Thinking on the thought-premise about information ethnics

Lanbo Kang

Abstract: the thought-premise of traditional ethnics is that "human is … animal". This kind of concept could demonstrate the human's moral behavior, however, it would be faced with two difficulties in the end. The first is that it negates the need that human should "pursue to become real human", because it understand human as something "established being". The second is that it can't exceed the animal's layer to think on the standard of "real human", even though it is admitted by some people that human should "pursue to become real human". In the era of information, having great changes take place in the being manner of human, these two difficulties are more and more obviously, and even restrict the research and use to the technology of information exactly. Under these circumstances, how human should understand himself all rounds? Which standard should be set up for human "pursue to become real human"? Like these kinds of problems are becoming so important in the era of information that ethnics would have to search for seriously. Being searching after these kinds of problems, information ethnics would exceed the layer of traditional ethnics, and become a kind of philosophy that of in the era of information.

Keywords: information ethnics, information, human, ethnics.

Lanbo Kang:

Faculty of Social Sciences, College of Science, Air Force Engineering University, Xi'an, 710051. (,710051)

Tel: 029-84270560; 13709148989.

E-mail: klbmail@vip.sina.com

Lanbo Kang come from Chongqing City, was born in 1963. In 1985, graduated from Sichuan University; In 1988, graduated from Xi'an Jiaotong University as a master of philosophy. And then, became a teacher teach in a military college. In 2009, graduated from Xi'an Jiaotong University, and get the doctor's degree of philosophy. Now is an associate professor in Air Force Engineering University.

Thinking on the thought-premise about information ethnics

Lanbo Kang

The problem which information ethnics is faced with in the information era may not be only limited the aspects of action criterions when information is being studied or used, but may include further aspects in the thought-premise of ethnics. In other words, the problem which ethnics, especially information ethnics, are faced with today is how to understand human himself.

1. The thought-premise of traditional ethnics and its problem

Traditional ethnics is the branch of social science. It studies human's action criterions mostly. As for human himself, who put forward or carry out the action criterions, need not to be studied deeply. Only needs it to put forward some rational action criterions according to the common concepts, combine with the needs of the society developments, that is all task.

However, the common concepts about human understanding himself is no more than to give a define which can reflect some attribute of human, i.e., human is the animal that can make or use the tools and symbols; human is the political animal; human is the thinking animal; human is emotional or volitional animal; human is the culture animal, etc. It seems that human can be distinguished from the animals to add some modifier before the word "animal". Under this conception human has further dignity than all kinds of animals, because he can make or use tools symbols; and has political rational emotional or volitional natures, as well as cultures.

According to the thinking logic that "human is…animal", in spite of how human can make or use the tools and symbols, in spite of what political rational emotional or volitional natures, as well as the fancy cultures that human has. In a word, in spite of what different attribute that human has, he still is the "animal" at all. He can't exceed the layer of "animal" in the end.

Actually, it certainty accords with human's experience to understand himself in the mode of "human is…animal". But there are two difficulties to understand human himself on the layer of animal. The first difficulty is that human is understood as some established beings. In this way, some people maybe think that they have gotten everything, as all of the animals, when they get their life from their parents, so they are human being inherently. Therefore they needn't pay out any effort for becoming "human". But actually, human is not human inherently, otherwise, the theory of socialization in sociology must be unnecessary. The second difficulty is now that human were animal eventually, then, even though he want to pursue to become human, he could understand human or pursued the human perfections according to the standard of all of the animals. In this way, the standard of human conduct himself has been reduced. In our daily life, during to the lower standard and the briefness of understanding human conduct himself, some people do everything out of human dignity.

Before information era, the two problems above mentioned not only still existed, but also brought very serious consequences. For example, people understand the relationship of human and nature only basing on survival; and think it is perfectly justified to ask for nature; and then, some people think the more they ask for from nature, the more human perfection they have. Such conception in fact is to understand the relationship between ourselves and nature according to the standard of animal survival. As some people sure that the survivals for animal and human all need

subsistence to keep their life. However, it is not because he asks for more subsistence than animals to make sure he is a real human. This attitude to the relationship between human himself and nature has change back to the nature difference between human and animals to a quantitative difference of consuming goods. As a result, the environment that human rely on has been havocked, and human himself has become a slave to pursue or snatch more and more subsistence quantitatively, till lost their human characters. But whether or no, the depth extent and speed of these serious consequences had been restricted by the factuality of the life before information era. They can't be magnified non-linearly by the non-hypostatic information. However, in the information era, the two problems above would become very graveness. The consequences would be magnified non-linearly by the non-hypostatic information. Because of the information era, human existence mode has being changed in total.

