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# AN ARGUMENT AGAINST TRANSCENDENCE

## *Um Argumento contra a Transcendência*[i]

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**Abstract:** This essay takes up a proposition that concerns contemporary efforts at unifying theory and practice, one undergirding much of Black studies. Amiri Baraka of the Black Arts Movement would call for a turn away from deferrals to freedom only attainable in an other-worldly beyond while the sociologist, Stuart Hall, would call for a formalization of the mechanisms instituting relations of subordination and dominance from within. I argue that, in considering theory and practice as a unified procedure, we circumvent the failings of searching for solutions transcendent to a world that we compose and recompose as members of that world.

**Keywords:** Transcendence; Cultural studies; Black studies; Amiri Baraka; Stuart Hall.

**Resumo:** Este ensayio aborda uma proposição relacionada aos esforços contemporâneos para unificar teoria e prática, que sustenta grande parte dos estudos negros. Amiri Baraka, do movimento Black Arts, clamava por um distanciamento das promessas de liberdade realizáveis apenas em um além transcendente, enquanto o sociólogo Stuart Hall defendia uma formalização dos mecanismos que instauram relações de subordinação e dominação a partir de dentro. Defendo que, ao considerar teoria e prática como um procedimento unificado, evitamos as limitações de buscar soluções transcendentes a um mundo que nós mesmos compomos e recompomos enquanto membros desse mundo.

**Palavras-chave:** Transcendência; Estudos culturais; Estudos negros; Amiri Baraka; Stuart Hall.

## INTRODUCTION

If the world is all that's the case, and the only one we have according to the optimist (Moten 2008, p. 1747), then how do we conceive of change without reaching for non-worldly resources so as to make worldly pronouncements? The interlocking function of these terms have determinates. We conjecture, we test, we revise if that procedure turns up empty. But what does this mean socially, culturally, politically?

This question has been brought up in each of those domains. In "Black Art," (1987) Amiri Baraka, formerly LeRoi Jones, called for a reorientation towards reality rather than resigning to exist in a fantasy as yet to be realized. Shortly thereafter, the sociologist Stuart Hall in "Who needs identity?" (1996) illustrated how claims to identity and its determinates within the systems of value licensing their use can only be satisfied within discourses, not outside of them. Both are arguments against transcendence. Without recourse to extra-systemic resources to rearticulate our state of affairs, we are forced to concede a union between theory and practice. In fact, efforts to see either one as fundamentally divergent fail. How so?

**1.0.**

Transcendent arguments lurk within Cultural Studies literature which, in turn, determines or defines orientations to the world that allow or disallow relationships on the ground. It is for this reason that a theoretical consideration of the motivating material from which socio-cultural and political movements are articulated is key. In 1965, the poet and activist, Amiri Baraka, quotes and puts into action Wittgenstein's (1921, p. 6.421) argument that ethics and aesthetics are one, prompting an analysis of how one comes to know the infrastructure of norms and institutions organizing their experience without exiting the world. For Wittgenstein, "in order to draw a limit to thought we should have to think both sides of this limit (we should therefore have to be able to think what cannot be thought). The limit can, therefore, only be drawn in language and what lies on the other side of the limit will be simply nonsense." This proposal to understand and question transcendent arguments is mirrored in Denise Ferreira da Silva's work, "On Matter Beyond the Equation of Value," in which she calls for an "immanent point of departure." (2017, footnote 4) This Baraka-Wittgensteinian boundary is evidence of one's embeddedness in the domain they analyze. Their call was that this dynamic must be shown. Denise da Silva's (2017) analysis of contemporary infrastructures of norms and institutions would state that, ". . . blackness returns The Thing at the limits of modern

thought." It is important to understand that boundary so that we can know the organizing dynamics of our state of affairs. Blackness, then, as that which is posited as an outsider within, as Patricia Hill Collins put it, licenses this analysis of our modern value system as it is formed both in excess of and downstream from histories of slavery, migration, racialization, etc. This is why we shall focus on Black Cultural studies.

