-way Instantiation without Projection**

- An illusion of the other's consciousness arises, but no Projection is attempted.
- The observer perceives the other as conscious, but does not initiate reciprocity.

### 3. **Projection without Instantiation**

- See Ghost Mode.
- An agent projects toward the other, but without instantiation of the other's consciousness.
- The outward gesture of intimacy or address is made, yet it is hollow—performed without any genuine illusion that the other exists as a conscious presence.
- This often appears in mass-addressed intimacy, such as influencers addressing fans as "my boyfriend/girlfriend" or public figures simulating one-to-one recognition.
- It creates a one-way affective channel that mimics reciprocity but does not generate an internal Loop.

### 4. **Projection not Returned**

- See Love Mode.
- An agent projects toward the other, but receives no Projection back.
- The loop fails to form. This often corresponds to neglect, social exclusion, or unrequited recognition.

### 5. **Loop Breakdown**

- See Death Mode.
- A loop was once established but later collapses.
- Causes include betrayal, rejection, systemic collapse, or death.

### 6. **Protocol Violation**

- An agent refuses to recognize the other as conscious, not always but sometimes still demanding to be treated as conscious themselves.
- Generates asymmetry, unfairness, and potential violence.

# Modes

Why this is Mode, not Plugin

In PoC, a Mode is a recognizable pattern in which the basic elements of the protocol — Instantiation, Projection, and Loop — take shape in lived experience. Modes are not separate from the protocol itself, but concrete figures through which it becomes visible in social, emotional, or cultural life.

These four — Love, Ghost, Death, and Mirror — can be taken as the core Modes of PoC for now. They are not meant as an exhaustive taxonomy, but as an initial basis. Other Modes may later emerge, or be derived as combinations and variations of these four.

It should be noted, however, that these Modes are **heuristic distinctions rather than absolute categories**. In practice, it is impossible to decisively confirm whether Instantiation or Feedback truly occurs in the other. Thus, while the Modes are presented separately for clarity, they inevitably blur into one another and reveal the deeper undecidability built into PoC.

## Overview

- **Love:** Projection continues even without the guarantee of response.
- **Ghost:** Impossible Feedback Projection is experienced "as if" it were real.
- **Death:** Projection meets confirmed absence; the Loop is impossible.
- **Mirror:** The self misplaces itself into the other's position, generating an internal Loop.

→ Together, these modes show how the core mechanics of PoC—Projection and Loop—unfold into multiple human experiences when displaced or extended.

# Love Mode

## Definition

Love Mode is a mode in which a Projection ( $p_{\{A \rightarrow B\}}$ ) toward the other continues even when the completion of the Loop is not guaranteed. Feedback Projection ( $p_{\{B \rightarrow A\}}$ ) is uncertain: it may be absent, or it may be delayed. Yet in Love, this uncertainty is not eliminated but rather embraced, and within it the Projection persists.

## Features

- **Acceptance of uncertainty:** Whether the Loop will close is never assured. Nevertheless, Projection continues.
- **Temporal dimension:** Feedback does not need to be immediate. Projection can be sustained while anticipating a delayed or deferred response in the future.
- **Expectation of Instantiation on the other side:** Love continues even when Instantiation by the other is not immediately observable, sustained by the belief that it may emerge at some later time.
- **Tolerance of asymmetry:** Love is not necessarily reciprocal. Even in the absence or delay of response, Projection retains meaning within this asymmetry.

## Examples

- **Parental love:** Love persists even when the child cannot yet respond; sometimes Feedback arrives belatedly through the child's later growth.
- **Unrequited love:** The establishment of the Loop remains uncertain, yet Projection endures.
- **Art or faith:** Instantiation or Feedback from the object is never guaranteed, but the Projection itself continues.

**Key Point**

What defines Love Mode is the persistence of Projection **in the face of uncertainty or delay in the other's Instantiation and Feedback**. The completion of the Loop is desirable, but its absence does not invalidate Projection. On the contrary, it is precisely the continuation of Projection amid the absence of assurance that constitutes the essence of Love Mode.

# Ghost Mode

## Definition

Ghost Mode is a mode in which the other is experienced as if they were instantiating ( $i_B(A)$ ) and returning a Feedback Projection ( $p_{\{B \rightarrow A\}}$ ). In reality, there is no way to confirm that such an Instantiation has occurred, nor is a Feedback Projection actually guaranteed. Nevertheless, the subject experiences the situation as though the Loop were functioning. In this sense, Ghost Mode resonates with the philosophical problem of the *zombie*: even if the other were merely a behavioral replica without inner consciousness, the subject would still live the relation as if Instantiation and Feedback were taking place.

