

Collaborative Survival through Open Research and Disagreement Management.

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Today we live in a global economy that presents both increasing possibilities and increasing threats. We know that we need a strategic shift in the way we manage our planetary resources in order to achieve the sustainable development that is necessary for the survival of civilization as we know it. The overall challenge of the knowledge society is to build a knowledge economy that can deliver and sustain such a shift. I believe that this can be done by what I call "*the Big Switch*" – away from today's global production supported by local information and IPR-based, closed research, towards more localized production processes supported by global information and web-based, open research. I also believe that knowledge management ideas and Semantic Web technology can contribute to the Big Switch by capturing essential knowledge, refining it through open dialog, and making it accessible within a global, *asynchronous public service system* - a *Knowledge Manifold* (Naeve, 2001, 2005) - in the form of a web-based and globally accessible knowledge and learning management environment. Three fundamentally important aspects of such an environment are (i) *Globally Relevant Content*, (ii) *Disagreement Management*, and (iii) a *Global Values Ontology*.

In this context there are three questions that I would like to discuss at the workshop:

(i): *Open Research and Open Ideas – supporting the unselfish perspective on knowledge*: How do we enable the co-construction and free sharing of *Globally Relevant Content*, such as e.g., how to harness your locally available renewable energy flows in a sustainable way? (Example: <http://tinyurl.com/dfvoq6>, click “more info” for the whole story).

(ii): *Disagreement management as a strategy for conflict resolution*: How do we harness the *constructive powers of disagreement* in order to foster innovation and new perspectives on the issues at stake and prevent them from becoming locked into a destructive tug-of-war between opposing points of view?

(iii): *Enriching the economy by expanding the values ontology*: How do we enable a collaborative construction of a *Global Values Ontology*, which gives everyone a chance to express what (s)he considers to be of value on this planet? This is NOT about agreeing on the values, but rather about making explicit the different types of values that exist among different people, communities and cultures.

Since the mobile phone is by far the most outreaching of the modern communication technologies, it has a strategically important role to play in all of these questions.

Over the last decade, the KMR-group (<http://kmr.nada.kth.se>) has developed a number of tools that support the collaborative construction of both contexts and content. Prominent among them are the concept browser *Conzilla* (www.conzilla.org) (Palmér and Naeve, 2005) with the collaboration service *Collaborilla* (Ebner, et al, 2007), and the electronic portfolio system *Confolio* (www.confolio.org, <http://oe.confolio.org>).

Conzilla/Collaborilla can handle collaborative contexts, and Confolio can handle collaborative content. However, none of these tools have yet been connected to mobile devices. One thing that we are planning in the near future is to enable the scanning and

uploading of information from mobile devices to Confolio. This will enable local communities to contribute information that can be collaboratively contextualized on the web. We believe that this type of interaction is a key aspect of a global asynchronous public service environment that can enhance our chances of collaborative survival in a sustainable way.

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