

Sample Book Title ¹

Sample book subtitle ²

FIRST-NAME LAST-NAME³

May 28, 2018

¹This is a footnote.

²This is yet another footnote.

³www.example.com

Dedicated to Calvin and Hobbes.

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Preface

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Structure of book

Each unit will focus on <SOMETHING>.

About the companion website

The website¹ for this file contains:

- A link to (freely downloadable) latest version of this document.
- Link to download LaTeX source for this document.
- Miscellaneous material (e.g. suggested readings etc).

Acknowledgements

- A special word of thanks goes to Professor Don Knuth² (for T_EX) and Leslie Lamport³ (for L^AT_EX).
- I'll also like to thank Gummi⁴ developers and LaTeXila⁵ development team for their awesome L^AT_EX editors.
- I'm deeply indebted my parents, colleagues and friends for their support and encouragement.

Amber Jain

<http://amberj.devio.us/>

¹<https://github.com/amberj/latex-book-template>

²<http://www-cs-faculty.stanford.edu/~uno/>

³<http://www.lamport.org/>

⁴<http://gummi.midnightcoding.org/>

⁵<http://projects.gnome.org/latexila/>

1

May 7, 2018 - Introduction

“This is a quote and I don’t know who said this.”

– Author’s name, *Source of this quote*

1.1 Summary

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1.2 Thesis of NEW333H

1.2.1 Why do humans need meaning in society?

Humans do not respond to raw stimulus. Instead, they respond to the meaning of stimuli. For example,

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The answer to this will be further developed through out the span of the course.

1.2.2 The Thesis of NEW333H

Thesis: The confluence of buddhism and cognitive science is a response to the meaning crisis in western society.

In order to fully analyse the meaning crisis, NEW333H will: (1) Study the Genealogy of Meaning (i.e. conduct a historical analysis to understand the nature of the meaning crisis) (2) Study the Cognitive process involved in human meaning making (i.e.)

Key Idea: Vervaeke proposes that by studying meaning in those two contexts seperately, we will have aquired the necessary foundational knowledge and 'machinery' to study the confluence of buddhism and cognitve science insofar as it addresses the meaning crisis.

1.3 History

1.3.1 The Bronze Age Collapse | 1200 BC

The Bronze Age collapse is considered one of the greatest mysteries and losses in human history. What we do know about this mysterious event is that civilizations that had lasted for thousands of years were collapsed in less than 1 human lifespan. The Bronze age collapse is often compared to the dinosaur extinction; there was massive destruction, affording massive speciation.

Before empires rose up again, there was a lot of divergence with lots of social experimentation, resulting in the development of psychotechnologies, which are standardized ways brought about by culture of formatting and communicating information that enhances cognition. With literacy, we invented powerful distributed cognition capable of linking to both your own brain at different periods of time, and can link to other brains as well. Most problems are solved with distributed cognition, and it is so embedded within our thinking that we often experience the illusion of explanatory depth, confusing access to DC with individual cognition (e.g. bicycle drawings). While literacy was pre-collapse, alphabetic literacy with its phonetic basis allowed for increase of capable literates due to easier learning. This enhances and expands your cognition by allowing you to look at your own mind and reflect again and again.

1.3.2 The Axial Revolution (or Age) | 800 BC to 300 BC

Presently, we see gods as supernatural and significantly superior. However, Charles Taylor (Canadian Philosopher, 1931 - present) says that in the pre-

axial age, there was no difference between the gods and men except for the degree of power they wielded. Charles Taylor said that the pre-Axial and pre-collapse worldview was oriented around the continuous cosmos, though this has been debated. He said that people experienced great continuity between the cultural/natural/sacred worlds. (A human could actually become a god such as Alexander the Great, because he wielded great power.) They also had the idea that time is a continuous, cyclical thing, having no sense of overall progress. Societies tried to preserve and remain harmonious with the current order, with the aim of cycling back to the origin, and doing so was meaningful. As such, wisdom was how to best harmonize with the cyclical continuity, a project of learning these skills so as to live long and prosper.

The differences between the natural world, social world, and spiritual world were largely differences in power that could be amassed. In this world, wisdom was understood as the practical skill of how to gain power.

Description: The nature of reality was understood in terms of a 'continuous cosmos' in the pre-axial age. This changed to an alternative way of thinking about reality, hence the characterization of this age as Axial.

This age featured a radical transformation in human cognition.

Took place in Ancient Greece, Ancient Israel, Ancient India, and Ancient China.

Questions

What is the relationship between psychotechnologies and Metacognition? Psychotechnologies empower our natural ability metacognition. When psychotechnologies are internalized and integrated with your metacognition, 2nd-order thinking abilities are developed.

How did the definition of wisdom change in the Axial Revolution? The pre-axial worldview was oriented around the notion of the 'continuous cosmos.' There was a universal belief that life was understood in a continuous cyclical fashion where wisdom was defined as optimal integration with the continuous cosmos.

Gods were representatives of power.

How do psychotechnologies impact human cognition?

How did alphabetic literacy impact human cognition?

Literacy allowed mankind to externalize their thoughts, and enable the persistence of information across space and time.

How did meaning transform in the Axial Age? Was there a notion of meaning in the pre-axial world view?

How did

Why do we feel no sense of continuity with ancient Egypt, or other civilization pre-800 BCE, though we do to ancient Greece and civilizations post-300 BCE?

There was a fundamental change that occurred. Notice how science came from ancient Greece, and history from ancient Israel, and these same advances occurred in India and China. The worlds major religions emerged around this point, during the Axial period.

1.4 Concepts and Phenomena

1.4.1 Continous Cosmos

1.4.2 Distributed Cognition

"A cognitive system whose structures and processes are distributed between internal and external representations, across a group of individuals, and across space and time" (Zhang and Patel, 2006).

It is important to note that most problems are solved through distributed cognition.

The relationship between distributed and individual cognition, is similar to the realtionship between an independent computer (or node) in a network, and the network itself.

How does distributed cognition behave like a system? What impact might it have on meaning?

1.4.3 Metacognition

- A higher order thinking Skill - Derived from the words meta meaning beyond and cognition which is "the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses."
- Metacognition is the awareness of cognition, and through literacy this increases, leading to what Bellah dubs Second Order Thinking (SOT). This involves reflectively analyzing and criticizing ones own cognition, and when integrated with distributed cognition, becomes very powerful in its affordance of self-criticism and correction/transcendence.

1.4.4 Psychotechnologies

Standardized ways brought about by culture of formatting and communicating information that enhances cognition.

A cognitive tool developed for the purpose of influencing human behaviour.

Examples: History, Alphabetic and Numeric Literacy, Money, Related Concepts:

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2

May 9, 2018 - Meaning Crisis as the Collapse of the Three Orders

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2.1 Summary

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2.2 History

2.2.1 The Ancient Hebrew Interpretation of the Two-World Mythos

Key Points:

2.2.2 The Thesis of NEW333H

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