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The Rise of the Code and the Hermeneutics of Technology: A Ricoeurian Perspective on Software

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Abstract: *The Rise of the Code and the Hermeneutics of Technology: A Ricoeurian Perspective on Software*

The aim of this paper is to contribute to understanding software from a “continental” perspective. I argue that Paul Ricoeur’s philosophical hermeneutics can help in developing a new understanding of the nature of software, thus fueling the philosophical debate on digital technology. The core of the paper is the application of the Ricoeur’s notion of text to software. A hermeneutic understanding of software allows us to explain those aspects of software that escape a strictly technical definition, such as the relationship with the user, the human being, and the social and cultural transformations that software produces, the same way that any text does. The hermeneutic understanding of software considers software as a social and cultural product.