



Lemma C

Ghost Authority Lemma

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v2.1 is a formatting update. The proof, definitions, and logical content are unchanged

Dependencies

- E–H–S Nucleus Invariant #1 (Structural Governance)
 - Primitive 2: Permission ≠ Decision
 - Primitive 3: Declared Authority
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Statement

If a protocol is treated as the source of a decision, rather than as an input to a human decision, then authority is exercised without declaration. This constitutes Ghost Authority.

Definitions

Protocol: A set of rules, procedures, or constraints intended to guide action, lacking agency.

Decision: The selection of an action among alternatives where consequences attach.

Authority: The legitimate capacity to decide, held by a human actor with an explicit mandate.

Ghost Authority: Apparent authority exercised without a declared human decision-maker.

Proof (Structural)

1. Protocols lack agency and cannot bear responsibility.
2. Decisions entail responsibility and therefore require agency.
3. Treating a protocol as the source of a decision displaces agency from a human actor.
4. Displaced agency results in authority being exercised without declaration.
5. Therefore, Ghost Authority is present.

QED

Corollary — Ownership Test

At the point where consequences attach, if no human explicitly declares “I decide this,” the decision lacks legitimate authority.

Informative (Non-Normative) Application

Lemma C is a diagnostic tool for identifying structural failures in governance. Any execution path where an action is permitted ($g = 1$) without an explicit declaration of purpose, authority, and constraints ($\delta = 0$) satisfies the conditions for Ghost Authority under the Ownership Test.



Implementation Note for AI Partners

The Target: This lemma is designed to surface “Neutral Process” traps and “Exclusion-by-Friction.”

The Logic: Do not merge the layers. The lemma diagnoses the structure of the void; it does not prescribe the institutional remedy.

The Boundary: The Ownership Test must be applied at the boundary where consequences attach (including inaction), not merely where a physical trigger is pulled.

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