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The notion of information and the notion of Ionian arché

ABSTRACT. The notion of information and the notion of Ionian arché
The article explores the possibility of interpreting the notion of arché as a metaphor of the notion of information. The notion of arché is presented from the perspective of Ionian school of philosophy and compared with the notion of information presented from the perspective of natural sciences. It is argued that there are three major similarities between the notions: both play important part in reflection on the nature of the world, describe the universe on a fundamental level and have its static and dynamic aspect.

KEY WORDS: arché, information, metaphor, natural sciences.

1. Introduction

The question "What is information?" is difficult to answer. Even Claude Shannon, the father the of contemporary information theory, did not define the notion [cf. Shannon, Weaver, 1948, pp. 279–423]. It seems that it is much easier to study manipulation, transfer, compression and storage of information than to formulate its general definition. The first to try and define information were cyberneticists such as Norbert Wiener and Gregory Bateson, who said, respectively: "Information is the recording of a choice between two equally probable simple alternatives" [Wiener, 1960, p. 9] and "Information is a difference that makes the difference" [Bateson, 1973, p. 448]. However, these definitions are rather unsatisfactory: they