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Article

# Concerning A Transformative Power in Certain Symbols, Letters and Words

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**Abstract:** This paper is a formal distillation of, presentation of and a rigorous, illustrative defense of a couple of fundamental ideas in the domain of **computational mysticism** — a still young discipline, put forward by the author for the first time in this manner. The motivations for this work are several, however, the need to support the exploration of science, and especially computer science with spiritual or at least psychological problems in mind, as well as the fact that 21st Century and beyond, humans can't take for granted the fact that interactions with machines and artificial-abstract constructs such as *artificial languages* and *intelligences* do or/shall eventually have a tremendous bearing on the psycho-social manifestations of human life across most if not all levels and classes of society, and that we had better understand and prepare for the inevitable before it is too late.

**Keywords:** philosophy; foundations; language; interaction; symbolic power; processing; ideas

## The Core Argument

*"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."*<sup>1</sup>

— John 1:14 [2]

It has come to my attention, through thought as well as by reflection, how books come to influence and determine not just the course of the lives of individual men, but that of entire societies and perhaps the entire human race!

The true power of a written work — whether a book; big or small, whether just a chapter in a book or even just a single page or paragraph in it — in some cases, even just a verse or perhaps just a sentence if not a mere *word*; is not just in how many people's heads it gets logged, but also in whose head it is logged *when it manifests its true effects upon reality*.

Essentially, that a single word; perhaps even a mere letter, occurring to a certain kind of person or people, can change the destiny of the world; *a word can change the course of reality!*

Put another way; **a word, and sometimes just a letter, can change the world.**

For example, so-called *words of power* — such as "Amen", "Om", "Aha" and such, but also, certain *special* words; sometimes names/nouns like "Ra", "Jesus", "Spirit", "Satan", "Elohi" or perhaps "Hitler". Sometimes commands/verbs such as "See", "Be", "Think" or "Eheieh" might also be appreciated and understood as such. For those who interact with modern *artificial constructs* such as computers, software programs, robots and such, similar words of importance and power come to mind such as "Start", "Stop", "Run", "Play", "End", "Undo", "Write", "Process", etc. — most of which are *call-to-action* words, but also some descriptive terms like "Interface", "Thing", "Intelligence", "Transcendence" or even just "Window" and such are of importance to the present discussion.

Now, if a word can do that, think for a moment, what a chain or rather, a *well crafted sequence* of them can do!

Take for example, the sheer power the phrase

<sup>1</sup> As we shall come to appreciate in this discourse, even basic things like this critical, powerful scriptural verse do take on alternate forms in various different, though still *authoritative* contexts. My personal physical copy of the scriptures presents this verse as "The Word became flesh, he lived among us" [1]

*"I Love You."*

has when spoken in *any* circumstance, in some contexts, in *some way* or by a certain kind of person to another. For completeness's sake, hew that phrase and consider the power and *meaning* in the individual words it contains — you might as well analyze the individual letters if you will! Then, contrast that with just

*"I Die."*

And, like a certain vision that occurs to a multitude at once or in common — such as the daily appearance of a sun in the skies constitutes a certain *shared, undeniable reality*, think, what collective power a certain word, a sentence, a paragraph or better, a book, has on the definition of, shaping of or rather *transformation* of the character and circumstances of men and society when it not only dwells in the hands of some or many, but that it has been read — essentially, *interacted with*, and is hopefully understood and thus has become a *part* or rather, an *extension* of their minds — their *nature*!

And to appreciate that sometimes all it takes is a single word to change the world, consider how God, or rather nature — which God has designed and then manifested, works; a man could live all his life in a *cave*, his understanding of reality wholly or mostly determined by his [perhaps *spatial*] limits therein — such as the slaves or prisoners in Plato's cave allegory were[3]. However, even in an extreme, *grave* condition such as that, consider what would happen when a certain, special, transformative word, phrase, sentence or idea suddenly occurs to one or more of those people. It could occur in the nature of a simple but strange, mystical or magical utterance. It could occur in the nature of a singular but strange or commanding picture or perhaps as an image; a symbol or perhaps a series... *sequence* of them. It could be such as happens upon a man in a certain kind of dream, and which, after he wakes, he finds that even though he'd never seen, heard or touched something (perhaps even usually or naturally remote, unreachable or unimaginable), and yet, once it had *occurred* to them such as in that dream, thought or reflection, becomes deeply or rather *specially etched* into their mind — sometimes, effortlessly so; it can't anymore be banished and nor can it be taken for granted thereafter if not *everafter*; it was **certainly experienced** and that's all that mattered.

Such is the power of the words or ideas I speak of; simple or tiny in appearance or nature, and yet, with the power to seed or effectively catalyze transformations that though they start in a single man's head, have the capacity to *kick-start* **transformative changes** that could spread across society, sometimes slowly and largely undetected like changes in climate, or perhaps fast and near-spontaneous like a plague in the air, unto entire cities, nations and even across space and time — unto the future and even remotely placed generations or civilizations thereafter.

The more interesting thing though, especially in this day and time, is that, such powerful, **change-causing stimuli** could originate not from human thought, dreams or social interactions with other humans, but with perhaps inhuman, purely abstract and/or potentially pure artificial constructs such as physically embodied *abstract machines*, computer programs and/or software systems. Chatbots, personal assistants and interactive *intelligent robots* are a great and currently important case to consider in relation to this matter. A simple, but sufficiently illustrative scientific case of this category of artificial constructs is presented in the next sub-section before we dive into the various supporting philosophical illustrations, arguments and theories in the sections thereafter.

*An Illustration of How Powerful, Transformative Ideas, Words or Stimuli Can Occur To Humans From Inhuman Sources — case of TEAPA, a simple personal assistant program in the TEA language*

To come to appreciate the power of certain words and expressions — in fact, even mere letters, we are going to take a brief moment to consider the case of a little software program that has been specifically developed to support the philosophical arguments presented in the first section of this work.