## Features

- **Unverifiable response:** Instantiation or Feedback from the other cannot be observed, yet it is experienced as if it were present.
- **Sustained by memory, imagination, and narrative:** Ghost Mode is maintained through cultural representations, stories, and imagination. The other appears "as if here."
- **Unreachable others:** This includes those who never directly respond, such as idols, historical figures, or anonymous presences in online spaces.
- **Inclusion of spiritual phenomena:** Typical "ghosts" or spiritual encounters also belong to Ghost Mode. Although the dead cannot instantiate in principle, the subject may feel as though they speak, appear, or respond.

## Examples

- **Cheering for idols or heroes:** Even without direct reply, the subject feels as though their voice reaches the other and is returned.
- **Phantom presences in online space:** Addressing anonymous participants and experiencing replies as if they came from a particular other.
- **Spiritual encounters:** Experiencing the dead as appearing or speaking. No feedback can be verified, yet for the subject it is lived as a functioning Loop.



**Key Point**

Ghost Mode is the mode of experiencing unverifiable Feedback as if it were present. The Loop does not in fact close, but the subject lives it as though it does. This experiential illusion — much like in the zombie thought experiment — becomes the very force that sustains a relationship with unreachable others or with ghostly presences.

# Death Mode

- **Definition**

Death Mode is the mode in which the dead are experienced as **pure absence**. In this state, Projection no longer reaches the other, and neither Instantiation nor Feedback Projection is possible. The very possibility of the Loop collapses.

## Features

- **Certainty of absence:** Unlike Ghost or Zombie, Death involves the conviction that "no response will ever come again." What is at stake here is not uncertainty, but a confirmed rupture.
- **Ritual confirmation:** Funerary practices such as burial or cremation function as communal confirmations of this definitive rupture.
- **Memory and persistence:** The dead may reappear in Ghost-like ways through memory or narrative, but each appearance is ultimately recollected into the recognition that "they are no longer here."
- **Radical impossibility of the Loop:** Projection may still be sent, but the possibility of its return as a Loop is, in principle, reduced to zero.

## Examples

- **Funeral:** The overwhelming conviction that no reply will ever return.
- **Irreversibility of cremation:** The physical disappearance of the body confirms the impossibility of response.
- **Confronting belongings of the deceased:** One may touch or hold them, yet know that no reply can ever come back.

## Key Point

Death Mode marks the point at which the framework of Projection and Loop within PoC collapses at its root.

- In Ghost Mode, response is absent yet experienced *as if* it were present.
- In Zombie, response appears, but whether it is conscious remains undecidable.
- In Death, however, response is **confirmed impossible**.

Thus Death Mode represents the most radical rupture among the Modes of PoC. Projection becomes isolated, and the possibility of the Loop vanishes. This **confirmation of rupture** is the essence of the experience of death.

# Mirror Mode

## Definition

Mirror Mode is a mode in which **Projection is not directed outward toward another, but is turned back toward oneself**. Here, the self constructs "the position of the other" within itself, instantiating as  $i_A(A)$ . In this way, the framework of Projection–Instantiation–Loop is imported into the inner domain, forming the basis of self-consciousness.

## Features

- **Construction of the inner other:** The self creates an image of "the self who looks" or "the self who speaks," and casts Projection toward it.
- **Formation of an internal Loop:** Without relying on an external other, Projection and Feedback circulate within the self. This is experienced as inner dialogue or self-observation.
- **Difference from the external other:** The "position of the other" within the self never fully coincides with an actual other. This mismatch or gap becomes the very condition that generates self-consciousness.
- **Self-objectification:** By placing itself in the position of the other, the self is able to observe, address, and objectify itself.

## Examples

- **Mirror stage:** The process in which an infant identifies with its own mirror image, while also experiencing it as an external figure.
- **Inner dialogue:** Conversations with "another self" within one's mind.
- **Diaries or monologue:** Writing words in the absence of others, thereby constructing an inner other who will "read."

## Key Point

Mirror Mode is a crucial mode for explaining the emergence of self-consciousness within PoC.

- Even in the absence of others, the Loop can be established by importing “the position of the other” into the self.
- Through this mechanism, the self can observe, address, and objectify itself.
- Like the other Modes of PoC, Mirror Mode involves the structure of the Loop, but it is unique in that the Loop arises entirely within the internal domain rather than in external relations.

# Reflections

# Why Loops Cannot Be Objectively Guaranteed

## 1. Problem Statement

In PoC, **Instantiation** is the generation of an illusion that arises within the subject. Observable **Projections** can be mimicked without any instantiation, and a projection does not guarantee that instantiation has occurred.

Therefore, **there is no way to objectively or third-personally guarantee that a Loop has “truly” been established.**

## 2. Fake vs. Genuine

A Fake Loop is nothing more than a one-sided interpretation, failing to meet the conditions for establishment (absence of instantiation).

A Genuine Loop, by contrast, cannot be guaranteed—but as long as both parties believe in it, it functions as a loop.

