

# On “the Mirror of Media” and “the Truth of the World” Based on Analysis about Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Thought

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**Abstract:** In Wittgenstein’s view, things became facts after judgment, and the sum of facts constituted the real world. Therefore, he also raised the question of the relationship between facts, judgments and the real world. In current real world, the basis for people to judge things is usually the relevant information obtained by themselves, and the media is a common tool for people to obtain information. In other words, the media is like a mirror for people to understand the real world. Through the special mirror of the media, people can obtain some information about things, judge them, and form an understanding of the actual situation of the real world. In other words, the special mirror of media has a direct impact on people’s understanding of the real world to a certain extent. Furthermore, the “media mirror” controls the “truth of the world” to a certain extent. Therefore, for the media, people should not only give full play to their auxiliary role in understanding the real world, but also strengthen their management.

**Keywords:** Wittgenstein; fact; judgment; media; real world

## 1. Introduction

As a special existence, man is related to the real world through his living practice. Human living practice is not only objective and material, but also conscious and purposeful. It is precisely because of the conscious and purposeful characteristics of their living practice activities that people are not only promoting their living practice activities, but also carrying out awareness activities of the real world. In people’s understanding of the real world, judgment is a very important and basic link. Wittgenstein believed that things became facts after judgment, and the sum of facts constituted the real world. Therefore, he also raised the question of the relationship between facts, judgments and the real world. In current real world, the basis for people to judge things is usually the relevant information obtained by themselves, and the media is a common tool for people to obtain information. In other words, the media is like a mirror for people to understand the real world. Through the special mirror of the media, people can obtain some information about things, judge them, and form an understanding of the

actual situation of the real world. In other words, the special mirror of media has a direct impact on people’s understanding of the real world to a certain extent. Furthermore, for people in current real world, “the truth of the world” is controlled by the “media mirror” to a certain extent. Therefore, for the media, people should not only give full play to their auxiliary role in understanding the real world, but also strengthen their management.

## 2. Facts and Judgments

In the theory of logical philosophy, Wittgenstein put forward that the world was everything that happened [1]. Indeed, the concept of the real world was not ethereal and empty. The real world was a process composed of all fresh and concrete things. In addition, this “everything that happened” was also included in the scope of human living practice, and was inextricably related to human living practice. It was precisely because of this reason that they could be recognized and defined as “everything that happened”. If some things were not brought into the scope of human living practice and had no connection with human beings, they wouldn’t happen or exist for human beings. Thus, the part of the real world that was not included in the scope of human practical activities didn’t exist or exist for human beings. On this point, Marx and Engels also discussed indirectly when criticizing the theoretical defects of Feuerbach’s idealistic view of history in German ideology. They pointed out that a theoretical defect of Feuerbach’s idealistic view of history lay in “he didn’t see that the perceptual real world around him wasn’t not something that had existed directly and consistently since the founding of the world, but the product of industrial and social conditions, the product of history and the result of activities from generation to generation” [2]. It could be seen that in the view of Marx and Engels, the real world in which they were living was not only a real world included in the scope of their living practice activities, but also created through their living practice activities. Thus, the boundary of people’s understanding of the real world also depends on the scope of their living practice. Based on this, for human beings, if a part of the real world was not included in the scope of their living practice, then this part of the real world was nothingness or nonexistence.

The real world was what happens. Therefore, only what was brought into the scope of people's living practice is the real "what happened" and recognized as a part of the real world.

Wittgenstein also made the following two comments on the proposition that "the world was everything that happens". First, the world was the sum of all facts, not the sum of things [1]. On this point, he made the following specific explanations. The world was determined by all facts [1]. The sum of facts stipulates what happened and what did not happen [1]. Facts in logical space are the world [1]. Second, the world was decomposed into facts. Anything either happened or didn't happen, and everything else remained the same [1].

Here, "the world was the sum of all facts" meant that the real world was composed of micro and specific facts. The fact was not generated spontaneously and naturally, but must be formed through human judgment. It could be seen that the real world wasn't irrelevant to people, but closely related to people. The existence and true appearance of the real world need to be confirmed by human judgment. However, this didn't mean that the existence and development of the real world need to rely on human judgment. In fact, the existence and development of the real world followed its internal objective laws, and are not transferred by human will and power. Based on this, of course, human judgment couldn't fundamentally dominate the existence and development of the real world. However, on the premise of following the internal objective law of the existence and development of the real world, people could give full play to their subjective ability to transform the real world. In addition, if you leave people, the existence and true face of the real world wouldn't be confirmed. In short, man was the main body to understand and transform the real world. The existence and true appearance of the real world need to be confirmed by human judgment. "Facts in logical space were the real world" shew that the real world was composed of facts in logical space. This once again shew that the existence and true face of the real world needed to be confirmed by human judgment. And "facts in logical space" was what people logically judged. And what people logically judged became a fact. In short, things were judged to be true. This also revealed the relationship between fact and judgment. In other words, the emergence and existence of facts were inseparable from a necessary link, that was to say, judgment. Everything that happened in the real world could become a fact only through people's judgment. If judgment no longer exist, then the facts would no longer exist. Generally speaking, judgment was a necessary prerequisite for the emergence and existence of facts.