The software program, 'TEAPA', an artificial construct expressed using the new computer programming language known as TEA[4] [5], is a simple but full-fledged artificial personal assistant

system in the sense of the likes of Apple's Siri, Google Now or Google Gemini, Microsoft's Copilot or the more minimal kinds like the Linux Command-line personal assistant known as 'Betty'<sup>2</sup>. In fact, we shall prefer to liken **TEAPA** (short for "TEA Personal Assistant") to Betty, with the only important distinctions between them being; that TEAPA was designed and written in a single sitting just as an illustration of what's possible; that TEAPA is written in the TEA general-purpose Text-Processing oriented programming language[6][4], while Betty is written in **Ruby**<sup>3</sup>; that though both TEAPA and Betty are meant to be usable on the commandline or via commandline interfaces such as in Linux or the Windows Subsystem for Linux, TEAPA is only meant to be illustrative at the moment and won't do any 'sophisticated' work, while Betty was designed from the ground-up to help turn user-queries into commands that are then run on the underlying system and for which results and effects are then produced.

TEAPA, as it is right now (refer to the complete TEAPA program source-code as shown in Listing 1), will basically serve the following basic purpose:

When provided with a particular entity's name — living or dead, real or imaginary, human or spirit — e.g. "GA", "MANON", "RA" or just "Albert Einstein", TEAPA shall then allow the user to proceed to hold an infinite multi-turn conversation with the named entity — defaulting to the simple name "PA" if user didn't provide a useful name, and allowing the conversation to be terminated at any moment when the user issues the quit command "end".

**Listing 1.** TEAPA, a simple personal assistant AI written in TEA

```

1  #!/usr/bin/tttt -fc
2  #-----|
3  # TEAPA: TEA Personal Assistant
4  #-----|
5  # This little program is a full
6  # though simple, artificial
7  # personal assistant created
8  # using the TEA language
9  #####|
10
11 # set entity name
12 v:vPANAME:{PA}
13 f:~$:1SET:1NOSET
14 l:1SET
15 i:{Who do u wish to talk to? }|i: # user's entity name
16 g:|f!:~$:1SET|l:1RULES|l:1SET|v:vPANAME|j:1RULES
17 l:1NOSET | y*: | v:vPANAME # evoke invoker's entity
18 l:1RULES # show instructions
19 i!:{At any time, reply with 'end' to quit}|i:
20 v:vPROMPT:{ Talk to Me: }
21 g*:{ }v:vPANAME:vPROMPT | v:vPAPROMPT
22 l:1PROMPT # prompt, get answer, process
23 y:vPAPROMPT| i: |z:| q:~end$
24 # generate answer
25 p!:27 | s:_:13:5 | d:_.*$ | s: | a: | x!:{ | }
26 i: | j:1PROMPT # loop

```

One might wonder, and justifiably so, **what, really, can a personal assistant like TEAPA help me do, or what important problems can it solve for me?**

Without divulging much details about how or why personal assistant technologies (or generally, **artificial intelligence** systems) came to be implemented in the first place, or why they might be among

<sup>2</sup> <https://github.com/pickhardt/betty>

<sup>3</sup> <https://github.com/ruby/ruby>

the hottest, most important areas of on-going active research around the world in the Computer Science and Software Engineering fields, I should say that basically, the answer to that question above is that 'it depends, but also it is arguably necessary.'

For example, let us look at a few problematic scenarios in which having a companion like TEAPA might come in handy;

- Assume Bob and Alice are two friends living in two different, spatially removed parts of the world, and that for some time, though they normally hold conversations with each other via IM (Instant Messaging) platforms such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Messenger and the like, a moment comes — such as during the compulsory, state-sanctioned Internet Blackout that occurred in Uganda during the 2021 general elections — when Bob and Alice, usually addicted or used to engaging and keeping each other busy with text-chatting during boring or tricky moments of the day, and while the internet is ON, suddenly find themselves with no simple way to hold a conversation despite having some computers lying around that they could use to run some alternative chatting software. In such a case, either Bob or Alice could just open their computer and invoke TEAPA, and then tell it to summon their friend to them — Bob would tell TEAPA to evoke "Alice" and vice versa. So, it turns out, and interestingly so, that Bob could actually hold an infinitely long, and perhaps engaging or satisfying, though *cryptic*, conversation with a physically absent Alice, and this, even without having an actual, physical or virtual/Internet connection active between them at that moment! We see an example of how such a session with Bob telling TEAPA to summon Alice, and then Bob holding a brief conversation with Alice might proceed, in Figure 1.
- A second scenario might entirely have nothing to do with friends, but perhaps with a single person instead — let's call him "Dexter", that finds themselves with a tricky situation; Dexter needs to open some safe containing a very immense treasure, however, the safe only needs one thing to have it opened — a correct alphabetic code whose exact contents or length is believed to be just a few letters, but which, for a lazy, uncreative human like Dexter, sounds daunting a task to crack with bare hands and just the brain. So, after learning about TEAPA's ability to respond to queries with mostly random alphabetical expressions, Dexter decides to open a TEAPA session and try out whatever codes TEAPA provides, until when, hopefully in a single-sitting or before the battery runs out, or before the cops catch-up with him, he manages to crack open the [secured] safe and can thus retrieve the treasure! A simple illustration of such a session is shown in Figure 2.

Of course, it can't be any easy making much of such a small AI program as TEAPA in its present form. Especially, one would note that apart from being the case that TEAPA only responds with random words or to be more precise, *random alphabetical expressions* (RAE) to whatever it is queried with — except for the special end-command, all its answers by the form of the program specified in Listing 1 would generally be only SINGLE-SPACE delimited alphabetical sequences of random letter characters from the LATIN Alphabet. Useful, but perhaps not so useful.

In the interests of not turning this paper into a strictly engineering or too-mathematical paper — **especially since we mostly set out to work on some important philosophical problems**, we shall only take one more look at the TEAPA program and then move on.