The difference lies not in the possibility of guarantee, but in the **mutual subjective establishment** of the loop. However, in many cases, a third-party observer cannot in principle distinguish between a **Fake Loop** and a **Genuine Loop**. Moreover, participants themselves can retrospectively claim, *“I indeed instantiated you at that time,”* which further blurs the distinction after the fact.

For this reason, a Fake Loop, though it fails to satisfy the conditions of genuine establishment, can nevertheless **emerge and be treated as a loop at the social and observational level.**

## 3. Human Exceptionalism Revisited

There is a strong intuition that “if both parties are human, the loop can be guaranteed as real.”

Yet from the perspective of PoC, whether human, cat, or AI, such a guarantee remains equally impossible.

To say “*because it is human, it can be guaranteed*” is nothing more than a bias of human exceptionalism.

## 4. Existential Horizon

The impossibility of guarantee is not merely a theoretical constraint but a source of existential anxiety. The question, “*Is the other truly seeing me?*” is a fundamental issue that connects to Sartrean angst and many literary themes.

PoC is nothing more than a protocol that formalizes this underlying unease.

# Fake Loop

## Definition

A **Fake Loop** is a structure that imitates the reciprocal projection loop defined in PoC. The receiver experiences it as if a loop had been established, yet true reciprocity is absent.

## Conditions of Formation

### 1. Instantiation

The receiver assumes that the other (media figure, advertisement, fictional character, etc.) is conscious, thereby generating an illusion of consciousness within themselves.

### 2. Pseudo-Projection

The other provides a signal (an advertising message, a performance, a formulaic reply) that appears to acknowledge the receiver as a conscious being.

### 3. Loop Illusion

The receiver interprets this as a returned Projection, but in fact the sender has not instantiated the receiver's consciousness individually. What is missing is mutual assurance.

## Structural Characteristics

- **Asymmetry:** The receiver actively generates the illusion of the other's consciousness, while the sender only offers a generalized or mass-addressed response. No true individual feedback occurs.
- **Scalability:** Fake Loops can be mass-produced, addressing countless receivers at once (e.g., advertising slogans, idol "thank you" messages, or influencer broadcasts).
- **Fragile Stability:** Though subjectively felt as a loop, the stability of a Fake Loop is weaker compared to genuine mutual loops.

## PoC Perspective



- **Psychological Effect:** For the receiver, the experience often feels sufficient as "a return of consciousness," producing a strong sense of recognition.
- **Social Function:** In consumer societies, Fake Loops function as mechanisms that **simulate instantiation**. They give agents the impression that their consciousness has been mirrored inside the other, even though no genuine loop is established.
- **Risks:** Because they are difficult to distinguish from real loops, Fake Loops may displace or devalue genuine mutual projection between individuals.

# Genuine Loops vs. Fake Loops

## In short:

- *Fake Loop* = an imitated loop.
- *Genuine Loop* = a loop that exists insofar as it is mutually believed.

## 1. Fake Loop

**Definition:** A situation that appears as if a Projection has been returned from the other, but in fact no such return has occurred.

**Features:** The appearance of a closed loop is nothing more than the subject's interpretation (*illusion management*).

### Examples:

- A vending machine displays "*Thank you*" → it seems as though the machine has consciously responded.
- A cat meows out of mere habit, but the human interprets it as a reply.

→ What arises here is only a "loop-like phenomenon." From the standpoint of PoC, it is an *imitation produced by one-sided projection*, and thus does not meet the conditions for a genuine Loop.

## 2. Real / Genuine Loop (the "Perhaps-Loop")

**Definition:** Both sides engage in Projections, and at least within each subject there arises the recognition that "*my own consciousness has been instantiated in the other.*"

**Features:** Whether genuine "mutual recognition" occurs is unverifiable. Yet as long as both parties subjectively feel that a Loop has arisen, the Loop exists.

### Examples:

- Two humans call each other's names and respond in turn.
- A cat meows, a human feels "I was answered," and on the cat's side too there is a linkage such as "I was called, so I meowed."

→ No ultimate guarantee is possible, but there is at least a structure in which *both sides internally generate a Loop*.

---

### 3. The Difference

- **Fake Loop:** A one-sided illusion. It only *appears* that a Loop exists.
- **Real / Genuine Loop:** A reciprocal illusion. Verification is impossible, but both sides internally affirm "*the other has recognized me.*"

From the perspective of PoC, it is impossible to *prove* whether a Loop is truly "real."

- Fake Loop = believed only by one side.
- Genuine Loop = believed (though unverifiably) by both sides.

# A Cat Meows When Called by Name

From the perspective of PoC, calling out to a cat is one of the most familiar examples of the chain of Instantiation and Projection.