Contemporary standpoint epistemologists take up a sociogenic principle in this regard, particularly Jingyi Wu in "Epistemic Advantage on the Margin." (2022) Wu's work builds upon that of W.E.B. Du Bois, Sylvia Wynter, Frantz Fanon, Herbert Blumer, and Patricia Hill Collins. If to occupy a position wherein one is able to share information amongst peers and with another group but receives no information from that other group, this asymmetry, despite indexing subordinate and dominant relationships within that state of affairs, shows that the out-group, not the in-group, can map how these relationships emerge and are codified. This is because of the out-group's prohibition from in/dominant-group dynamics. That position allows them to encode those dynamics as a constitutive component of their state of affairs. The out/marginal-groups do this faster and more efficiently than those who both receive outside information and freely share amongst themselves while not providing anything to/for others. The insiders cannot know the limits of this model because it's assumed, thereby unquestioned.

Wu's analysis reveals why transcendent arguments, i.e. abstracting oneself from a state to know it better than those therein, fail. Their proof shows that one does not have to assume a transcendent position in order to analyze the governing dynamics of a state of affairs. Without this embeddedness, analysis returns vacuous results. Black studies, according to Denise Ferreira da Silva, has the capacity to explain the dynamics of instituting this asymmetrical sharing of information. This asymmetry is downstream from embodying a third-person point-of-view, i.e. possessing a model of these dynamics that stipulates that one is both inside the state of affairs but outside of the group benefitting from the system in place. That system organizes those affairs in such a way that marginal groups understand their position and how that position is valued given that system in such a way that one's actions are overdetermined by that system.

The above explains why Bohmian mechanics appears during recent developments of the sociogenic principle — see Sylvia Wynter (2001, p. 36-38). A measurement problem arises during the analysis of complex dynamic systems. How can we be sure of our analyses when the mechanism we utilize alters that system? What are we measuring if that mechanism is not to be included in that system because it maps the phenomena it

was designed to capture? Wynter's move aligns with the hesitant sociology of Du Bois whereby, like Bohm, experiment and/or study must be embedded in the conditions they analyze. This gives way to the formulations that we come up with to explain those conditions having multiple solutions—the same subject, multiple identities given the configuration space. Sociology being the study of where law intervenes in chance for Du Bois aligns with the consequence that subjects observe themselves through an embodied frame of reference. That frame is a material constituent of that space and follows from the configuration of norms and institutions that license the way subjects articulate themselves and are identified by others. The closer we look the more we find that the way spaces are configured lead to different possibilities with regard to the identifiable outcomes of the same subject's operations across domains. Our theories, models indexing worldviews, map probabilities over configuration spaces. What is possible, is necessarily possible across that space until that domain is configured in such a way that what emerges can be identified as proof of the framework employed to organize that space. That identity references the conditions in which that possibility can be articulated. As such, a subject can participate in different domains or contexts, however, the framework indexing a worldview's overdetermination of that subject's activity via the identities accessible to it and, thereby, relevant within that framework, can only know, i.e. observe, that subject in one way or another.

For Bohm and other physicists, and in direct alignment with the socio-communication model of Stuart Hall (1973) below, our model provides a mechanism that encodes conditions in which the phenomenon we abstracted from features of experience and indexed under some concept can be said to be members of other contexts, thereby a member of the world. This is so when the relationship between those features cohere in the object revealed when those conditions are reconstructed. That concept, here subject, can be found in different objects. Consequently, we too must be in the conditions we model. However, if this mechanism is not a part of that environment, there is no way to say that it measured anything. Transcendence is on the ropes. It is for this reason that nascent understandings of superpositions and uncertainty were of interest to Du Bois' theory of Black double consciousness and his hesitant sociology whereby study becomes the analysis of where and when law intervenes in chance.

**2.0.**

In this paper, I discuss how optimism and pessimism in Black studies hide transcendent arguments. I hope to show why they fail in virtue of utilizing a mechanism that posits itself outside of the affairs they analyze. The only reason to assume such a position seems to be to organize how we could, for the former, or ought, for the latter, perceive that state, hence our focus on mechanisms of interpretation and how they are imposed and/or materialize in the world. Pessimists and optimists assume transcendent positions that inevitably waver. The optimist acknowledges life as an outsider within a state denying access to value and proposes an alternative. (Moten, 2008) The pessimist denies its subject the ability to possess any value altogether because value is a proposition only for those defined within that system, not the constitutive outside of those populations. Outsiders are acknowledged insofar as they're denied benefits from that system. Thus, pessimism positions itself as the only theory that has access to its subjects because they're unknowable in these prevailing systems of value except through their negation. This is so because pessimism is a metatheory of our state of affairs (Wilderson , 2020, p. 14).