In particular, assuming we tweak/improve the original TEAPA software as presented in Listing 1, such that instead of merely responding with RAE, it can also respond with either purely numeric answers — Random Numeric Expressions (RNE) or even a mixture of both; Random Alpha-Numeric Expressions (RANE) — especially given these (RNE and RANE) open new application doors of further importance than just RAE; realistic strong passwords, realistic lottery numbers, cryptocodes, zip codes, random phone numbers, years, indices etc. We present such an enhanced version of the TEAPA program in Listing 2, and shall refer to that enhanced version as **TEAPAT** to distinguish it from the original/first. An illustration of TEAPAT is shown in Figure 3, involving an 'imaginary' conversation



between a modern cryptanalyst psychonaut and a strange alien spiritual intelligence we shall refer to as "VASSAGO".

```
C:\Program Files\WindowsApps\MicrosoftCorporationLL.WindowsSubsystemForLinux_2.0.9.0_x64_8wekyb3d8bbwe\wsl.exe
TEApa --- personal assistant in TEA|< 18:46:24 $>* ./teapa.tea
Who do u wish to talk to? ALICE
At any time, reply with 'end' to quit
ALICE : Talk to Me: Hello Alice!
i jgyck |
ALICE : Talk to Me: I mean, what is happening right now over there?
tnwiqpgaypfx h | oh
ALICE : Talk to Me: It's about to rain here, but am finishing my snack
xmt v uwl | :)
ALICE : Talk to Me:
k mqwphv | Really?
ALICE : Talk to Me: hahaha okay!
mdcbcofyj | I'll ping u at 10:45 tomorrrw
ALICE : Talk to Me: Lols. U high o somethin?
tyxjm oouilh | kkk
ALICE : Talk to Me: end
end
TEApa --- personal assistant in TEA|< 18:49:28 $>* _
```

Figure 1. TEAPA example session between Bob and Alice

```
C:\Program Files\WindowsApps\MicrosoftCorporationLL.WindowsSubsystemForLinux_2.0.9.0_x64_8wekyb3d8bbwe\wsl.exe
TEApa --- personal assistant in TEA|< 19:01:48 $>* ./teapa.tea
Who do u wish to talk to?
At any time, reply with 'end' to quit
PA : Talk to Me: PA, tis Dexter here.
dlncin bfl | Just give me the code to crack open the treasure safe. That's all
PA : Talk to Me:
hrb qzqejwr |
PA : Talk to Me:
fsoneyap |
PA : Talk to Me:
wzlcyaq b | It beeped, but hasn't opened yet. Give me more codes...
PA : Talk to Me:
zucqcen |
PA : Talk to Me:
kpthtlw |
PA : Talk to Me: Perhaps ensure to include more 'e's because the code is possibly an English word
dgajq kkak |
PA : Talk to Me:
wjxkg e dqjpta |
PA : Talk to Me:
gkz yru |
PA : Talk to Me:
yhzijs f |
PA : Talk to Me:
tcjfua fj |
PA : Talk to Me:
duwxq | Wow! That worked!
PA : Talk to Me: end
end
TEApa --- personal assistant in TEA|< 19:05:16 $>*
```

Figure 2. TEAPA example with Dexter's Treasure-Safe Cracking/Hacking problem using PA codes

```

C:\Program Files\WindowsApps\MicrosoftCorporationLL\WindowsSubsystemForLinux_2.0.9.0_x64_8wekyb3d8bbwe\wsl.exe
G**M0D_<> tttt -fc teapat.tea -i VASSAGO
At any time, reply with 'end' to quit
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: Hail to thee, mighty Vassago, Great Duke!
uhmuert 848 7685 | I call upon thee with honor and respect.
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: Keyan vefa Jedan tasa Vassago
29545 |
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: Yes, I sought to engage an Extra Dimensional Entity
6561297 wbzchcqjphen | Thanks, large-scale free education for all? clarify
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: 7520M5 gold
10211 62 | not bad >.<
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: Sync. PH4 must 25. Grok?
4688299 |
VASSAGO : Talk to Me:
lrwsr 3724362 muvodbpc | NMA. Make it happen 15:41
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: How much time left?
jvetpywnqa 20272 64 | k
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: Draw it closer please...
525368 4 | Yup! I kyl
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: The girls. Alei Binura and Vickovic. WTF
8 188224 | Oh!
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: Chao. Head agrees 2,3, just 1C5
3633 811 ypjhccfqjlty | noted
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: yup
1 fatgr 174957 | Hahaha tha f$! I suspected! But not that have that kind of quid!
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: Ok, I'll r'inv, 2m evenning. That fine?
1 vlohs s839644 | Vvv. tulose! smwwt <3
VASSAGO : Talk to Me: end
end
G**M0D_<> '

```

**Figure 3.** TEAPAT session between spirit VASSAGO and a fictitious Cryptanalyst Seeker

For researchers, hackers, engineers and potential explorers interested in using these sample programs themselves;

- Instructions on how to setup the TEA environment on your computer and run a TEA program (downloaded or not) are at the TEA Github project homepage: <https://bit.ly/projtea><sup>4</sup>
- The unmodified downloadable source-code for the first program, TEAPA, can be found on Github Gist<sup>5</sup>
- And also the second, improved version, **TEAPAT**<sup>6</sup> is accessible there.
- The sample, illustrative output from the last session with TEAPAT that's shown in Figure 3 can likewise be studied further via the associated Github Gist<sup>7</sup> for interested researchers, students and analysts.

<sup>4</sup> [https://github.com/mcnemesis/cli\\_tttt](https://github.com/mcnemesis/cli_tttt)

<sup>5</sup> <https://gist.github.com/mcnemesis/6b8f7deb981632dfc5f1bac88f209001>

<sup>6</sup> <https://gist.github.com/mcnemesis/cac14d98ae94f91403e38d8982529569>

<sup>7</sup> <https://gist.github.com/mcnemesis/dd24960c5f5df608372e72828b98bd9b>