### 3. Judgments and Media

As mentioned earlier, things became facts through judgment. In current real world, people's judgment of various things is often based on some information related to these things. In current real world, for people, in addition to obtaining direct information through their own practical activities, obtaining indirect information through

the media is also a common way. McLuhan once pointed out that "media was information" [3]. For this brief conclusion, its true connotation and significance didn't mean that the media itself was equal to information, but that it contained a functional relationship between media and information. Specifically, the functional relationship between media and information was that media was an important channel for manufacturing, publishing and disseminating information. At the same time, it was also an important channel for people to obtain information. In other words, a basic function of media was to provide people with information. Based on the information provided by the media, people could judge everything that happened in the real world. It could be seen that, in a sense, the media served as an important external auxiliary condition and tool for people to make judgments. People's judgment of everything that happened in the real world was inseparable from the assistance of the media. Without the assistance of the media, people wouldn't be able to make many judgments. Generally speaking, the media is an important kind of prerequisites for the emergence and existence of judgment. This is the relationship between judgment and media in current real world. In the real world, the specific effect of media on judgment can be analyzed from two aspects as follows. That is to say, first, the media provide some real and effective information, and then provide scientific and reasonable guidance for people's judgment. Second, the media provide some false and invalid information, which mislead people's judgment of things. Combined with the actual situation of current real world, most of the information provided by the media to people is true and effective. This information provides positive guidance for people to judge all kinds of things happening in current real world. However, at the same time, very a little information provided by the media to people is false and invalid. These false and invalid information is what people usually call spreading rumors. In current real world, the investigation of the truth often passively follows the rumors, and it will take some time after the rumors are made and released, which leads to the lag of rumor refutation. In addition, as the media audience, the psychology and behavior of the general public such as conformity and curiosity hunting will objectively drive and boost the spread of rumors. For the above reasons, rumors provided by the media are often easy to spread, which seriously mislead people's judgment of things. In short, in current real world, media has become an important assistant and tool for people to judge all kinds of things that happen in the real world. However, the effect of media on people's judgment has two sides. That is to say, it can not only provide positive guidance for people's judgment, but also mislead people's judgment to a certain extent.

### 4. Media and the Real World

As mentioned earlier, in current real world, obtaining information through media has become a common way for people to obtain information in daily living practice and cognitive activities. The function of people's access

to information is to provide reference basis for people's judgment of all kinds of things happening in the real world. Thus, the information provided by the media provides a reference basis for people to judge things. The things judged by people become facts, and the sum of facts constitutes the real world. In other words, through people's judgment of various things in current real world, people's minds have formed factual knowledge based on these things, and then the sum of these factual knowledge constitutes people's understanding of the existence and true face of the real world. Therefore, the information provided by the media also indirectly affects people's understanding of the objective existence and real face of the real world. The authenticity of the real world is controlled and controlled by the media to a certain extent. In a sense, media has become a mirror for people to understand the real world. To a certain extent, the real face of the real world is kidnapped and dominated by the special mirror of the media. In short, "media mirror" in turn kidnap and control "the truth of the world" [4].

In current real world, various media are very developed. They provide people with rich and diverse information. The influence of these information on people has two sides. That is to say, on the one hand, they not only provide an effective reference basis for people to judge all kinds of things in current real world, but also provide a powerful auxiliary tool for people's understanding of the real world. Furthermore, people can enhance their scientific understanding of the existence and true face of the real world with the help of these effective information. On the other hand, there are also some untrue information among them. These untrue information can neither provide effective reference for people's judgment of various things in current real world, nor provide powerful auxiliary tools for people's understanding of the real world. On the contrary, these untrue information will mislead people's judgment of various things in current real world and their understanding of the real world. Further, under the misleading of these false and invalid information, people will have some wrong understanding of the existence and true face of the real world. Combined with specific examples in real life, the multiple "reversal" of the "truth" of events in the news reports released by the media reflects that the information provided by the media can not only effectively assist people's understanding of the world, but also greatly mislead people's understanding of the world. In short, the multiple "reversals" of the "truth" of the event in the news reports released by the media reflect the two sides of the role of the information provided by the media in people's understanding of the world. In other words, "media mirror" in turn kidnaps and controls "the truth of the world". In view of the two sides of the role of the information provided by the media in people's understanding of the world, in the process of obtaining information with the help of the media, people should do well in the following two aspects. That is to say, on the one hand, people should make full use of the media to obtain information about all kinds of things that happen