I will utilize Denise da Silva's analysis of an equation of value in which blackness is identified yet codified as the zero of the system. Thus, blackness is implied in each instantiation upon that basis which in turn grounds that system—consider the ordinal logics of Alan Turing for example. As such, Harlem Renaissance philosopher, Alain Locke's, functional analysis in "Values and Imperatives" allows us to realize the embeddedness of a meta or second-order theory. "The further we investigate, the more we discover that there is no fixity of content to values, and the more we are bound, then, to infer that their identity as groups must rest on other elements." (1935, p. 40) Meta, secondary, i.e. transcendent, theories attempt to codify an order within the domains in which they were abstracted to dictate how one moves from one sub/co-domain organizing states of affairs to another. In sum, these theories embody the process of becoming the non-member member of that domain.

This much is covered in Black studies and political scientist, Cedric Robinson's (1980), work in which he comments on order, both political and epistemological. Alongside Robinson, the Wittgensteinian paradigm allows us to question systems of order, not evacuate the value of that which it orders prior to the articulation of the value of its expression through infrastructures of norms and institutions. That which is cast outside of that order "orders" the system and is how that order is known despite one occupying some position that determines their place as outside. A metatheory's being

embedded but unrepresented at the heart of a theory, because it licenses what moves are available after the implementation of a rule in that theory or model, is also shown by philosopher of logic and mathematics, Jarred Warren, in *Shadows of Syntax* (2020). What counts in the model is determined by the constitutive rules of that model which are present but not represented in the output of that model. Even for Locke's "A Functional View of Value Ultimates," a "functional approach, even should it lead to a non-functionalist theory of value, of necessity treats the value varieties in terms of their interrelationships, guaranteeing a comparative approach and a more realistic type of value analysis." (1945, p. 81).

What's most important to analysis is not necessarily the products but an understanding of the frames that produce and codify the function of identities within a system of value. As such, we must analyze the this-ness of those identities that are inevitably in excess of any one determination of their value—hence appeals to physical interpretations of superpositions in the literature, i.e. the functional content of identities having multiple solutions across domains. Over contexts (=sub/co-domains), the function of identities across positions in that domain produces different results as they relate, i.e. index, the features available within the frame constituting that context. Those features may differ across contexts, yet that function maintains the same relationship it encodes between them. Hence, Stuart Hall's formulation that the same subject, known by its operations and how those "ops" (Moten, 2008) function to articulate a value given the context, can be known under different identities which only have a value with respect to the infrastructures of norms and institutions organizing local affairs. From this functional analysis, wherein functions are relations between features that then become an object of that function, (Taylor, 1998) we can make a model of the world without recourse to the extra-systemic, transcendental, machinery that may render our analysis dubious from the start.

## 3.0.

We make our start by understanding how relationships between features of experience are encoded and projected across contexts to see if that relation coheres elsewhere, thus mapping the extent to which the frames, models, or theories about the world we develop apply. If so, they represent a material understanding of the world. This occurs because we can decode, actually explain, worldly dynamics. Applying those codes

returns an object of experience, albeit not always the same thing upon which it was trained. When successful, this represents a real extension of that identified concept within the world we inhabit. For this, we return to Stuart Hall.

Going forward, we must conceive of what the application of a frame determining a context in which what does or does not obtain in the world entails. We will then look at how projections of a frame highlighting particular features of experience, explained by a concept referencing the conditions organized by that frame, and from which this context follows, makes the object obtaining that framework a real extension of that concept. Finally, we will see the importance of this in the social sciences as the study of where law intervenes in chance. Our theories or models of the world map the probability of our concepts obtaining or not over the spaces we configure, manipulate, experiment upon. As such, these real and variable probabilities exist and are smoothed out across domains except for when conditions, here infrastructures of norms and institutions, allow them to emerge.