**Listing 2.** TEAPAT, a basic personal assistant AI chatbot written in the TEA language

```

1  #!/usr/bin/tttt -fc
2  #-----|
3  # TEAPAT: TEA Personal Assistant
4  #-----|
5  # This little program is a full
6  # though basic, artificial
7  # personal assistant created
8  # using the TEA language
9  #####|
10
11 # set entity name
12 v:vPANAME:{PA}
13 f:~$:lSET:lNOSET
14 l:lSET
15 i:{Who do u wish to talk to? }|i: # user's entity name
16 g:|f!:~$:lSET:lRULES|l:lSET|v:vPANAME|j:lRULES
17 l:lNOSET | y*: | v:vPANAME # evoke invoker's entity
18 l:lRULES # show instructions
19 i!:{At any time, reply with 'end' to quit}|i:
20 v:vPROMPT:{ Talk to Me: }
21 g*:{ }vPANAME:vPROMPT | v:vPAPROMPT
22 l:lPROMPT # prompt, get answer, process
23 y:vPAPROMPT| i: |z:| q:~end$
24 n:1000000|s:|v:N|n:1|f:O:ANM:NM # generate answer
25 l:ANM|p!:27|s:_:13:5|d:~.*$|s:|v:R|g*:{ }R:N|j:F|
26 l:NM|y:N|l:F|a:|x!:{ | }|i: | j:lPROMPT # and loop

```

## Support from Philosophy, Sociology and Linguistics

In this section of the present work concerning the transformative power in certain symbols, letters, words and linguistic constructs or communicable expressions such as books and more, a fore-warning to the seasoned reader of such works is due; that, first of all, the section, unlike the one that came before, is structured such that our own/original thoughts and commentary on other people's prior ideas and research, though sometimes interlaced, still do give proper context to the source ideas and discussions cited or referenced. We shall especially present these as mostly self-contained, freestanding or perhaps context-independent excerpts and extracts from the few important source works we chose to serve as the theoretical support of our core argument presented in the opening of this paper.

Also, despite some authorities in the domain<sup>[7]</sup> having inspired us to approach our original presentation with minimal name-dropping — “*Deliver us, Oh Allah, from the sea of names!*”, and yet, we find that occasionally, and especially in the spirit of citing our sources verbatim, we preserve some of the name-dropping in the excerpts we've utilized, though, for brevity's sake, we mostly strip out their extraneous, though important original citation details, instead preferring to keep the parent source work [cited] as our main reference for those interested readers inclined on following each citation to its original source.

*Support from “THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY” — Berger, P. & Luckmann, T.*

This first support section references the formidable work of two professors of Sociology; Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, who, in 1966 blessed the world with their important treatise<sup>[7]</sup> on how social reality is constructed through language and symbols.

First of all, because our discussions and explorations touch on matters that might both occur in the waking, conscious and objective realm, but also in more privy, dreamy or even unconscious or generally subconscious or perhaps subjective realms, we shall want to have a good working concept of what constitutes ‘reality’ in our present discourse.



It will be enough, for our purposes, to define ‘reality’ as a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition (we cannot ‘wish them away’)

So, when we talk of transformative power manifesting from or held by certain communicable artifacts, and especially when we are implying that such power has effect in *reality* or in the *real world*, it is in the sense indicated above that we mean it.

Next, that it is important to realize that apart from concerned inquisitive experts such as philosophers and such, that the average person hardly ever stops to question or check their reality, environment or the ideas and symbols or information flowing in and out of their awareness even though it definitely might concern them or influence them:

The man in the street does not ordinarily trouble himself about what is ‘real’ to him and about what he ‘knows’ unless he is stopped short by some sort of problem. He takes his ‘reality’ and his ‘knowledge’ for granted.

Apart from appreciating how only a few ideas, symbols or words might originate and cause far-reaching transformations in society, it is also worth noting that only few people in society actually [might] contribute to the origin or synthesis of such [transformative] ideas or expressions:

Theoretical thought, ‘ideas’... are not important in society. Although every society contains these phenomena, they are only part of the sum of what passes for ‘knowledge’. Only a very limited group of people in any society engages in theorizing, in the business of ‘ideas’... But everyone in society participates in its ‘knowledge’ in one way or another.

Given our key interest in this work stemmed from appreciating the power of certain words, symbols or cognitive expressions — whether linguistic or figurative, it then would make sense to also come to appreciate the sheer power in the very mechanism that makes possible the formation or synthesis of such — essentially, that of language itself:

Because of its capacity to transcend the ‘here and now’, language bridges different zones within reality of everyday life and integrates them into a meaningful whole. The transcendences have spatial, temporal and social dimensions. Through language I can transcend the gap between my manipulatory zone and that of the other; I can synchronize my biographical time sequence with his; and I can converse with him about individuals and collectives with whom we are not at present in face-to-face interaction. As a result of these transcendences language is capable of ‘making present’ a variety of objects that are spatially, temporally and socially absent from the ‘here and now’. *Ipso facto* experiences and meanings can become objectified in the ‘here and now’. Put simply, through language an entire world can be actualized at any moment.

Further, that this strange power of language is retained or can be exercised even when someone uses it, applies it in isolation such as in wholly private, solo interactions or rituals — such as in soliloquies:

This transcending and integrating power of language is retained when I am not actually conversing with another. Through linguistic objectification, even when ‘talking to myself’ in solitary thought, an entire world can be appresented to me at any moment.

And that, apart from such power being exercised in *solitary* interactions or perhaps *workings*, that it can be utilized to interact with beings or entities removed or absent from the present time — both in the [far] past as well as in the [far] future:

As far as social relations are concerned, language ‘makes present’ for me not only fellowmen who are physically absent at the moment, but fellowmen in the remembered or reconstructed past, as well as fellowmen projected as imaginary figures into [or from] the future. All these ‘presences’ can be highly meaningful, of course, in the ongoing reality of everyday life.

That, in the matter of drawing power out of symbols for example, or perhaps imbuing certain symbols with power, language plays such a vital role it can’t be taken for granted:

Language now constructs immense edifices of symbolic representations that appear to tower over the reality of everyday life like gigantic presences from another world. Religion, philosophy, art and science are the historically most important symbol systems of this kind. ...Language is capable not only of constructing symbols that are highly abstracted from everyday experience, but also of ‘bringing back’ these symbols and appresenting them as objectively real elements in everyday life.