in the real world, and then judge these things according to these information, so as to turn things into facts. Further, people also form some factual understanding of various things that happen in the real world, so as to enhance the understanding of the actual situation of the real world. On the other hand, in the process of obtaining information through the media, people must also enhance their discrimination ability, and then use their discrimination ability to distinguish the authenticity of information, so as to eliminate the false and preserve the true of information, and try to avoid being misled by untrue information. Only by doing well in these two aspects can people give full play to the auxiliary role of the media in their understanding of the reality of the real world, and make the "media mirror" become a right-hand assistant in their understanding of the "truth of the world", rather than a serious obstacle to their understanding of the "truth of the world".

## 5. People and Media

In current real world, media is originally an important kind of tools made by people and used to obtain information. However, with the continuous progress of related technologies, media become more and more powerful, and then penetrate into all aspects of people's living practice more and more deeply, providing people with a variety of information. At the same time, the information provided by the media is growing, which makes people fall into an unprecedented and doubling amount of information in their living practice. This information contains both real and false. For people, these information constitutes the basis and reference for people to judge all kinds of things happening in current real world. As mentioned earlier, things become facts through judgment, and the sum of facts constitute the real world. Based on this information, people can make judgments on various things, and then form a factual understanding based on these things in their minds. All kinds of factual knowledge together constitute people's understanding of the existence and true face of the whole real world. Thus, the information provided by the media indirectly controls people's understanding of the existence and true face of the whole real world. Based on this, it can also be said that the media, originally a kind of tools for obtaining information made by people, in turn dominate and control people. This reflects the reversal and alienation of the relationship between people and the media. From the perspective of subject and object, in the relationship between people and media, people are the subjects and media are the objects. People consciously and actively make and use media to obtain information. However, in current real world, with the innovation of technology, the media have become increasingly powerful, and they have increasingly penetrated into all aspects of people's living practice. At the same time, the information they provide to people shows an explosive growth in quantity, and is increasingly rich and diverse in content and types. In terms of nature, these information is both true and false. Real information can provide effective reference for people to judge all kinds of things

that happen in current real world, while false information can't provide effective reference for people to judge all kinds of things that happen in current real world, and even mislead people to judge all kinds of things that happen in current real world to a certain extent. However, in other words, whether the information is true or false, these information constitutes the basis and reference for people to judge all kinds of things happening in current real world. In current real world, if people leave the media, they won't be able to obtain all kinds of information provided by the media, and then they won't be able to judge all kinds of things that happen in current real world, it will be difficult to form a factual understanding of the real world, and it will be difficult to effectively understand and transform the real world in their own living practice. Therefore, in the relationship between people and the media, the people who used to be the subjects lost his subject status, while the media, which used to be the tools and objects of people's living practice, in a sense, in turn become the subject, and then dominate and control people's living practice and people's understanding and transformation of the real world.

## 6. How to Deal with the Mirror of Media

In current real world, the media have deeply embedded and influenced people's cognitive activities of the real world. On the one hand, the information it provide acts as a reference for people's understanding of the real world in a sense. Compared with people's cognitive activities, the media are like a special kind of mirrors. Some real and effective information they provide, like "mirror", also presents the real face of the real world to a certain extent, and then provides a more reliable reference for people's cognitive activities of the real world in a sense. If it is completely separated from the media, people's cognitive activities won't be carried out comprehensively, deeply, smoothly and effectively. Based on this, in people's cognitive activities, first of all, people must fully and effectively use the media mirror to give full play to its greatest auxiliary role in people's cognitive activities. In addition, while the media play an auxiliary role in people's cognitive activities, it also close people to a real world constructed by themselves to a certain extent, so that people are dominated and controlled by them in cognitive activities. In other words, for people's cognitive activities, acting as a special kind of mirror, the media provide some real and effective information or "mirror image" about the real world that can indeed present the real face of the real world to a certain extent, and then provide a more reliable reference basis for people's cognitive activities. However, the "mirror image" of the world they provide also limits and restricts people's understanding of the real world to a certain extent. In other words, the real and effective "mirror image" of the real world provided by the media can effectively assist people's understanding of the real world to a certain extent. However, at the same time, all the "mirror images" provided by the media also form a unique "mirror images" real world to a certain extent. This "mirror images" real world hoodwinks people's objective and accurate cognitive activities of the

real world, which in turn dominates and controls people's cognitive activities to a certain extent. In view of this, while making full use of the media, people should also strengthen the management of the media. To strengthen the management of media, we can start from the following aspects.