Hall's encoding/decoding model of social communication—describing social formation and evolution—provides a key insight into where Bohmian-Wynterian mechanics and sociogenesis intersect. It is through that framework that we find a physical interpretation, a model, of the union between theory and practice. It explains how concepts forged through this circuit are forced into becoming real extensions, i.e. members, of our world. That circuit—a process of interpretation, affecting an operator's worldly orientation, which then allows for certain environmental input to re-enter that process and, thereby, changing how others orient themselves to how that operator's changed within that environment—provides us with explanatory power. The function of applying a theory to organize practices constitute while changing what's necessarily possible in that framing of the world. This cannot be accomplished through definition alone.

The encoding/decoding process (=mechanism) is conceived as a finite yet open procedure that runs through, because embedded within, an environment. If outside of that environment, it would return null results. This model, if anything, shows that a subject cannot be "delinked" (Silva, 2014, p. 93) from the environment within which it's articulated, hence Silva's focus on "plenum" and a Bohr-Wynterian focus on embedding, mutual-implication, and entanglement. Taking input from the conditions wherein that mechanism's placed, its output becomes part of that environment, thereby changing the domain upon which it acts as it composes what's considered that environment's

constituents. This mechanism selects features of its environment and encodes a relationship between these features for later use in the following way.

> An encoding is an open frame produced by a mechanism abstracting features *a* from some environment such that the set *A* is/becomes an object of *F* from which we have a model an *x* is an *F*.

That model tests the extent to which *F*-ness tags equivalent sets of relations when applied to organize subsequent contexts of experience in relation to those resources (Fara, 2015). Its use is licensed when that set of relations appears, highlighting objects that contain that relationship between features while disregarding others. With that being said, it's not necessarily reference to the thing upon which that encoding was initially based but to the relationship itself, now considered an object of thought within those conditions, that's important. That object is the framework that one utilizes to explain a particular phenomenon. Different objects obtaining across contexts organized by this framework are said to obtain a functional equivalence across those contexts. They could be different iterations of the same object over time, or different objects that fall within the same class of an organizational scheme. The encoded framework indexes a concept that is seen as being a part of our world although not necessarily a thing in it—see Silva (2015; 2017). When that framework is utilized, what appears as significant within and to that framework is decoded in terms relevant to those receiving the output of that process.

This circuit is crucial as it's through functional equivalence that we find that objects (of thought) are only significant insofar as these encoded resources can be shared across contexts or amongst subjects. It is only within this circuit that what is identified as significant can be said to be a constituent of our shared state of affairs, that the "fact" that this framework obtains represents a "real" extension of the concept that frame encodes. As features are of the world and the relations indexed between them composed by a subject running through that environment, questions of whether subjectivity is of the world don't arise for there is no way to say that it is not based on its output. The question of a thing in and of itself doesn't arise either, it's a detour. What is of concern is the functional composition of "worlds."

By definition, functions are abstract objects. If we have an encoded set of conditions and a context following those conditions wherein that encoding comes available, then the pairing of those become an object of that function. That function becomes an abstract object encoding sets of relations. These relations, therefore,

are objects in their own right, making the subject an object of study as well. Equivalence, then, can be held between different encodings that hold in different contexts, i.e. that both follow from the same conditions. Different subjects oriented to the world in a similar way, can encode relations between themselves, thereby making those relations objects of their world. Consequently, functions and equivalences can be considered constituents of our world. Effectively, what is shown is the process that makes concepts like race, gender, class, etc. materialize within the subjects, constituents, of our world.

A system of concrete sensate cognition as a theory of subjectivity can be formalized by this process, encoding features of experience that become members of a stock of prior encodings that when projected, and obtaining an object in a latter context, expresses a concept whose content is the function of that encoding's application. Encodings and decodings that obtain functional equivalences with prior resources that are re-encoded for later use can be composed so as to construct more complex concepts. The complex concept references the functional content that constitute its parts, not the whole that it supposedly denotes. When output from one concept becomes input for another, this citational line holds when and only when the conditions for each component are met. If not, either the concept is updated, or it doesn't obtain.

For example, this explains the difference between (1) a dog-like creature becoming a "dog" because its components come together dog-wise—not that each component exactly replicates the initial thing upon which we were trained—or (2) that creature becoming a new discovery, or (3) our projection just being incorrect. This set of resources are applied to see where and when these concept-wise relations obtain in other contexts, not the features themselves. This process socially calibrates this cognitive system over time by way of the output that is received and decoded with respect to the resources by which that output enters the environment for self and others. Resultingly, this changes that environment's shape as this process continues. The subject, then, becomes a compiler of the analog sensate domain these cognitive terms codes and re-encodes into forms projected to organize future experience. (Fodor, 1975) A concept, then, is expressed as a constituent of our world when concept-wise approximations between data and world obtain.