2. Great changes of human existence mode in the information era

According to the viewpoint of K. Marx, the freedom and consciousness life activities are human existence mode. Without this mode, human can't confirm himself as the human being. The freedom and consciousness life activities differentiate human from animals on the layer of life. But in the different era, the freedom and consciousness life activities always show themselves as different contents and forms. In the fore-information era, such activities represent their materiality mostly. Although it has information characters in today's viewpoint, the spirit was still restricted by the materiality in the end. As the platform that human created his spirit life was only the substantial material world. In such world, human enters into his life directly. The complexities of human were enslaved to the factuality of the world. Especially, the fictive ego has little opportunity to show independently in the factuality life. If he persisted in showing his fictive ego, he would encountered many mistakes and get into many troubles in his factuality life.

And it is restricted by the factuality of the material world to exceed the limitation of human life. For instance, people not only know but also dissatisfy their life's limitation. So they always try to make their spirit life go on forever. But this make them have to pay huge effort. And whether to get the aim, it is rely on some chance. Socrates paid his nature life for his spirit life eternal. But exception this, due to he had met both honesty and promising students like Plato. Otherwise, his sacrifice might have been die off or forgotten in many people's misunderstanding or not propagation. In this way, the eternal of his spirit life he had pursued could not come true. The similar circumstance has plenty in human being's history.

However, the circumstance would change drastically in the information era. Information technology not only filters into the every aspects of our life, but also digs a new flat-----information world for human to know and show themselves over again. The feature of information world means of great changes in the mode of human existence. The state of human existence or his freedom and consciousness life activities would develop completely in the two interaction world, one is the material world that human being have been used to, the another one is information world which has been dug by information technology. Owning to the state of human existence, in the use of information technology widely, human is not only in the material world, but also in the information world with various visage multiples egos and multifarious fashions. And to exceed the limitation of human life, if someone wants to eternal of his life, he needn't pay his nature life for the spirit life eternal like Socrates, and needn't be restricted by any chance. He only need make his sounds and looks his thought etc, all project into the information world by

information technology. And then, his spirit life can go on forever in the information world. Because information produce, information process, information transfer, information storage and information acquire, etc no longer be restricted by traditional factuality. They are become quite cheapness and easiness. This means of that every person would have the chance or route to exceed his life limitation easily and cheaply, so long as the information technology has been developed continuously.

In fact, it is different completely from that the process of human freedom and consciousness life activities evolved before. In the past singleness material world human freedom and consciousness life activities were restricted by the factuality of material world, and the space-time structures about the life activities evolving were simpleness relatively. Because in the single material world, the activities such as politics, economy and military affairs, etc, except science research, that human evolved in a general speed, which can be hold by their experience directly. The processes of such activities evolving are relatively slow. So people can understand or control them by their experience. On the other hand, these activities sometimes were restricted by the geographical factors. Though the world war II was a cosmopolitan war, there still were some places avoiding that disaster at all. It is in the influence of material world factuality and the space-time structures' simpleness, the freedom and consciousness activities are simple and doubtless. The risks and quandaries which human brought up against were less relatively. So that people always hoped to develop technology to increase their knowledge about the object world they act, in order to avoid the risks and quandaries.

However, in the information era, human freedom and consciousness life activities have being infiltrated by information everywhere. Under this circumstance, many activities evolving by information have no longer limited by the factuality of material world, but evolved in some new space-time structures. Because under the support of information technology, information even transmit in velocity of light and carry no national boundaries. That is where the network extends, where the information can reach accordingly. This makes human freedom and consciousness life activities evolve both very fast in speed and very extensive in area. Base on the processes and results of the activity, human activities have being infiltrated by unrealistic information everywhere, and the information interact one another may bring some new unexpected phenomena or information, therefore it would be very obvious that the risk and uncertainty or anti-intention come from the process of human activities. In this state, only depending on the technology development deeply, it can't avoid the risk and reduces perplexities availably, unfortunately, with the development of technology, great new perplexities or a lot of defiant risks would be taken place.

In a word, information technology is not like the past technology only to change certain modality of human being's life at all. Information technology has brought some essential effect on the higher layer to human himself and his freedom and consciousness life activities. These kinds of effect means that human being only understand this kind of technology more completely on a higher layer and actualize to understand or found themselves completely much more, can they rein such technology very well in the process of human being's developing themselves.

3. The thought-premise of information ethnics and its subject position

In the information era, the great changes of human existence mode means of if he understand himself still under the thought logic route, which think of human as "animals", and pursue his

perfections according to the animals' standard, human would destroy himself in the process of pursuing his perfections.

