

Overflow

"I had broken myself of the habit of thinking in short song cycles and began reading longer and longer poems to see if I could remember anything I read about in the beginning. I trained my mind to do this, had cast off gloomy habits and learned to settle myself down... I began cramming my brain with all kinds of deep poems. It seemed like I'd been pulling an empty wagon for a long time and now I was beginning to fill it up and would have to pull harder. I felt like I was coming out of the back pasture. I was changing in other ways, too. Things that used to affect me, didn't affect me anymore. I wasn't too concerned about people, their motives. I didn't feel the need to examine every stranger that approached."¹

- Bob Dylan

Direct reading is a self-transformation that leans towards an “enlightened” state. As Dylan reconfigures the practice of his creative act, transforming as a result, emerges anew with no care for superficial concerns in the world and amongst people, achieving almost a “spiritual” clarity. Another readable exists in the means of metamorphosis, the idea of cramming. The transition from a relatively inexperienced writer, “pulling an empty wagon”, confined to writing short song cycles to presumably longer and deeper poems, the betterment brought out through cramming.

On Anthropotechnics

Anthropotechnics: The exercises by which the individual transfigures and transforms themselves to an end—an autoplasmic labor.

Sloterdijk conducts an extensive analysis on anthropotechnics in “You Must Change Your Life: On Anthropotechnics”². This essay is intended to outline an Anthropotechnic. One that conceives of polymathy as its end. That demands a definition of polymathy itself.

Is the “exactness” of a number N relevant to the definiendum? Polymathy as expertise, creative contribution, in N fields, for instance. However, for our purposes an exact N is unnecessary. Polymathic condition defined in which $N > 1$ (perhaps 2) and trending upwards. What is creative contribution? Due to the nature of anthropotechnic, creative contribution as determined by the agent (and the object) suffices. If done correctly, creative of the agent coincides with the creative of the domain-space.

The prototypal instance: Davinci. We explicate by combining the particulars of Dylan's means and the actuality of Davinci's practice, primarily the simultaneous condition of cross-domain projects.

The Case of Multiple Wagons

For Dylan, the cramming happens in a single dimension. A vertical dimension with the concrete domain of songwriting. What can happen if a new dimension of extension appears? A horizontal extension, the case of multiple wagons. What is its relation to polymathy?

A categorical similarity posited on multiple wagons and the explore-exploit dilemma.

Explore-Exploit Dilemma: Given a defined objective, the explore-exploit paradigm refers to the challenge of selecting the most effective action in pursuit of that end.

- Exploitation involves choosing the best-known option based on current information to make immediate progress.
- Exploration entails investigating alternative options to gain better information that may lead to superior outcomes in the future.

Overemphasis on exploitation risks missing out on potentially better opportunities, while excessive exploration may hinder efficient progress toward the goal.

A transfer of contexts.

Explore-Exploit P: Given the context of polymathy (P), the terms change as follows:

- Exploit: As the act of applying vertical extension i.e. confined to one domain.
- Explore: As the act of horizontal extension, the expansion into multiple domains.

The practice of polymathy necessitates a trending upwards N. Thus, any anthropotechnic that aims at this end should take into account the addition of multiple wagons.

Overflow

Overflow, an anthropotechnic to the end of polymathy. As implied from the case of multiple wagons, the idea is to assert an Array, horizontal extension of domains. And their vertically extended exploitation. The Array is advanced simultaneously. All acts of vertical extension, exploitation, happen at once.

Obviously, there is no “true” simultaneity possible for the Human. We define a unit approximated to simultaneity, p-Time. Given p-Time as instantaneous, the vertical extension continues.

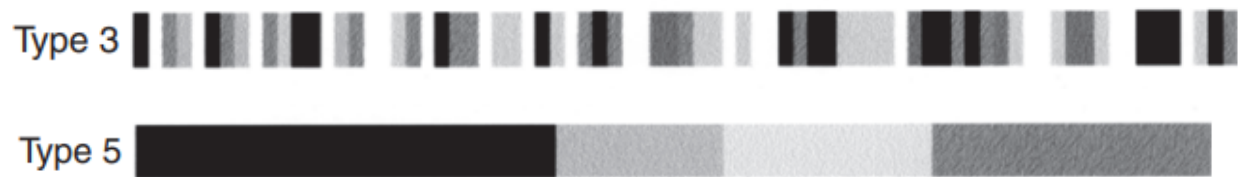
What are the conditions of praxis? What would be a concrete p-Time? Say the time taken to exploit all wagons resulting in a production is p-Exhaustive-Time. Select p-Time such that it is significantly smaller than p-Exhaustive-Time.

$$p\text{-Time} \lll p\text{-Exhaustive-Time}$$

Why significantly smaller? The assumption behind Overflow is that a certain kind of overwhelming of the human brain acts as compound acceleration, reinforcing following Overflow cycles. An overwhelming caused by completion of units of study in different domains that require different learning modalities, resulting in an accelerated capacity of production and learning that makes the next horizontal exploitation more effective.

Comparative Analysis: Overflow and the Sequential Vertical

Take the Sequential Vertical. To sequentially stack vertical extensions, a wagon exploited one after the other. Compare Type 3 (Overflow) and Type 5 (Sequential Vertical) in Bernstein et al. (2011)³.



Which is more conducive to polymathy? On the grounds of biological credence, the human brain peaks in the 20s. Even if the neurological performance peak is kept alive (highly unlikely)—through favorable habits, treatments, and the same—it will not increase. Even if the neurological peak is kept alive, the amount of physical energy required for creative production will decrease. Biological performance for polymathy monotonically decreases.

Therefore, the exploitation of the later horizontal domains takes a hit. If the polymathic practice demands an exploitation of N fields, all in maximal depth, to the approximately equal quality of the highest creativity, it is better to practice Overflow. Not to mention, the neuronal rewiring resulting from overwhelming is absent in the Sequential Vertical.

Note that if p-Exhaustive-Exploitation is increased sufficiently, the line between Overflow and the Sequential Vertical blurs. For instance, consider p-Exhaustive-Exploitation = 40Y, p-Time = 5Y, N=5. This is a Sorites Paradox Variant. However, the concerns are dissolved because differentiating grains and heaps in a non-exact window grounded in contingency is possible. And that is all that the anthropotechnic needs to function.

Footnote: Empiricity of the Singular

On what grounds, if any, can the empiricity of this “experiment”, as the first Anthropotechnist would deem it, be read? Some immediate problems arise.

First, the lack of a sample size. There are almost no individuals who practice overflow, the sequential vertical, not to mention being excellent at it. Second, the excellence criteria still lacks

rigorous definition in a philosophical manner. Many papers on creativity hint at the popular and culturally accepted as signs of creativity when it clearly is not the case. In Kaufman et al. (2009)⁴, Bill Gates and Oprah Winfrey are considered creative. If creative means the creation of the capital-N New, they are simply not creative.

Is there an empiricity of the singular? Not to be mistaken with the concretized general. The case of personalized medicines. Starting from insights of general empiricism, then fine-tuning to concrete cases. Could we devise experimental procedures starting from the singular, considering only the singular? An offshoot of conceptualizing Overflow, to be taken up later.

References

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4. Kaufman, J. C., & Beghetto, R. A. (2009). "Beyond Big and Little: The Four C Model of Creativity." *Review of General Psychology*, 13(1), 1–12.