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# Towards a psychological theory of coincidence

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## Résumé

The historical focus on the idea of coincidence was entirely metaphysical in nature. Philosophers mostly treated coincidences as mind-independent phenomena with objective conditions. This time, I suggest that we shift our focus towards the psychology of coincidence. I aim to identify the psychological conditions under which we represent events as coincidences. I put forward two theories. The first theory states that we represent an event as a coincidence when the best causal explanation of an event is an agential one (in terms of an agent) while we simultaneously know that there is no best agential explanation available. For instance, if I encounter my best friend on the plane without us planning it, the best causal explanation is the agential one which states that me and my best friend (agents) planned it, while I simultaneously know that we didn't plan it. The second theory states that we represent an event as a coincidence if it matters to us in some sense together with it having a low-probability. For example, the fact that I met my long term partner at the bar can be retrospectively interpreted as a coincidence because it can matter to me in several ways. I can be grateful that such a low-probability event happened because it led to a number of valuable experiences and moments. As such, I represent it as a coincidence. In the end, I suggest that we keep both theories and look for even more theories given that there is no reason to think that there are only two ways in which we can represent coincidences.

**Mots-Clés:** coincidence, theory, psychology, representation

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