

Open-source: Open-publishing and organic knowledge

In practical the idea of open source is very simple: to give the source code of a software available to anybody who can transform it. The more people work on the source code to perform the software, the better it is for its development.

I don't want to talk about technical information about source code and open source. A lot of websites do that much better than I would have done. My purpose is to talk about open-source as linked to a conceptual background; working in collaboration in meatspace, dealing with questions of collaborative practices, networks and collective knowledge, this conceptual background has interested me since I began to work with these thematics.

Open source starts with collaboration, networks, digital sources and circulation of data, implying a wide community of knowledge sharing competences and circulations of information.

Here are for me the basic conceptual items that deal with open source projects:

- collaborative practices:

Working in collaboration and in network is interesting because it questions the relationship of the individuals to the collective.

Individuals working through networks, work on a common interest. Artists working together in collaborative practices are meant to share their knowledge. To collaborate means at least sharing knowledge and finally refer to collective intelligence. Collective intelligence is bound to the question of abundance and multiple. It introduces multiplicity, plurality, differences and wealth.

This organization of working questions the patriarchal and vertical figure of the «Creator», the «white male artist» of the western bourgeois society. As a woman artist, I am seduced at once by this opening.

- digital sources:

Digital technologies and sources illuminate at least two events that I understand as fundamental:

First, a reproduction which annihilates hierarchical position between an original and its copies by the replication of code, and second the multiplication of the means of production- reproduction and circulation of these «replicants» copied and pasted infinitely. Because they question the hierarchy of the Original, the Only One and the Figure, these technological possibilities are a real opportunity to end up with the patriarchal figure of the capitalistic order.

- Networks:

Nodes of individuals evolving in a system of relationship between each other and the whole. Networks and collaboration are very much connected.

But networks are also bases of globalized markets of the new economy. Fluidity, efficiency and organization are included in corporate business. These are also peculiarities of networks. To collaborate in networks does not mean being in an alternative position in absolute.

Particular conditions of organization are necessary for the creation of an alternative position to the capitalistic posture; open-published, organized on a non-hierarchical basis and on a non-oppressive gender and racial structure, and providing information and data that circulate more or less freely (on Internet: through forum or blog), and can be discussed or shared. These configurations could be met in online communities networks like the p2p

networks, open-source networks,... which practise debate and sharing at a horizontal level.

In p2p networks, each of us become an active partner, because the structure place each of us in the position of giving something to somebody else while taking something from someone else in the same time, making alive that spirit of sharing datas inside a wide community.

The most amazing thing is that besides the uge repression that is done by coporate buziness to stop people to share informations between each other, they're still doing it in the most natural way.

Because it is natural to human nature to share informations, works and files with others. It is not being criminal, it is in keeping with a long cultural inheritance of human history.

These new social figures, working in collaboration, nodes and networks, circulation of digital sources are bounded one to another by the new facilities of the digital technology. They draw new possibilities of emancipation and freedom for the people. That is why they are targeted by the institutions of the capitalistic order in its confrontation with the people. This confrontation is a war. It has already begun and we participate in it.

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