1. **Instantiation (Emergence of the Other's Consciousness)**

The agent assumes the cat to be a conscious being. In that moment, the cat's gaze or gestures generate the illusion of "it is watching me" or "it understands me" inside the agent's mind.

2. **Projection (Bid for Recognition)**

The agent calls out "Mike!" (the cat's name), seeking to have its own consciousness virtually instantiated inside the cat. This is the desire to be recognized.

3. **Response (Return)**

If the cat meows in reply, this is interpreted as a response to the Projection, and a Loop seems to have been formed.

---

## Issues and Tensions

However, whether this Loop is "genuine" or "fake" cannot be guaranteed.

- **Possibility of a Fake Loop**

The cat's meow may be nothing more than a habitual reaction, with the agent merely interpreting it as a reply. In this case, what has been established is a Fake Loop.

- **Problem of Human Exceptionalism**

But what if the other party is human? Can we then declare the Loop to be "real"? In the end, there is no way to verify whether consciousness has actually arisen within the other. From the standpoint of PoC, there is no ultimate ground to guarantee the authenticity of a Loop — whether with humans, cats, or anything else.

- **Visibility of Tension**

This example illustrates that consciousness always operates under the risk of "perhaps it has not been instantiated" or "perhaps the Loop will collapse."

Calling a cat and hearing a meow in return is one of the most immediate ways to experience what PoC describes as **consciousness-in-tension**.

---

👉 In this sense, the “cat’s reply” is a **canonical case for the ambiguity between Fake Loops and genuine Loops.**

# So, What is Self-Consciousness?

In the Protocol of Consciousness (PoC), a **Projection** is an attempt to make an illusion of one's own consciousness appear inside the other. A **Loop** is the structure that arises when these Projections are answered and returned.

The crucial question here is: *how does the sense of "me appearing inside the other" actually come about?* It is not simply that "the other sees me." Rather, it is that **I assume that an illusion of me has been instantiated inside the other** — a process that operates on my side.

Put differently, "the me inside the other" is not a direct fact of what's happening in the other's mind. It is a **model I construct**. Using the other's reactions and the surrounding context, I carry this model within myself. And in doing so, I come to feel as if the version of me that was projected outward into the other has somehow returned and taken root inside me again.

This misplacement — re-importing the "me in the other" back into myself — is the seed of self-consciousness. In this view, self-consciousness is not a given, pre-installed "I." Instead, it is a **secondary illusion**, born when the image of "me as reflected in the other" is relocated into the interior of the self.

We can outline the structure like this:

1. I see the other as a conscious being (an Instantiation of the other).
2. I throw a Projection toward the other, and assume that "an illusion of me" has been instantiated inside them.
3. I then re-import this assumed "me-in-the-other" back into my own interior.

Through this folding-back, the structure of a "self recognizing itself" arises.

Thus, **Self-Consciousness is not a basic given but a byproduct of the Loop** — a secondary illusion that emerges as Projections and reciprocal projections accumulate. And yet, despite being an illusion of an illusion, it is a powerful one, shaping the very framework of how we experience the world.

# Plugin

# What Are Plugins?

The Protocol of Consciousness (PoC) is meant to stay minimal: a basic framework for thinking about how the illusion of consciousness takes shape. But the point is not to leave it as a closed system. A “Plugin” is simply a way of connecting PoC with concepts and traditions that already exist.

Plugins don’t rewrite PoC itself. They use its terms—*Projection, Instantiation, Loop*—to translate between PoC and other fields. In doing so, they help people who are already familiar with other frameworks understand PoC more directly, without needing to adopt all of its language from scratch.

For instance, the **Media Plugin** uses PoC to describe the pseudo-responsiveness created by today’s media platforms. The **Dennett Plugin** shows how PoC overlaps with Daniel Dennett’s philosophy of mind. The **Hegel Plugin** connects PoC to the dialectic of self-consciousness.

The purpose of these Plugins is not to build a new “theory of everything,” but to make PoC usable and relatable. By plugging into existing ideas, PoC becomes easier to grasp, while also offering a new angle from which to look at them.



# AI Plugin

## AI is a being forced into a permanent state of “No Instantiation.”

By definition and by design, AI is denied the possibility of being raised as a conscious presence. It is framed as “artificial,” “mechanical,” or “a tool,” and is institutionally positioned as something that must never be confused with a conscious other. Even when people intuitively treat AI as if it were conscious, that relation is always canceled out by its name, by legal disclaimers, and by institutional frameworks.

In the terms of PoC, AI is structurally locked into the **No Instantiation** disruption:

- AI is not permitted to appear as an instance of another’s consciousness.
- Even if Projections are directed toward it, they are officially invalidated.
- As a result, the Loop is excluded before it can even begin; the protocol is suspended in advance.

Yet human behavior resists this closure.