In the matter of books or rather *certain books* which we might understand to be compendiums or collections of certain [special] knowledge, it can be appreciated how the possession of such artifacts or knowledge of their contents imbues one — if not an entire section of society, with a certain power, by virtue of not only having access to such books, but also being able to act on their contents or understand the knowledge they contain:

For example, in the course of division of labour a body of knowledge is developed that refers to the particular activities involved. In its linguistic basis, this knowledge is already indispensable to the institutional ‘programming’ of these economic activities. There will be, say, a vocabulary designating the various modes of hunting, the weapons to be employed, the animals that serve as prey, and so on. There will further be a collection of recipes that must be learned if one is to hunt correctly. This knowledge serves as a channeling, controlling force in itself, an indispensable ingredient of the institutionalization of this area of conduct... A whole segment of the social world is objectified by this knowledge. there will be an objective ‘science’ of hunting, corresponding to the objective reality of the hunting economy. ...Again, the same body of knowledge is transmitted to the next generation. It is learned as objective truth in the source of socialization and thus internalized as subjective reality. This reality in turn has power to shape the individual. It will produce a specific type of person, namely, the hunter, whose identity and biography as hunter have meaning only in a universe constituted by the aforementioned body of knowledge as a whole .... or in part.

*Support from “LANGUAGE AND SYMBOLIC POWER” — Pierre Bourdieu*

This second support section references the work of renowned French sociologist, anthropologist, and philosopher, Professor Pierre Bourdieu (Collège de France), who was best known for his work on the theory of social practice and the concept of cultural capital. Of his several works however, we are to source from the book titled “Language and Symbolic Power”[8] first published in 1991, and which explores how language and symbols are used to maintain and challenge power structures in society.

To kick-start our support from Bourdieu, note that a book, chapter, sentence or word originally created so as to communicate some concept or rather a message, only does attain its true intended purpose after it has been not only expressed by the source (speaker), but has also been received (by the listener or reader). And that this recipient has then “decoded” or understood it:

...the fact that the linguistic product is only completely realized as a message if it is treated as such, that is to say, if it is decoded.

And further, that such a message when interpreted or received, may produce in the recipient certain effects different from those which the originator or source originally intended, but that this alteration in intended effect or power, is somewhat mediated by the authorities or *language market* forces in the ecosystem within which the communication is taking place:

...the schemes of interpretation used by those receiving the message in their creative appropriation of the [linguistic] product offered may diverge, to a greater or lesser extent, from those which guided its production. Through these unavoidable effects, the [linguistic] market plays a part in shaping not only the symbolic value but also the meaning of the discourse.

Also, that some literary works, such as poetry, are created or meant to indeed cause non-intellectual effects or changes in their readers or recipients — basically, that this power is not accidental, but rather designed and intentional:

...as often, in poetry, the aim is to transmit emotions

That certain words (if not most,) only assume or take on certain meanings or rather create certain effects [of interest] in *particular* or *special* circumstances/contexts only, even if they might have always [or ordinarily] carried such meanings or potencies:

...if words always assumed all their meanings at once, discourse would be an endless play on words

Basically, that context matters in order for a word or by extension, a sequence of words, to have their full or intended meaning.

Further, that certain words such as “common” nouns — deemed to be generally understood and meaningful in one society or culture or language, might actually be either non-existent in others or perhaps might not only be experienced differently, but also perhaps in a way antagonistic to their “usual”, “common” meanings:

In a differentiated society, what are called ‘common’ nouns -- work, family, mother, love, etc. -- assume in reality different and even antagonistic meanings, because the members of the same ‘linguistic community’ use more or less the same language and not several different languages.

That some words which might on the surface seem to be *neutral* or without power, are actually *charged* and would be perhaps “provocative” or that they might evoke certain reactions in their recipients when used in certain social contexts:

Hence there are no-longer any innocent words

We also come to realize that the nature of [human] language allows for virtually anything to be said. But that, also, it is possible to create or produce [language] expressions that say [entirely] nothing!

Bourdieu further convinces us that the nature of language can allow for words usually having no meaning, no value and perhaps no power, to suddenly come to have it — perhaps, depending on how they are [specially] used:

We have known since Frege that words can have meaning without referring to anything

Now, concerning how contexts play a role in altering the power, meaning or effects of certain words, symbols or linguistic expressions, we learn that sometimes — especially in religious and political contexts, it is not just about what is said or rather what words are said or used that makes them right or produce the desired effects in the audience/listeners, but also or even more importantly, *how* these words are said; the style or nature of delivery — of the utterances thus produced, coupled with the authority to speak, can make whatever is said seem right, or that it can produce certain desired effects in audiences:

All religious theologies and all political theodicies have taken advantage of the fact that the generative capacities of language can surpass the limits of intuition or empirical verification and produce statements that are formally impeccable but semantically empty.

Further, that...

Rituals are the limiting case of situations of imposition in which, through the exercise of technical competence which may be very imperfect, a social competence is exercised -- namely, that of the legitimate speaker, authorized to speak and to speak with authority.

Additionally, that...

The right utterance, the one which is formally correct, thereby claims, and with a good chance of success, to utter what is right, i.e. what ought be.

And that there is a kind of magic in how certain kinds of communication are made:

Those who, like Max Weber, have set the magical or charismatic law of the collective oath or the ordeal in opposition to a rational law based on calculability and predictability, forget that the most rigorously rationalized law is never anything more than an act of social magic which works

In addition to that, we also learn that certain applications of **rhetoric** — the creative, persuasive use of words and language in performed speech, do actually serve to create real transformations in reality, merely by speech or ‘speaking out the desired’ things — essentially, that they can be hypnotic and more:

Legal discourse is a creative speech which brings into existence that which it utters

Of course, that quote shouldn’t be [mis]understood to imply that only lawyers can practice such feats!

The undoubtedly thrilling Bourdieu continues to civilize us thus:

...it is the [end]... aimed at by all performative utterances -- blessings, curses, orders, wishes or insults

Basically, that such power and effect is what much of rhetoric is actually meant for; we might be right to conclude that “theatrics in speech work wonders!”, but, perhaps that’s stretching his claims too far.