First, strengthen the management of the whole process of media's manufacturing and disseminating information. For the media, we strengthen the management of them, which mainly means strengthening the management of the whole process of media manufacturing and dissemination of information. Whether the media play an auxiliary role in people's cognitive activities, or the media in turn dominate and control people's cognitive activities, they all play a role through the manufacture and dissemination of information. Therefore, to strengthen the management of media, we must effectively manage media's manufacturing and disseminating information. To strengthen the management of the whole process of media's manufacturing and disseminating information, the government and media enterprises need to work together. First, the government's news, information management and public security departments need to strengthen the supervision of the media. Specifically, the above-mentioned departments of the government should first formulate and improve laws and regulations for the management of the whole process of media's manufacturing and disseminating information (including media enterprises and individuals using media), so as to provide a legal basis for the management of the whole process of media's manufacturing and disseminating information. At the same time, we should use advanced scientific and technological means and professional staff to strengthen the review of the information released and disseminated by the media (including media enterprises and individuals using the media). During the review process, once any false information is found, the media enterprises that publish and disseminate the false information or individuals using the media shall be notified in time to eliminate or correct the false information, and corresponding sanctions and penalties shall be imposed according to relevant laws and regulations and the actual harm and loss caused by their behavior. Second, media enterprises and individuals using media should also strengthen self-regulation. Specifically, media enterprises should strengthen the self-regulation of the whole process of manufacturing and disseminating information. For the whole process of manufacturing and disseminating information, media enterprises should consciously use advanced scientific and technological means and professional staff to strictly self-examine and supervise this process. In the process of self-examination and supervision, once false information is found, advanced scientific and technological means shall be used to eliminate or correct these false information in time. At the same time, media enterprises should also establish and improve the prevention mechanism of false information. Specifically, after the information is produced and before it is officially released and disseminated, media enterprises should

strengthen the self-examination of the information. In the process of self-examination of information, once false information is found, it shall be cleared or corrected immediately, and the relevant responsible persons shall be punished and educated. In addition, individuals using the media should also strengthen their self-examination of the information before it is officially released and disseminated. In the process of self-examination of information, once false information is found, it should be cleared or corrected immediately, and warn themselves not to make the same or similar mistakes in the future.

Secondly, improve the media audience's independent thinking and information recognition ability [5]. To strengthen the management of the media, we shouldn't only focus on strengthening the management of the media, but also improve the ability of the media audience, that is to say, the broad masses of people who obtain information through the media. Specifically, we should improve their abilities of independent thinking and information recognition, so that they can effectively distinguish and screen the information they come into contact with in their daily life, so as to eliminate the false and retain the true. Only in this way can we achieve the following two effects. First, enable the general public to effectively promote the awareness of the real world with the help of the real information provided by the media. Second, enable the general public to effectively identify and filter the false information released by the media, so as to avoid being misled by the false information made and disseminated by the media. Based on these two effects, for the majority of people who obtain information through the media, the special "mirrors" or the media can become an effective auxiliary kind of tools for them to understand the real world. At the same time, the special mirror of the media wouldn't hinder or mislead them to promote their understanding of the real world.

## 7. Conclusion

In current real world, with the development of electronic information technology and network technology, media have deeply penetrated into people's living practice and people's understanding of the real world. In terms of the actual situation, people's understanding of the real world have been influenced and controlled by the media to a great extent. If we leave the media completely, people's understanding of the real world won't be carried out normally and smoothly. In a sense, media have been equivalent to a special kind of mirrors for people to promote their understanding of the real world. For people, the information provided by the media or a special mirrors, has a two-sided impact on their cognitive activities in the real world as follows. First, the real and accurate information produced and

disseminated by the media will greatly promote people's cognitive activities in the real world. Second, the false and untrue information produced and disseminated by the media will seriously mislead people to promote their understanding of the real world. Therefore, for the media, people should do well in the following two aspects. On the one hand, people should make effective use of the media. Specifically, people should fully rely on the real and effective information provided by the media to promote their understanding of the real world. In other words, we should give full play to its auxiliary role in people's understanding of the real world. On the other hand, people should also manage the media effectively. Specifically, the relevant departments of our government should formulate and improve the laws and regulations for the management of the whole process of media (including media enterprises and individuals using media) manufacturing and disseminating information, and then effectively manage the whole process of media enterprises and individuals using media manufacturing and disseminating information according to these laws and regulations. At the same time, people should also improve the independent thinking and information recognition ability of the media audience. Only in this way can they effectively distinguish and screen the information they come into contact with in their daily life, so as to eliminate the false and preserve the true, so that they can effectively promote their understanding of the real world with the help of the real information provided by the media, and avoid being misled by the false information created and disseminated by the media. In short, only with the special mirror of the media, can people not only make full and effective use of it to promote their understanding of the real world, but also avoid being blinded and misled by the false information it creates and spreads.

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