Socio-culturally, identity formation and the projection of that framework indirectly proves the necessary possibility of the interlocking subject-wise activities that

are not represented in output but required to explain how these identifications are determined and why they have value. (Hempel, 1952) Identity implies subject activity (=subjectivity). Concepts (=objects of thought), when shared, can be considered empirically only as a function of their value within a system already in place. That system was abstracted from prior activities. This much was discussed by Alain Locke (1945). However, systems that do not update given the contexts in which they are applied will turn up empty, for those conditions are no longer available due to past output becoming future input to encoding/decoding or that they contradict its application during their evolution. Values are derived from facts and yet the citation of that fact is only significant when its function is determined in a system of value already in place and updated accordingly. Our encoding/decoding mechanism helps us utilize this model without onboarding a circular argument.

It must be said, we are not born with concepts. Only a device to compose, reproduce, and project those we utilize to organize subsequent experience. There isn't evidence that this capacity and its output is not of the world because the search for the proof required to say that it's not turns up empty. If the output does not reference an actual thing and yet is an object of thought, that object is still coming from us, articulated through a mechanism running through an environment as it composes its content. What obtains the status of "objectivity" in the world is relative to a frame of reference that indexes its determinate mode of expression. This does not mean that everything goes, for an expression is only valid insofar as its range of application is known and its use represents a real extension of that domain.

**4.0.**

Our environment, our world, then, must be finite yet open. Conceptually, compact manifolds without boundaries in differential topology allow us to visualize spaces in this way. However, since we are speaking of features at various positions in an unbounded space such that relationships between sets of features are encoded and projected to organize subdomains of that very space, we can think set-theoretically. In this way, finite but open is not hard to conceive as a space that is considered a subset of itself has a nondeterminate interior with no exterior. We populate that space with objects by virtue of the differences they obtain without necessarily being separate from each other. Difference without separation is what we will turn to Denise da Silva (2016) for

below. Thus, space is constituted as it's populated, not necessarily "filled" with things but created as different "objects" are articulated from others.

Space's internal constitution has been a staple of physical inquiry. The concepts relevant within a world of facts, not things, according to Wittgenstein, can be conceptualized given our mechanism above. That space is conceived along four axes and is constituted as a "universe", world of worlds, and the conceptual mapping of distances, i.e. differences, between them, held relative to a constant which in all is considered a finite yet open phenomenon. This being constituted internally by distances along and relative to that constant means that our objects of study are situated within a four-dimensional grid. That grid can be considered in socio-cultural terms along semantic and rhetorical axes, according to Henry Louis Gates Jr. (1988), as well as epistemically, thanks to Michel Foucault in *The Order of Things* (1966).

Our encoding/decoding mechanism running through an environment means that it never finds itself nowhere, but always somewhere specific. (Flatley, 2012) So if thrown into a world organized by some epistemological grid, the gravity of events encoded and utilized to frame it explain what is licensed in what follows and shifts grid lines. The displacement of these lines pushes certain content into a domain where someone's capacity to decode what's the case, relative to their previously encoded resources, allows them to improvise off what's given to reproduce what's understood to be the case in terms relevant to that framework in the next situation.

These grid lines are inferred from the distance/difference between positions within this space held relative to the following. A three-dimensional set of features, i.e. "world," encoded by a two-dimensional constant representing a framed worldview—see Hall (1973, p. 11). That view's either a previous encoding that obtains a functional equivalence with what's apparent now (therefore able to be decoded) or a shared encoding that can and is instituted as a norm across subjects for subsequent experience. This is inversely related to the root/route covering the difference of the output of a decoding with respect to that two-dimensionally encoded environment, i.e. the distance between this iteration and prior use. This formulation becomes an extension of appropriate use relative to other encodings held in relation to a norm.