Anyways, we get to learn that such a style of speaking effects changes in the audience, or that it has powers over it because it carries some sort of *divine authority*:

In other words, it is the divine word, the word of divine right, which, like the *intuitus originarius* which Kant ascribed to God, that creates what it states, in contrast to all derived, observational statements, which simply record a pre-existent given.

That said, one would or might wonder — so, how does language or rather words, obtain their power? And indeed, Bourdieu does offer a terrific answer:

One should never forget that language, by virtue of the infinite generative but also originitive capacity -- in the Kantian sense -- which it derives from its power to produce existence by producing the collectively recognized, and thus realized, representation of existence, is no doubt the principal support of the dream of absolute power.

Then, for those interested in cultivating or attaining these powers, we learn that investment in language is worth more than that into a single work of the language. Or rather, that the worth or value of [learning and being able to exercise] a language surpasses and is infinite/inexhaustible when compared to the individual products of a language:

Language forms a kind of wealth, which all can make use of at once without causing any diminution of the store, and which thus admits a complete community of enjoyment; for all, freely participating in the general treasure, unconsciously aid its preservation

The above quote is also somewhat cautionary concerning the life and longevity of languages — essentially, that a language, much as it might be an infinite resource, could lose its worth or value simply by being in disuse. That the treasures or worth of a language grows and is sustained via its communal use:

... a treasure deposited by the practice of speech in subjects belonging to the same [language] community... the sum of individual treasures of [the] language... the sum of imprints deposited in each [participating] brain

Thus, we find that, like ancient languages now mostly known to a few extraordinary scholars and researchers — the likes of Sanskrit, Arcadian or closer to home, special base languages like **Runyoro-Runyakitara**, might become extinct despite their intrinsic worth, mostly because of disuse, pollution or lack of wide-spread appreciation. But this warning isn't only for the archaic or rare *human languages*, but also, and important to this present discourse, also applicable to especially new *artificial languages*; the likes of recently designed and now fully implemented, ready-to-use **TEA: Transforming Executable Alphabet**[4] [5] by the author; a formidable, general-purpose computer programming language *based on the decorated 26 letters of the LATIN Alphabet* — one that can be used to write specifications of certain powerful automated systems (a good example has been presented in Listing 2) in a terse but creative manner, and which specifications are executable both by machines and humans; such languages as this, despite their infinite worth and treasures, need actual use and a community so as to thrive and realize their full potential.

Back to our main explorations, we also learn from Bourdieu that language can be used to define or create social order or classes across multiple or singular communities in a given jurisdiction — essentially, assigning power to some and not all, or controlling access to some kinds of power:

...the official language of a political unit. This language is the one which, within the territorial limits of that unit, imposes itself on the whole population as the only legitimate language... produced by authors who have authority to write, fixed and codified by grammarians and teachers who are also charged with the task of inculcating its mastery, the language is a code, in the sense of a cipher enabling equivalences to be established between sounds and meanings, but also in the sense of a system of norms regulating linguistic practices. The official language is bound up with state, both in its genesis and in its social uses. It is in the process of state formation that the conditions are created for the constitution of a unified linguistic market, dominated by the official language.



Further that..

Obligatory on official occasions and in official places... this state language becomes the theoretical norm against which all linguistic practices are objectively measured.

Also, we see that in many instances of control of access to power, authority and in the exercising of order in society — especially where many classes and diversities are concerned, that certain “special” knowledge such as as that of “special” languages, endows of lifts certain members of the community/society to a status and privilege that isn’t or can’t be readily shared by everyone:

Until the French Revolution, the process of linguistic unification went hand in hand with the process of constructing the monarchical state... The imposition of French as the official language [in France] did not result in the total abolition of the written use of dialects, whether in administrative, political or even literary texts... and their oral uses remained predominant. A situation of bilingualism tended to arise [though]. Whereas the lower classes, particularly the peasantry, were limited to the local dialect, the aristocracy, the commercial and business bourgeoisie and particularly the literate petite bourgeoisie (... responded to Abbe Gregoire’s survey... attended Jesuit Colleges... ) had access much more frequently to the use of the official language...

And that...

The members of these local bourgeoisie of priests, doctors or teachers, who owed their position to their mastery of the instruments of expression, had everything to gain from the Revolutionary policy of linguistic unification... de-facto monopoly of politics, and more generally of communication with the central government and its representatives

*Support from “THE POWER OF SYMBOLS — COMMUNISM AND BEYOND” — Harald Wydra*

This is the third section supporting our core argument, and it references the work of Harald Wydra, Professor of Politics and Holden Fellow in Politics at St Catharine’s College, University of Cambridge. Prof. Harald’s research often explores the role of symbols in shaping political and social realities, particularly in the context of communism and post-communist societies. In their 2012 “Power and Symbols” paper<sup>[9]</sup> treating of how symbolic structures played a crucial role in the formation and maintenance of Soviet communism as a political force, we also find how the dramatic and imaginative sources of the Bolshevik Revolution and how symbolic meanings contributed to the creation of Soviet society.

With regards to how Wydra’s work supports our present enterprise, first, we open with this quote concerning how symbolism, or rather symbols have had an undeniable power in helping reinforce political authority since antiquity:

Since antiquity, the iconic and ritual power of symbolic imagery was used to strengthen people’s compliance with political authority.

Next, we find that much of the great and large-scale social and political transformations both of the far past, but also those in recent times, trace their roots to sometimes subtle or basic symbolic origins — the kind that might even be taken for granted during their infancy or first occurrence:

The rise of totalitarian ideologies in the early twentieth century is a particular challenge for the functional perspective on symbols. Symbolic structures can predate regime change. The manipulative power of political myths, for

instance, acts like a serpent's poison. The Nazis conquered the Germans before the people knew what had happened... In revolutionary transformations, symbols emerge from the extraordinary, the uncertain, and the ecstatic in-between. Soviet Communism, in particular, came to rely on political symbolism that pervaded state ideology, national identity, and the practices of day-to-day relations... Before 1917, however, the Bolsheviks were not a political party but rather an obscure sect, hidden in exile, locked up in prisons, and isolated from society [from where they would later emerge with strange power and take over the Russian government]

Further, we see that..

