



Chapter VII

Digital Culture and Sharing: Theory and Practice of a Brazilian Cultural Public Policy

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Abstract

In this chapter, we present the digital culture project that has been developed in Brazil and supported by the Brazilian government, which determined that the process of digital inclusion should be seen fundamentally from a cultural perspective. The chapter started with the principle of sharing of information as the basis of the information society, thus provoking a reanalysis of the productive scenario in which users actively participated in the productive scenario instead of acting as mere consumers of the technically innovative process being carried out by the companies. We discussed the concept of cultural property in the context of this new society and presented the Brazilian vision of this scenario.

Introduction

The question is whether sharing is the beginning or the end of the process of re-evaluating culture in the context of the information society. Therefore, one should analyze the idea of a repositioning of the values related to the productive processes as a result of the influence of this concept. Is it possible to identify a movement of transformation in the concepts of work, value and property as the human productive process becomes collective, shared, and cooperative? From this investigation, implications arise such as the fact that human potential could become decentralized instead of being synthesized and tied to specific activities according to the logic of industrialization (e.g., confining a worker to a single machine carrying out a single action). In other words, all human potentiality becomes seen as an active element in the construction of the processes. It thus becomes possible to envision human activities being determined by each player as a function of his or her level of interaction, interest, motivation, and so forth, with the world that surrounds him or her. In other words, it is cultural action as an element of value and of a consequent generation of autonomy.

This has been the position adopted by the Brazilian Government's Ministry of Culture, which considered that the process of digital inclusion should be seen fundamentally from a cultural perspective. In this way, the Ministry of Culture appropriated not only the means of production but also the way in which production occurred, strengthening sharing as the principle of digital inclusion in Brazil. Such appropriation aimed to create conditions for the establishment of autonomy to the citizens, who thereby gained an active role in the scenario of digital production and not merely a role as spectators and/or users of a process in development. In this context, two structural pillars have been seen as fundamental to the exercise of protagonism: the specification of a multimedia kit and the usage of free software. Both pillars performed essential roles in this process. Through the language of text, audio, video graphic images, and software, cyberspace has the potential to promote, among other things, an ample notion of citizenship, culture, education, and political activism.

Based on the aforementioned, this chapter presents the main digital culture actions developed in Brazil, with the support of the Brazilian government, as part of a program called Living Culture (*Cultura Viva*). These included the concept of cultural hotspots; a description of the multimedia kit and its relevance to the project; the training program for content producers; the creation of conditions for autonomy and dissemination of the project's philosophy; the models of intellectual property adopted; the environments created to motivate collaboration, publication and sharing among the members of the project's network; and the results obtained up to now.

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