Of course, this measure represents a model in which this description is a constant and differences between positions within a universe of worldviews, of "worlds" as sub/co-domains of a universe of discourse. These are determined relative to that constant, i.e. the model by which we tell the difference. That constant changes shape as

subjects work in and through that environment. If we have two axes that frame a particular worldview, this frame moves along another axis over however many iterations of one's projection of that concept so as to organize their subsequent experience. This operation holds insofar as the extension of that concept indexes a relationship between features of the world. This system is held in relation to others over the constant or norm described above. Norms are functional equivalences between decodings positing a similar orientation to the world between subjects. Through this parallel transporting, the encodings/decodings are held functionally equivalent across systems. Movement along this line produces a difference without separability in Silva's terms, whereby we tell the difference between "worlds" by whether an equivalence of orientation over norms obtain or not. Distances between world's over successive iterations, moving us along a constant's line of projection, generates, as well as narrates, the space in which our socio-cultural and political affairs can be said to be significant. This is in accordance with Wynterian sociogenesis. As worldviews change, they either turn closer to others or diverge, i.e. turning the other direction and leaving certain aspects of the domain out of view for the sake of the framework being projected to organize that space.

Novelist and anthropologist, Zora Neale Hurston (1934) would speak of angularity while considering the characteristics of Black expression, particularly insofar as it is complementary or divergent from normative forms of life. If we triangulate the location of these indexed worlds, their outline in three dimensions gives us the volume of the displacement caused by the members of that worldview. This indirectly provides a measure of the gravity, the significance, of this formation relative to differing states of affairs. In sociological terms, this is the amount of "space" that entity, its mode of expression, takes up with respect to others. This process inevitably shapes other states of affairs, allowing and/or disallowing certain expressions due to the configuration of that space as these procedures progress in tandem. A model for discussing the concept of articulation (Hall, 1980) with respect to Stuart Hall's (1973) social communication model emerges. One can explain how relations of subordination and dominance arise and evolve over time with respect to the conditions that allow or disallow subjects' capacity for expression, not necessarily what is expressed, for different expressions can maintain the same relationship between individuals.

We can simplify this further if we pay attention to worldviews. Worldviews are organized by frames of reference. If we consider the World, by its socio-cultural and

political affairs, as one within which there are many sub/co-domains projected and surfacing within certain categories, fields, and/or disciplines by organizing what is to be found in different regions of that space, there is a unique difference in the capacity to encode a worldview when one considers their position outside of that domain or within it. For example, in taking a 360° view of one's surroundings, if we are outside of that world, i.e. see a world as a whole within an assumed worldview held constant and therefore providing no new information regarding the totality of that experience, then our line of sight combined with the relation between the extent of space that view captures would be static. In fact, despite our seeing "everything," our attention would be on the vaguest terms because the world is still. We would shut out what is deemed irrelevant to seeing that "whole" as we are fixated merely on the boundary of that world. However, if one is in the world as they project frames to organize experience from one finite arc of that view to the next, more would fit in that frame as the world moves along, making it seem as though the sum circumference of our views is larger than the previous scenario. The closer one assumes a position to the center of the world, constructing it as they're in it, the more gravity, the more grave, each decoding.

This much was formalized with respect to standpoint epistemologies and relativity. We admit to there being multiple frames and study those frames by finding what is invariant across them. If the relation between the extent of the actual world within one's line of sight across a fixed domain and what's circumscribed within their point of view is held constant and combined with a relation between that framed view with respect to one's line of sight, line of inquiry, when paired with a relation between that line of sight and one's position given what we see by virtue of projecting some encoding, something occurs. If that pair combined with the former relation is held proportionate to a line of sight, our line of inquiry given our position, then we find that different systems experience the same world, albeit differently. Functional equivalences between terms allows us to compare these worlds relative to the constant or norm by which the space between them was ascertained. Objectively, this means that what is in the field of view of one system may not be captured in another, yet that same object is a necessary possibility for each system relative to a norm as long as a functional equivalence, a decoding, arises in terms relevant but unexpected prior to encoding that domain. Logically, we are forced into these concepts being real extensions of some worldview without having to leave the system of systems structuring that universe of possibility, without having to reach for a transcendent argument.