Human is not some lone and established existence. His freedom and consciousness life activities make him found the most universal relationships with the environment he lives in. and he has to integrate himself with someone else most directly, such as his parents, brothers and sisters, colleagues, friends, bosses, underlings, etc. Only in these relationships or connections, can his freedom and consciousness life activities keep and develop. And with the self-cognition or self-reflection his life activities, these kinds of activities have been adjusted gradually, and his existent states have been changed. At the same time, he can corroborate or rediscover himself, and layout himself yet based on the results of the self-cognition or self-reflection. From this means, it is the freedom and consciousness life activities, human differentiate himself from the animals on the life layer. And it is these kinds of activities, human becomes a process, an idea that human has to strive for the perfections all his life. That is to say, human has to strive for "becoming human" all his life. Therefore, it has been truth so deeply that Nietzsche said human is a course, Heidegger and Sartre believe that human can't be define, he is "to be is not to be".

The nature that human creates himself   pursues himself means that human never gives up creating and pursuing the perfections of himself, due to he hasn't understand himself completely, even still defined himself to "animals". He would have created and pursued the perfections of himself according to the unconsciousness attitude of animals to nature and the standard that animals survive directly. But these results would have led human in an existent condition, which is less than animal's. Because it is for survival that animals have to occupy the material goods. However, not only for survival, but also for proving his existence and perfections, human has to occupy the material goods. For these aims, human has to use his all technology that could be dug, and use his all measures that could be found, such as economic, political and military measures, etc. As a result, even the most lupine animals saw human doing evil, which soaks human's wisdom everywhere; they could have sighed for their crude ferocity. It is obvious that it is easy to make human's wisdom go astray to understand human himself in one-side view and to evolve his freedom and consciousness life activities by this one-side view.

Today, information technology have made human freedom and consciousness life activities most convenient and speedy evolve completely through the double world which blend information and substance each other. The mode of human existence therefore occur great changes. However, if human refused to change the viewpoint of understanding himself in a one-side, and still thought of he is a rational or able to create and use tool animal, or thought of himself is some good at the symbols and holding glitter culture animals, farther more if he achieved to create and perfect himself by the manner and standard of animals, he would encounter huge quandary in the information era yet. Because, on the one hand information technology affords everyone a new flat and equal opportunities to evolve their self-creating life activities, on the other hand, it magnifies human complexities nonlinearly with the non-substaintial information. The freedom and consciousness life activities make human become the most complicated existence in the world. Before information era, these kinds of complexities only display through the substantial material world, they are often restricted by the substantiality of substance. But in the information era, such complexities have to appeared much layers and aspects in the double complex world which interact on information and substance. Not only are the restrictions from the material world substantiality reduced relatively, the non-substance   the speediness and the universality of

information also intensify the human complexities, so that there would reveal tremendous complexities while human is creating and pursuing his perfection by himself. If human, who have so much tremendous complexities, actualized his self-creating and pursuing his own perfection in the way or standard of animals occupancy survival goods for their life, he would dig and use information technology superlatively with all kinds of features and measures in order to snatch the pecuniary wealth furthest from the others and the nature.

If information ethnics hoped to solve the questions in theory indeed, which human being would face with in information era, the important thing is to break through the simple thinking logic that traditional ethnics understand human himself. In fact, human is that real existence who has been creating or transcending himself in the freedom and consciousness life activities. Today's information technology has afforded the best condition for the self-creating or self- transcending. Under this circumstance, how human to create himself more goodliness, and how to transcend himself more refulgent, it needs information ethnics to discuss deeply on the layer of life, not the layer of animal, basing on human freedom and consciousness life activities. Human's form of life is different far from animals'. For animals, to keep their life is the whole content of their life activities. But for human, except keeping his life, the content of his life activities has consisted to define his life some greater meaning. Well then, which life can have greater meaning? Is that to make use of information technology for occupancy and consumption more material goods, or for founding human spirit in order to make life overcome the limitation of material? Like these kinds of questions should be answered in the era of information by the theory exploration of information ethnics yet.

Thus it can be seen, never is information ethnics a new embranchment of traditional ethnics, but the innovation to the whole ethnics in the information era. That is to say, it should be unified the build of moral standard with human understanding himself and pursuing his perfections internally. And such unification means that information ethnics would not be restricted on the layer of social science like the traditional ethnics. In fact, it's exploration about how to understand human himself and how to lead human to pursue his perfections, has involved the subject in a basic philosophy faith, which is how human being becomes a real human. Basing on this means, information ethnics has to be the philosophy in the era of information.