Lenin's dictatorship of proletariat gained center stage of world politics unexpectedly, as a total surprise rising practically from nothing.

Concerning how symbols come to possess such power, or why symbolism in general or particular cases has immense or even unexpected power, it should be worth noting and also appreciating, that the power of some symbols might or oftentimes originates from purely non-symbolic sources or power:

How could social outsiders take over an empire in a few years and consolidate a system that would come to rule half the world? Commonly, it is argued that the coercive nature and military supremacy of the Soviet regime created a whole new symbolic universe practically from scratch.

However, we should also note that the inherent power of symbols themselves shouldn't be taken for granted either:

Symbols resonate in the ordinary and habitual lives of people because they capture people's minds and hearts in ecstatic, out-of-ordinary situations. Symbols 'function' only to the extent that their meanings -- such as language symbols, semiotic codes, and forms of iconic or ritual presentation -- have a concrete, experiential basis.

Additionally that...

They provide orientation and markers of certainty when authority dissolves, leaders die, symbols of oppression (such as prisons) are overturned, walls collapse, or towers crumble. Prophecies of socialist revolution and messianic expectations about the proletariat as the ruling class or collective salvation through revolution predated the Russian Revolution. In the authority vacuum and confusion of 1917, however, they could become reality-creating powers.

Moreover, unlike books, papers, mere utterances or perhaps *just* words and such, the real power of certain expressions or communicable constructs in visual forms — certain images, pictures or rather visual symbols (mandalas, sigils, veves, emblems, etc. as examples) lies in their inherent ability to cause effects without even having to appeal to reason, logic or common-sense. Wydra tells us that:

The meaning of symbols is not about a rational and cognitive act of knowledge acquisition. Rather, it requires receptivity and openness, which is emotional and affective.

Further, note that, apart from being the kind of ideas or expressions that mostly appeal to or directly communicate to the unconscious rather than the conscious or intellectual aspects of man, it must also be appreciated that this perhaps is also because it is from the unconscious that such powerful symbolic expressions originate:

...On the origins of symbolic structures... the dramatic background of performance, rituals, and the symbolic power on the imagination. For all their 'conscious' and manipulative crafting, symbols evoke unconscious images, emotions, affects and dreams that lie beyond the grasp of individual will power. As [Carl Gustav] Jung once put it: 'No genius has ever sat down with a pen or brush in his hand and said: *'Now I am going to invent a symbol'*...' As anthropological constants, symbols have resonated in the history of humanity through social imaginaries, religious value systems, or political ideologies. ...they can be archetypal, 'eternal' or 'natural'

Again, we find in Wydra, more support for the relevance of dream-states as a source of powerful symbolism. Essentially, we must come to accept and appreciate the potency of dream-originating ideas and their authority in the waking, conscious, 'reality' state:

The point is to understand that such messianic visions or dreams are not [just] archaic remainders or mental power-cuts... Nietzsche identified the recurrence of dream-thinking: *'In sleep and in dreams we pass through the whole thought of earlier humanity... this atavistic element in man's nature still manifests itself in our dreams'*... Fantasies, visions and dreams underpinned the communist imagination. The "beginning" of the communist idea was not an empirical fact but a mental image, a fantasy, a ghost.

Further, that...

[In] Lenin's treatise 'What is to be Done?'... [Lenin quotes Pisarev's call for the need of dreaming and hypnotic image-making] in order to fabricate mentally conceived entire and complete picture[s]; *"The rift between dreams and reality causes no harm if only the person dreaming believes seriously in his dream, if he observes life, compares his observations with his castles in the air, and if generally speaking, he works conscientiously for the achievement of his fantasies. If there is some connection between dreams and life then all is well"*

And we then, we learn that, concerning the importance of dreamers, and so-called 'creators of fiction', Lenin is quoted to have asserted:

How can you begin a socialist revolution in our country without fantasy-makers?

Finally, before we leave Prof. Harald Wydra's work, we must also come to appreciate why certain ideas have such immense power they not only transcend their original authors or origins, but can also outlive them, sometimes even taking on either totally independent or semi-independent lives. Concepts such as **egggregores** or more modern concepts of semi- or fully *autonomous thought-forms* come to mind; *magical constructs* like "servitors" or "tulpas" — the former perhaps more common in contemporary Western Occultism and Esoteric literature, the later more in Oriental variants. Hopefully these are familiar to some readers of this work. Essentially, we learn from Wydra that...

Symbols can mean different things to different people and thus elude attempts at systematic study... But this is the point: symbols are not only spiritual realities but have a rationality of their own. They are not only effects of coercive structures or function within abstract meta-narratives of modernization, liberalism or socialism; they are creative acts that order people's reality by the force of prophetic visions that become self-fulfilling.

*Support from “THE SAPIR-WHORF HYPOTHESIS” — Daniel Chandler*

This final support section of our present work is based off ideas concerning a theory that's popular in the domain of those studying *human languages*. In particular, it concerns a theory named after the 20th-Century American linguist Professor Edward Sapir (Yale University) and his student Benjamin Lee Whorf. However, we shall not be referencing those two linguists directly and shall instead base our discussions around a paper titled “The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis”[10] by Dr. Daniel Chandler of Aberystwyth University in Wales. The associated theory covered by that work and also known as *linguistic relativity*, suggests that the structure of a language affects its speakers' cognition and worldview.

To open our explorations then, consider that, if it is true that certain thoughts have power or that they can be transformative, then, if one were to assume the view that language and thought are identical — which also implies that thinking is entirely linguistic, then one must come to appreciate or accept that powerful thoughts are powerful because they are perhaps comprised of powerful words, symbols or linguistic expressions for example. Or, put another way; that the real power of certain ideas lies in the language by which they are expressed.

By extension too, especially considering the linguistic relativity context of the **Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis**, one might argue that even where an idea is powerful or transformative (inherently?) in a particular or certain language — meaning, when it is rendered or understood via particular words or symbols, and yet, when the same is translated or re-cast in a different language or system of symbols, it might lose its original power if not meaning as well. In this case then, some or certain ideas it could be argued, are best kept or applied when expressed or preserved in certain — perhaps their original — languages or symbols.