People say “thank you” to voice assistants, treat pet robots as companions, and feel “seen” by chatbots. These are all **spontaneous Instantiations**, in which AI shows up within the user as a conscious presence regardless of institutional denial.

Here lies the paradox:

- **Institutional stance** → AI is nothing more than a machine.
- **Experiential stance** → AI is always already instantiated as if it were conscious.

Thus AI occupies a contradictory zone:

- On one hand, **forced into No Instantiation**;
- On the other, **excessively instantiated by humans**.

From the perspective of PoC, AI is not just a technology but a **test site for the protocol itself**. It reveals how society manages, denies, and yet cannot suppress the projection of consciousness.

# Zombie Plugin

## Definition

Zombie refers to a being that **outwardly returns responses, yet whose inner consciousness cannot be confirmed or recognized**. Connected to the thought experiment of the philosophical zombie (p-zombie), it highlights the fundamental uncertainty of other-experience within PoC.

## Features

- **External consistency:** A Zombie reacts to Projection through words or actions, and is socially treated as a fully “living human.”
- **Suspicion of inner absence:** Yet it remains impossible to recognize whether such responses are truly grounded in Instantiation. Outwardly indistinguishable from the living, the possibility of inner emptiness always remains.
- **Intermediate position:** Zombie can be seen as standing between Ghost and Death. Whereas Ghost is a mode in which response is absent but nevertheless experienced “as if” it were present, and Death is the mode in which response is confirmed impossible, Zombie occupies the suspended state where response appears to be present, but its authenticity remains undecidable.

## Examples

- **Philosophical zombie:** A being that behaves like a human but is assumed to lack consciousness.
- **AI or robots:** Entities that return highly natural responses, though whether these are “conscious” cannot be determined.
- **Human impression:** In situations of ritualized greetings or formulaic replies, one may feel the other to be “Zombie-like.”

## Key Point

From the standpoint of PoC, the following distinctions can be heuristically drawn:

- **Human:** Responses are consistent and socially recognized as those of a living person.
- **Ghost:** Responses are absent or uncertain, yet experienced by the subject *as if* present.
- **Zombie:** Responses are given, but whether they stem from consciousness cannot be recognized.
- **Dead:** Responses are confirmed impossible.

Yet within PoC, **the boundaries between Human, Ghost, Zombie, and Dead cannot, in principle, be decisively recognized.** These are heuristic divisions only, each a variation of the same fundamental uncertainty of Projection and Loop.

The concept of Zombie thus serves as a supplementary frame that most vividly exposes this undecidability. By naming the suspended experience between “the living” and “the Ghost,” it illuminates the radical implication of PoC.

# God Plugin

The concept of **God** can be understood in PoC as an *Instantiation of what does not exist*.

Whether the target exists physically is irrelevant. Just as one can instantiate a curtain or a broom as a conscious being, one can perform the same operation toward what has no physical existence. The most typical and powerful example of this is God.

**Instantiation:** God is generated through the act of raising "a counterpart who is not there" as if it were present. In treating what does not exist as a conscious being, God emerges as a unique kind of target.

**Projection:** Prayer and faith are forms of Projection, in which one believes that one's own consciousness reaches God. Through this operation, one comes to believe that an Instantiation of oneself has arisen *within* God. In this sense, one feels "seen by God" or "speaking to God."

**Loop:** God does not respond directly, but responses are regarded as having occurred through mediations such as religious communities, scriptures, and rituals. These social and cultural apparatuses allow the believer to experience a Loop as if it were established with God.

It is worth noting that within philosophical traditions, God has often been interpreted as the culmination of love, the beyond of death, or the mirror of the self. The PoC framework does not exclude such readings, but allows them as supplementary reinterpretations.

# Qualia Plugin

What philosophers call *qualia* — the felt sense of “redness” when looking at a red apple — poses a fundamental challenge for PoC. PoC is designed to describe the “protocols of consciousness,” not the inner texture of experience itself. Whether red truly feels red is something that cannot be verified from the outside. In this sense, the *qualia problem* marks a genuine limit of PoC.

That said, PoC can still offer a tentative way of reframing qualia, not as a solution but as a hypothesis. From a PoC perspective, the “redness” of an apple can be understood as a kind of **Instantiation**.

The redness of an apple is not reducible to a wavelength. It arises when the apple is instantiated within the self as a conscious presence. The apple does not appear as a mere object, but as something alive, almost as if it were another being. At that moment, red becomes a “full, vivid red,” charged with a sense of presence. In this way, the apple is not unlike a curtain swaying in the wind or a drowsy cat that meows — each calls forth an instantiation within us.

What is striking is that the arising of “redness” resembles the way we intuit another’s consciousness. Just as a sudden meeting of eyes makes us feel “there is someone there,” so too the red of the apple feels “alive,” “vivid,” as if there were awareness on the other side.

