



Extended Abstract

On Sign and Information

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Introduction

Since the 20th century, as human society has gradually entered into the information age, the informatization tide has swept the globe. The researches on information have been growing day by day, like the connection between the science and technology and the information, the nature of information, the characteristics of information and the spread of information. Besides, philosophy has already incorporated information and technology into its field of vision, and has gradually evolved into the philosophy of information and philosophy of technology with distinct era characteristics and frontier scientific nature.

Philosophy of information and philosophy of technology are the results of scientific and technological revolution, however, judging from the current study, since the 1980s, founded by Professor Wu Kun, and being improved constantly, the philosophy of information has already constructed to a theory building, and become the true sense "meta-philosophy". Philosophy of technology also has new faces constantly. In the process of the discussing about the technology's essence, more and more scholars begin to notice that technology is the "media" that links human beings and nature. And the media needs a certain sign system to realize the communication between human and nature, thus innovation of technology is the constant evolvement of communication ways between human and nature. American technology philosopher Neil Postman believes media, a vital technology, is just seriously ignored in general philosophy of technology. People always tend to be more concerned about the technology on the production, or the technology that can "transform nature". While, "media" technology used for communication among people has been neglected. M McLuhan believes that media have changed the way how human perceive the world and how human experience the world, and then generates the new behavior patterns that human influence the world. While compared with

the contents and messages transferred by media, its impacts on the development of human society are relatively minor. There are some scholars in China hold that, in the technological revolution, the effects of media to the modern civilization are particularly important. The problem is that, the innovation and development of media technology certainly have significant influence on human behavior, ways of thinking and other aspects, but putting the information aside and giving it little attention worth rethinking.

Media, as a carrier of information, its relevant technological innovations actually are the constant changes of modes of information's presentation. And different present ways are reflected in the different sign systems. Therefore, under the backgrounds of deepening studies of linguistics, and semiotics, many contemporary philosophers tend to expound their thoughts from the perspective of sign and information. And there is a continuing tendency towards the philosophy of information. Albert Borgmann (1937-) has been devoted himself to the sign presentation of modern technology and to ponder information's value and meaning, and then deepening into his reflections on technology and human culture. Therefore, based on the achievements of the philosophy of information studies in China, this thesis will from the perspective of sign and information, compare the thoughts of Mr. Albert Borgmann and Pro. Wu Kun. And then this paper will put forward some opinions on the relationship between sign and information, to show the theory field of the philosophy of information, which is as the "Meta-philosophy".

1.The thoughts of realism --- comparison of different philosophical foundations

Mr. Borgmann's "inclusive realism" and Mr. Wu Kun's new viewpoint of existence are the basis of their own philosophy thoughts. The essences are that the different thoughts of reality completely distinguish their own information philosophies. "Inclusive realism" is based on scientific realism, namely "monism", to look at all the correlates relevant with material and spirit. Thus, this philosophy still belongs to traditional philosophy of technology. While, Mr. Wu's new "objective unreality" is a new view in the indirect existence field. It breaks through the traditional realism. Thus, the philosophy of information has the basic characters of the "meta-philosophy". And best of all, in the junction of substance and spirit, they both make their own explorations. Borgmann regards the sign as the bridge connecting the material and social life and the spiritual world. And Mr. Wu Kun takes "objective information" which marks the indirect existence field as the vinculum between material world and spiritual world. Thus, the two philosophers are both looking for the real correlation between material and spirit. They both avoid falling into the stereotype of "dualism". One catches the "sign". And the other one finds the "information". Why is this? What is the association between sign and information? This association is the similarity of their philosophies. What is the difference between sign and information? And this difference is the different philosophical connotations between them.

2. Sign and information—comparison between different philosophical factors

First, in terms of the division of information form, constrained by "unicity" of realism, Mr. Borgmann regards sign as the standard to classify information types. The classification reflects the evolution of

human society, but overlooks infinite vitality and great creativity in the evolution process. The division of Mr. Wu Kun is based on the division in new existing field, Sign information is one of the important forms of information regeneration, indicating the roles of sign which is the product of human thoughts in creative thinking.

Second, in terms of the relations of sign and information, Mr. Borgmann regards sign as the existence field marking reality and information as the meaning represented by sign. Mr. Wu Kun considers information as the self display of existing way and state of matter. The evolution of information is accompanied with the development of material world and spiritual world. Sign information is the abstraction of conceptual thoughts and the key of information creation. Therefore, sign is a stage of information evolution and a form of human thought. Information is reproduced through sign and the reproduced information turns into for-itself information and enters into another round of evolution, thus the relatively independent information possesses endless vitality and sign is endowed with new form and meanings in the constant evolution of thoughts.

Third, in terms of value of information, Borgmann thinks that grasping information depends on relations between sign and matter, The more direct the relations between sign and matters, the closer the relations between information and reality, and the less uncertainty of information; conversely, the uncertainty of information increases. Borgmann holds negative attitude to technological information in contemporary informationization trend, believing that meanings of matters fade away with springing up of information. Mr. Wu Kun thinks that the realization process of value is the process where subject information is realized in object. The highest level of information value is spiritual value. Subject and object perceive and understand object information through interaction with each other. Subject, through internal thinking, processes stored information and creates new conceptual images and sign information, which constitutes the realization process of spiritual value. The value of information has universality, complexity, vigor and creativity, which will drive diversified development of human values.

Methods :

Comparison and analysis

Results and Discussion:

The author think that the information concepts of Mr. Bergmann is the philosophy of technology from the perspective of information ethics, which is critical and reflective. The philosophy of information of Mr. Wu Kun has new theoretic perspective and grand theory space. We are convinced that besides promoting philosophy of technology, the development of philosophy of information will propel the revolution of fundamental ideas of philosophy, in turn trigger fundamental changes of philosophy. It's worth noting that currently the study of philosophy of information is on the rise worldwide and continues to innovate, at the same time, other subjects such as bioscience, brain science and cognitive science are developing rapidly. New philosophical problems will draw inspirations from philosophy of

information, which further promotes development of philosophy of information and demonstrates its theory glamour as meta-philosophy.

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