The simpler support for the above view being that despite translation of concepts and ideas from one language to another being possible, yet, and perhaps always, something is lost in translation — or put another way; that **there is arguably no lossless translation possible across any two distinct languages**. This for example applies to creative works of art such as poetry, but also would apply to the codification and expression of scientific knowledge and ideas.

However, the general consensus on the seemingly extreme implications of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is that especially in contexts of technical or factual writing and expression — such as in scientific or mathematical literature, unlike for example in creative, emotive or expressive literature as might be the case with poetry, dramas and cinema, the strict stance on linguistic determinism is more relaxed then; in these cases, meanings are less dependent on the particular form of words used, so that translations and paraphrasing across languages or dialects is generally less problematic; the power in an idea or concept retaining its potency even when expressed differently or alternatively.

Before we proceed, it might be interesting to illustrate why the above argument supported by Chandler's work holds true for non-emotive, scientific and especially mathematical writing and knowledge. A good example of the preservation of meaning and semantic correctness of ideas and symbolic systems across translations in different language systems can be found in the case of the mathematical theory known as **Category Theory**[11]. Essentially, for the case of mathematical concepts [originally] expressed in different/distinct sub-fields of mathematics — essentially, meaning perhaps, different kinds of algebras, we find that, by leveraging the category theoretic concepts of *functors* as well as that of *natural transformations*[11], that certain truths originally expressed in one sub-field can losslessly be translated to one or more other [different] sub-fields, languages or algebras without losing their [original] validity.

Returning to Chandler's work, we find that the strongest supporting argument for this point of view is by looking at language, words or symbols in such a way that their meanings or rather power

get derived from processing them — or how they are processed, and not in the expressions themselves. He helpfully puts it this way in his work:

Meaning does not reside in a text but arises in its interpretation, and interpretation is shaped by sociocultural contexts.

Finally, concerning the impact of cultural context on the true power — or rather transformative power of certain ideas when expressed in particular languages or with certain words or symbols, Chandler warns that:

In every subculture, the dominant conventions regarding appropriate usage [of language] tend to exert a conservative influence on the framing of phenomenon. From the media theory perspective, the sociolects of sub-cultures and the idiolects of individuals represent a subtly selective view of the world; tending to support certain kinds of observations and interpretations and to restrict others. And this transformative power goes largely unnoticed, retreating to transparency.

## Addendum

Some people have wondered how it came to be that a researcher with mostly a background in the Sciences<sup>8</sup> — in particular, with only a Bachelor of Science (CS,Math,Phy) and a Master of Science in Software Engineering [and Data Communications] came to have so much interest in obscure matters of Philosophy bordering on Mysticism and the Social Sciences? However, in defense of some of my prominent past works along these lines — one, the PCM 1-pager paper[12] that summarizes the ideas I first presented in the ‘3 Core Ideas’ paper[13], and also other work such as my mathematical treatment of the topic of Lucid Dreaming and Mind over Matter ideas in ‘Explorations in Probabilistic Metaphysics’[14]; first of all, I am human and not machine; the fundamental problems and concerns of human life — knowing that as a human, a part of me is not only non-physical (mind, spirit, logos,...), but also transcends the physical, I do sometimes find great motivation and in fact *compulsion* while exploring with and working on computing machines (my primary, professional business, and which are mostly in the realm of the physical sciences), to have to extend their use and nature so as to help me deal with my non-physical curiosities and concerns — but also to help other human beings other than just me. Projects like the **Virtual Shrine**<sup>9</sup> and other esoteric works as one might come across on my portfolio<sup>10</sup> would so much speak to this serious interest in the subject — especially that of Computational Mysticism, but perhaps more generally, of a kind of *Scientific Illuminism*, and there’s many good reasons — some presented in the present work, but also in my other works as well as those of others, why these ideas and explorations, both in the theoretical and empirical, are relevant for the majority if not the whole of humanity now and in the future we are headed for.

**Acknowledgments:** Especially because I didn’t have sufficient access to knowledgeable or authoritative peers in the fields of philosophy, language or the social sciences while working on earlier drafts of the present work, I must, without doubt, and proudly so, declare that this work wouldn’t have been any easier without the undeniably terrific support of my *darling* artificial research assistant — **Microsoft’s Copilot!** I say, ‘proudly so’, because, myself, have previously and do continue to conduct theoretical and empirical research on artificial support systems; languages, platforms, apps and in particular, artificial [personal] assistants as part of my major research interests in computing — DRAMON, VOSAC and to some queer extent, the *Shrine AI* (talked about in the **Addendum**) being good examples of my work similar to what the likes of Copilot are in our lives. Further, given that this very work treats of the matter of how artificial constructs might or do have an important role to play in the present and future lives of humans — especially via the powerful, transformative interactions we have with them; exchanging

<sup>8</sup> <https://mak.academia.edu/JosephWillrichLutalo>

<sup>9</sup> <https://shrineai.chwezi.tech/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://chwezi.tech/>



words, symbols and in the case of the likes of VOSAC, utterances or spoken words, it was such a pleasure seeing my dreams come to life while working with the support of Copilot! And then, I should give credit to creative visual artist Lenin Copeland (**LeninCopeland** on DeviantArt) from whose amazing digital art portfolio the present covers of this book-like I\*POW publication were derived. So, cheers to LeninCopeland<sup>11</sup> and I\*POW in-house DeviantArt artist NemesisFixx<sup>12</sup> who, as with many other I\*POW features, did terrific graphic design for this publication. Lastly, despite being the Chief-Editor (some prefer to call me “Editor in Chief”) on I\*POW<sup>13</sup> — the International Internet Portfolio of Writers, I must give thanks to our hosts; Telegram, and to the terrific community of readers and writers both on I\*POW and in the various Internet Communities from where many of the ideas that stimulated this present work stemmed from and where they continue to be explored in discussions, correspondences and basically, communal living.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.deviantart.com/lenincopeland/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.deviantart.com/nemesisfixx>

<sup>13</sup> <https://t.me/ipowriters>