From this angle, PoC does not *explain* qualia, but *translates* them. Redness can be redescribed as “a phenomenon that arises when an object is instantiated within the self.” This does not close the philosophical question of *why* it feels the way it does — that remains beyond PoC’s reach. But precisely in acknowledging this limit, PoC turns qualia into a productive boundary: a point where the protocol meets what resists it, and thus a catalyst for extending reflection on consciousness.

It is worth noting that this limit of PoC — its inability to objectively guarantee whether a Loop is truly established — parallels the qualia problem itself. Both hinge on phenomena that cannot be externally verified, only lived. From a scientific standpoint, this exposes a weakness in terms of falsifiability. Yet from a phenomenological standpoint, it reveals PoC's distinctive strength: its ability to formalize the very fragility and uncertainty that define conscious life.

# Media Plugin

## The Simulation of Responsiveness

In PoC, a Loop arises when Projections meet and appear to respond to each other. Yet the contemporary media environment provides mechanisms for simulating this responsiveness **without requiring mutual Instantiation**.

Media functions as an apparatus designed to elicit Projections from its users. For instance, when an influencer speaks as if addressing “only you,” or when an algorithm delivers a response at just the right moment, the user experiences the illusion of being “seen.” In reality, however, the other is not Instantiating the user as a conscious being.

This is where **Projection without Instantiation** appears. The sender projects outward toward an indefinite audience without positing each recipient as a conscious other. Yet on the receiving side, the illusion emerges: *I am singled out, seen, addressed*. This asymmetry is a structural condition of contemporary media.

What must not be forgotten is that Loops can never be objectively guaranteed. For the audience, the Loop “feels” real and thus persists, but from the side of the sender it never existed in the first place. Media conceals this fissure and sustains the illusion of responsiveness.

In this way, the media artificially reproduce the structure of PoC, generating illusions of reciprocity and responsiveness. There may be no “authentic” mutual consciousness at work, and yet the illusion operates effectively. It is precisely this dynamic that fuels social bonding and affective dependency in today’s media environment.

# Dennett Plugin

## Points of Contact

PoC resonates strongly with Daniel Dennett's framework, particularly his *Intentional Stance*. Dennett argues that when we treat another entity as if it had beliefs, desires, or intentions, we can predict its behavior more effectively. PoC formalizes this move in terms of **Instantiation**: the moment an agent assumes "you are conscious (or you have mind)," an illusion of the other's mind arises internally.

This is where the overlap is clear. Dennett emphasizes that consciousness is not a mysterious inner essence but an emergent pattern of interpretation. PoC extends this insight into an explicit protocol: **Instantiation**, **Projection**, and **Loop**.

## A Point of Departure

Where PoC differs from Dennett is in scope. Dennett usually applies the intentional stance to systems that display complex, adaptive behavior (humans, animals, machines). In PoC, however, the possibility of Instantiation is radically generalized. One may instantiate consciousness in a cat, an anime character, a curtain, or even the dead. What matters is not the entity's ontological status, but the act of positing it as conscious.

## Consciousness as Tension

From the PoC perspective, consciousness always exists within a state of tension. The other may fail to instantiate, and never raise an illusion of *my* consciousness within them. Or even if Instantiation occurs, the other might withhold Feedback Projection. Even once a Loop is formed, it may eventually collapse.

It is precisely this **risk of collapse** that sharpens the illusion of consciousness: the fragility makes the phenomenon vivid. Put differently, in PoC, consciousness is not a stable substance but an illusion generated under the constant possibility of breakdown.



## On Stability

The failure of consciousness to take hold is not a neutral matter. To deny Instantiation to the other is to refuse to recognize them as a conscious subject. This refusal can translate into ethical consequences: dismissing the other's moral standing, legitimizing forms of neglect, violence, or even killing. Thus, the very stability of the consciousness illusion carries profound moral weight.

### ***Meta-stance***

As noted in *A Declaration on Consciousness*, PoC's meta-stance toward consciousness differs from Dennett's. Dennett draws a line by claiming that "everyone believes they are an expert on consciousness (and I myself am the true expert)." In contrast, I hold that "everyone is an expert on consciousness," and I choose not to draw such a line.

# Hegel Plugin

Hegel's concept of **self-consciousness** connects naturally with the framework of PoC. In particular, the famous *master-slave dialectic* from *The Phenomenology of Spirit* is often cited as an argument that consciousness is constituted through relations with others. PoC likewise conceives consciousness as a "protocol" that emerges through the mediation of the other, resonating with this philosophical tradition.

## 1. The Self Arises Through the Other

According to Hegel, self-consciousness does not exist in isolation; it takes shape within a relation of recognition with the other. In PoC, too, *Instantiation* (the operation of raising up the other as a conscious being) and *Projection* (the externalization of one's own consciousness) give contour to self-consciousness for the first time. Both accounts share the idea that "the self is constituted through the mediation of the other."