Within a world of possible worlds, finite within these axes yet open for constituted and extended internally, each possible position within that system of systems prior to being collected into bounded worldviews can be put into one-to-one correspondence with a subset of itself. As such, we can formalize a method to enumerate without having to count each position. Following Georg Cantor, snaking through this system of positions, drawing a line through each coordinate, we can represent this same spherical universe as a line of positions progressing in both directions. If a subset of that line, a grouping of points, represents a worldview, then it follows that there are more possible worldviews than there are positions on that line. What might seem implausible at first is rather intuitive. For example, given a number line, a subset of that line would be the even numbers. However, the object "even number" was not a member of the original line yet composed of its members. Therefore, the concept "even number" represents an object that is a real extension of that line, a necessary possibility structurally implied by that system. That concept remains latent until actualized by the projection of a concept organizing that line in such a way that that object emerges. That concept is forced back into reality as the output of an encoding operation that can then be decoded in terms available to that line.

Forcing may seem to imply that these concepts were external to the environment and implemented as an interruption. However, we see that the concept is an emergent quantity, it is not imposed. Those that are imposed are quickly revealed as such. For an encoding abstracted from the environment that's projected in the future produces output that is decoded in terms relevant to that previous encoding. This means that there existed a non-empty domain in which there's a framing or context from which that abstracted encoding was embedded. If external to that system, the domain could be empty or contradictory. As long as another sub/co-domain does not produce an encoding that when decoded asserts the nonexistence of another, then we can say that the concept was already there, lying as an alternative arrangement of features as yet actualized by some subject. That object was not yet available to the frame of reference until subjects decoded and reencoded that relationship between features in such a way that it obtained a functional equivalence with what was known to others—see Cohen on forcing.

Forcing is really about a poetic computational capacity that is revealed by its output but not represented in it because it produced it. As Ada Lovelace would call computation a poetic science, this process is exemplified by a creative capacity, the infinite use of finite means. If we have a particular worldview licensing certain

expressions that reference the conditions in which their function was defined and of which this context is a successor, then the function of composing that encoded set of conditions can be abstracted in the following way. If it's the case that if a worldview obtains then there's a function by which that view is projected, therefore a function citing the conditions of its proper application, then that worldview is expressed by its function of application — see Church (1956). In this way, if a concept's a necessary possibility given certain conditions, and its indexed worldview comes available within a particular reference frame, one in which the output of that encoded frame's implementation proves functionally equivalent to a resources possessed by a subject, then that functionally equivalent yet unforeseen output represents a real extension of that framework from within the world in which that subject operates, not outside of it.

It follows that we can associate different bundles of features to construct more complex worlds from our stockpiles of encoded concepts. That from that domain of selection, during projection we can compose, through functional composition, complex concepts. Composition means the output from one operation becomes the input for another which then relates the domain of the first to the last. If that composite obtains objects in the current context of application, then it is added to our inventory of resources to explain world processes. This is what is intended by the concept of poetic computation, of associative thinking.

Associative thinking is a process of interest from poets Keats to Fred Moten. Discussed under the concept of negative capability, we have formalized how associations that are not apparent can be evoked in our actual world by showing how one abstracts a function of some concept's expression and composes it with others within their environment. When applied in the current context, this resource forges unexpected but relevant output. A function prior to its application can be equivalent with others. They become distinct when they're applied when considering their output, but if a functional equivalence obtains between some output from another function when certain conditions arise, not necessarily some thing but a relation between things, unexpected but structurally relevant output obtains through composition. These compositions cite their means (=conditions) of expression through the function of their application, thereby licensing their output in subsequent contexts. For Keats and Moten, it is this capacity, now formalized through an encoding/decoding mechanism, that we compose "flexible" and "open" structures through which we associate what's given

in different ways and project that complex idea as a real extension of the world from which these structures were derived.

**5.0.**

In order to ground our theory and trouble its being held distinct from practice, we'll look to a sociological example. Many explanations arise as to why the application of theories to organize experience in a way that can be replicated across contexts have failed. However, does this mean that theory should be dispensed with? Consider what occurs when there isn't a framework that is intersubjectively held, where no theory is utilized as a guide to experience. If we interrogate 1000 cases with only 1 turning out as proof of our hypothesis, and from that result reinstitute that practice which never fails to detect and thereby confirms what we already believe to be true, then suppose that sometimes, 5% of the time, we find out that that practice turns out a false positive. In the next bundle of experimentation, we obtain 51 proofs that we hold as a norm across contexts. However, only 1 is true, the others are false, making it such that only 2% of our reports given our experience turn out to be true. Continued attempts at replication increases this issue to 5%, making under a third of our characterizations of the "real" world true, i.e. valid within the scope of applying this model of action/expression—see Clancy (2021).