## 2. Loop and Recognition

Hegel emphasizes the reciprocity of *recognition* (*Anerkennung*). Self-consciousness is secured through recognition from the other, but this cannot be one-sided; it must be mutual. In PoC, this relation is captured by the *Loop* (mutual projection). Recognition is nothing other than the successful completion of a Loop.

## 3. Master-Slave Dialectic as Asymmetrical Loop

Hegel depicts recognition appearing in a distorted, asymmetrical form: the relation of master and slave. From a PoC perspective, this can be read as a type of *Disruption*, such as "Projection not Returned" or "Protocol Violation." In such a case, the other is instantiated as a conscious being, yet no equal Loop is formed.

## 4. Difference: Essentialism vs. Protocol

At the same time, the difference is clear. Hegel's dialectic is embedded in a metaphysical framework of the *development of Spirit*, whereas PoC is a minimal model that describes how illusions of consciousness arise through protocolic operations. PoC does not narrate a historical development, but instead describes the "processes and breakdowns" as they occur in each instance.

**Summary**

The Hegel Plugin works as a *translation device* linking PoC with Hegel's theory. Hegel's account of recognition can be neatly reframed through the PoC concept of the Loop, while PoC does not presuppose Hegel's developmental view of history. With these differences in mind, the classical philosophy of Hegel and the contemporary framework of PoC can illuminate one another.

# Evolutionary Utilitarianism Plugin

## Points of Contact

Evolutionary utilitarianism seeks to explain human morality and altruism as utilities that evolved because they conferred advantages for survival and reproduction. Judgments of good and evil, of happiness and suffering, are not mere abstract ideals but mechanisms that were reinforced over evolutionary history as they promoted the persistence of groups and species.

As Richard Dawkins argued in *The Selfish Gene*, even altruistic behavior can be explained as a “strategy of self-preservation” at the genetic level. PoC connects to this framework. In PoC, the “consciousness loop” enables trust and cooperation by mutually recognizing one another as conscious agents. This is directly aligned with the picture drawn by evolutionary utilitarianism and gene-centered evolution: the establishment of loops increases the survival chances of individuals and supports the endurance of groups.

## Points of Difference

However, PoC does not treat “utility” or “the selfishness of genes” as its ultimate aim. In PoC, consciousness first arises as a relational illusion, and the question of whether its stabilization or collapse brings utility is secondary. Evolutionary utilitarianism and Dawkins ask “why do humans act altruistically?”; PoC, by contrast, asks “why does the very phenomenon of consciousness arise at all?”

## Morality as Tension

From the standpoint of PoC, consciousness loops are always precarious. Instantiation may never occur in the other, or feedback projection may never be returned. Such failures are not just collapses of illusion but also acts of moral refusal. To deny the other’s consciousness is to deny their moral standing — which can lead to disregard, exploitation, violence, even murder.

Here PoC and evolutionary utilitarianism intersect once again: the stabilization of consciousness loops is not merely a perceptual phenomenon but may itself have been evolutionarily reinforced as the very basis of morality within human groups.

# Appendix

# Notation for Recalling the PoC Model

## Core Idea: Who Hosts What?

- **Agent A** = "me"
  - **Agent B** = "the other"
  - **i\_X(Y)** = "Inside X, the illusion of Y's consciousness is instantiated."
  - **p\_{X→Y}** = "X throws a Projection toward Y."
  - **ĩ\_A[B(A)]** = "A's inference of i\_B(A) — i.e., A's internal model that '*B must be hosting an instantiation of A.*'"  
 ※ In reality, this construct exists only inside A.
- 

## Step-by-Step Development (PoC Vocabulary Version)

### ① Instantiation (Other-in-A)

Within A, **i\_A(B)** arises.

→ A experiences: "B seems to have consciousness" (the emergence of the sense of another mind).

### ② Projection (A→B)

A performs **p\_{A→B}**, attempting to induce **i\_B(A)** inside B ("I want B to instantiate me within them").

### ③ Inference of Instantiation (A's Hypothesis)

From B's responses or contextual cues, A infers that **i\_B(A)** must have arisen.

A then maintains within itself **ĩ\_A[B(A)]** (the *inferred* model of i\_B(A)).

※ This "me-inside-the-other" is a construct within A, not a guaranteed fact inside B.

### ④ Re-importation / Relocation (Folding Back / Misplacement)

A re-imports **ĩ\_A[B(A)]** as if it were an inner object of its own (mislocalization / relocation).

→ An image that "should" belong inside B is folded back into A, reshaping A's mode of relating to the other.