We quickly find that in the above it is easy to attribute this failure to the individual rather than the system in place. Clancy has shown that due to this individual being seen as separate from the issue rather than an exemplar of it, there is little pressure or blatant disregard of the system in place guiding, licensing, action. Accountability to design is easily eschewed and blame is placed on singular instances. Attend to the instance apart from the system, norms continue under different names for the relationship in and to the world they dictate. Consider the implications with respect to race, class, and gender. The relationships they index remain the same although the single thing of concern has been removed. But what if we account for theory?

If theory is unified with practice—practice considered the implementation of a theory and theory the codification of practice updated as that theory is tested—then this picture shifts drastically. Say if we encode a framework that is abstracted from experience and then project that frame so as to decode the current context in terms relative to our store of prior encodings. We test whether a functional equivalence occurs between

results, that equivalence explaining current experience. We can then raise our expected true cases to 5%. All things the same, we would get 98 equivalences, 50 valid, 48 errors, i.e. 5% false positives from the remaining 950. Using our framework as a guide, all 50 cases replicate when similar conditions arise, licensing the application of that frame, with <3 errors. When shared across subjects, joint application of this framework allows for the identity of this concept as a member of the world to be explained in different ways by virtue of these functional equivalences. We, therefore, eliminate a relativism that cascades into mutually exclusive interpretations that cannot be verified because they were only applicable within individual instances defined by what is not the case for another individual—see Sylvia Wynter's "On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory."

## 6.0.

In conclusion, practice ignoring theory ignores that it's implementing a theory, whether on purpose or accidently, that justifies its employment. Without being able to reference the theory, what one's doing has no explanation or reveals that one does not want to be held accountable for failure, for its collapse, but reap its benefits while it lasts. With the example above, we find proof of Hall's method (1996) as well as a concrete way to speak about this unity without recourse to transcendence. What is significant is only such if a functional equivalence obtains between different but not mutually exclusive findings. Those output operate in similar ways given the conditions framed by those participating in that world. Bad theories, those that obtain no thing because held universal and, therefore, it cannot be said when and where they do or do not apply, exemplify bad practice. In Footnote 4 of "Matter Beyond the Equation of Value," Silva proposes an "immanent point" of departure inspired by exactly what superpositions in physics predicts and models, collapse when operators are reduced to one solution. That model helps us conceive of this tension, and is why we pursued it here.

With theory as practice and practice as theory, we are not calling for our armchairs just yet. A theory or orientation to and within a world with respect to a system is implemented as a guide to action. When the relations that theory indexes is abstracted from experience and then put to use to organize future contexts, it is done relative to a system of encoded functionally equivalent output. What become the constituents of our worlds come from the implementation of that framework across similar conditions. If that frame obtains no one where or thing, it's empty; if it does but

the output is different, we update the model. There's no need for transcendent cognition or other-worldly subjectivity for the mechanism that does this runs through the world, its output is a part of the world and so is the mechanism. With this conceptualization in hand, we are able to propose a difference without separability as Silva lays out. (2016) To "think the World" with respect to cultural difference, as Silva has done, comes to the fore in our system for we can speak of paraconsistent theories as subdomains of a universe of expression in material terms. Two formations may not be interchangeable but, as members of the system, they could be functionally equivalent expressions of a connected universe of worldly co-domains. It is only through this functional equivalence, or not, that differences in the extension of the terms that qualify each can be discussed—see Alain Locke. Individual yet not mutually exclusive, an expression from either is valid in virtue of the constitutive conventions, encodings, of the conceptual system already in place yet calibrated through experience. Past output from them and others become new input for subsequent applications by way of their function within the conditions in which subjects find themselves. A division between theory and practice, then, is a secondary and derivative distinction. Prior to an operation's determination as one or the other, theory and practice are functionally equivalent concepts that go into the formulation of what we take as the constituents of our world(s).

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[i] Editor's note: Portuguese translation made by Plí's editorial team