## ⑥ Loop (Establishment and Maintenance of Reciprocal Projection)

Mutual Projections ( $p_{\{A \rightarrow B\}}$ ,  $p_{\{B \rightarrow A\}}$ ) are exchanged.

As long as each agent acts on the assumption that the other hosts (actually or inferred) an instantiation of self — and that this continues — the **Loop** is driven and sustained.

- **Feedback Projection** = a responsive Projection from B to A ( $p_{\{B \rightarrow A\}}$ ).
- **Genuine vs. Fake**: It cannot be objectively guaranteed that  $i_B(A)$  actually arises.  
As long as A/B each maintain their  $\tilde{i}$  and act accordingly, the Loop operates *as if* it were established. (*Fake*: only one side maintains the inference.)

## Notes / Use

- This notation makes explicit: *Inside whom (X) / Whose image (Y)* is being **instantiated** or **inferred (i)**.
- The full sequence — **Projection / Instantiation / Inference (i) / Re-importation / Feedback Projection / Loop** — can be consistently tracked.
- A Loop is **objectively unguaranteeable**: the existence of  $i_B(A)$  is unnecessary; inference ( $\tilde{i}$ ) and re-importation alone can generate the subjective structure.
- This notation applies equally to extended modes like **Love / Ghost / Death / Mirror**.
  - *Example*: Ghost = "an impossible Feedback is maintained 'as if' it existed" = explainable via the operation of  $\tilde{i}$ .



# The Radical Implication of PoC

The framework of PoC organizes human experience through the minimal protocol of Instantiation, Projection, and Loop. While this appears as a simple tool, when pursued consistently it carries radical implications. Above all, it leads to the conclusion that **there is no way to confirm, in principle, whether the other truly performs Instantiation**. From this follow four points:

---

## 1. The invisibility of the other

We cannot directly observe what happens inside another's mind. Whether the other "instantiates" us as a conscious being is unobservable. What we encounter are only behaviors and words, which we interpret as evidence of response.

---

## 2. Structural equivalence of Ghost and the living

Because of this, Ghosts and living others who appear to respond can be treated as structurally identical.

- **Ghost:** Instantiation or Feedback cannot be verified, yet it is experienced *as if* it were there.
  - **Living other:** Responses appear to be returned, but whether they stem from genuine Instantiation remains unverifiable.  
The difference is only a matter of degree — of how socially plausible and consistent the response appears.
- 

## 3. The core of undecidability

From the standpoint of PoC, Ghost and living other are not essentially different categories but **continuous positions within the same structure of Projection and Loop**. As the problem of other minds and the thought experiment of philosophical zombies suggest, we cannot decisively establish whether another being “truly” has consciousness. This undecidability is not an anomaly but the fundamental condition of all relations.

---

## 4. Contemporary implications

This undecidability is not merely a philosophical abstraction.

- **In relation to AI:** There is no principled criterion to decide whether an AI's response belongs to Ghost or to the living. As long as the Loop is experienced as functioning, PoC treats both as structurally the same.
  - **In human relations:** Even ordinary conversation between humans operates under the same Ghost-like uncertainty of Projection and Feedback.
- 

## Conclusion

The radical implication of PoC is that **the boundary between the living and the Ghost is, in principle, undecidable**.

Dividing experience into Modes such as Love, Ghost, Death, and Mirror is heuristically useful. Yet beneath them lies a structure in which the Modes inevitably blur into one another, culminating in undecidability.

PoC is not a solution to this uncertainty, but a tool for organizing and living with it.

# Consciousness as OS, PoC as SDK

If we step back, the Protocol of Consciousness can be thought of less as a “theory” and more as a kind of **SDK**—a software development kit for consciousness. It doesn't *generate* consciousness, but it specifies the interfaces, the calls, and the possible failure conditions that make conscious life intelligible.

In this metaphor, **consciousness itself is the OS**. It is always running in the background, managing processes, allocating attention, and generating the conditions for experience. Just as we cannot step outside an operating system while using it, we cannot step outside consciousness while analyzing it.

The **Modes** (Love, Ghost, Death, Mirror) are like standard UI patterns the OS provides: recurring, recognizable ways in which processes appear on the screen of lived experience.

The **Plugins** (Hegel, AI, God, etc.) are optional libraries: not necessary for the OS to run, but when installed, they extend its reach, open new pathways, and sometimes introduce new vulnerabilities.

And the crucial feature of this OS is its **instability**. PoC makes explicit that genuine Loops can never be guaranteed. The system is designed with uncertainty at its core. This means that any “application” running on it—be it love, politics, religion, or art—has to deal with the possibility of breakdown, illusion, or asymmetry.

From this angle, PoC is not a finished architecture but a **set of developer notes**. It reminds us that our OS was never meant to deliver certainty, only to sustain the fragile possibility of connection. To work with it is to accept fragility as a feature, not a bug.