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Free Software Movement

www.gnu.org.in

FSF India
www.gnu.org.in

free software movement is not

- a technical movement
- an open source movement
- only for people who use a computer

Free Software Movement (FSM) is

- a cultural movement
- a political movement
- an intellectual movement
- a way of life

FSM is a comprehensive social and political movement

science
politics
legislation
culture

Let me start with some

basics.

After the entry of a computer

- we write our life in 'digits' which only a machine can read.

Are we

Digitizing or

Discretizing?

This is the question each of us have to ask.

Digitization requires two operations

- Encoding (writing)
- Decoding (reading)

almost all the operations that happen in a computer (or any symbolic activity of human beings) can be reduced to these two fundamental operations.

Discretization happens by delinking these two processes.

So, if we want to prevent

someone from not accessing what we think is the most powerful, we have to block the means of accessing the resource or the process.

This can be best achieved by first separating the symbols (or code) from the decoder.

This is **the principle of discretization.**

An example

Invent a new language and make it inaccessible.

- Develop a discrete language (like Sanskrit) with a new artificial grammar.
- Rewrite the available wisdom of the commons in the new language.
- Restrict the commons from accessing it.
- Create a restricted class of people who can read and write the new language
- Unless the person belongs to the group that agrees to abide by the restrictions do not give access to the knowledge.

The current example

- Software is one such artificial language
- Digital documents include cultural artifacts, our poems, essays, books, paintings, videos, dance, music, conversations, ...
- All of them are getting discretely written in a private language and the corp orates (the new Brahmins) stealing the knowledge of the commons

Dangers of a Digital Society

- Using digital methods to prevent
 - the sharing of knowledge, music, documents, videos, etc.
 - the sharing of software
 - accessing digitized journals
 - entry to digital libraries
 - accessing your friends
 - entry to schools, colleges

Therefore, in a modern digital society we need to ensure a new form of fundamental rights

- right to encode (write, express, create)
- right to decode (read, understand, interpret)
- right to re-encode (modify, mix, blend)
- right to re-decode (re-interpret)
- right to copy (right to imitate)

If we are not granted this right

- proprietary corporations, who are in nexus with the Govts, will control the process of encoding and decoding (reading and writing) of all the cultural processes.
- This right is at once basic as well as general that it will ensure non-digital cultural freedom as well as digital freedom, or in some future form of “figital” freedom.

So what do we do?

- We are so tiny
- The systems that we have to fight are so mighty

copyleft tactics

and the art of hacking

what is hacking

first: hacking is not cracking

two: hacking is to find a creative solution to a
problem

Mahatma as a hacker



Sunderlal Bahuguna



Feb 17th 2010

Free Software Movement

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Richard Stallman



And many other hackers

Larry Wall
Donald Knuth
Linus Torwalds
Eric Raymond
Jimmy Wales
Michael Tieman
... and thousands of others

What do all these hackers do

They use copyleft tactics to create a free software, free technology and free society.

Copyleft tactics to bring in social change

- Explore an action that cannot be considered by people as bad, such as **sharing, loving, helping**, etc.
- And do them **transparently**.
- **And do them collaboratively**.
- **And do them inclusively**.
- No civilized society prohibits these actions
- Amplify these actions as much as possible for your cause, whatever that be.

An example from our own history

Be the change you want to see

Mahatma Gandhi

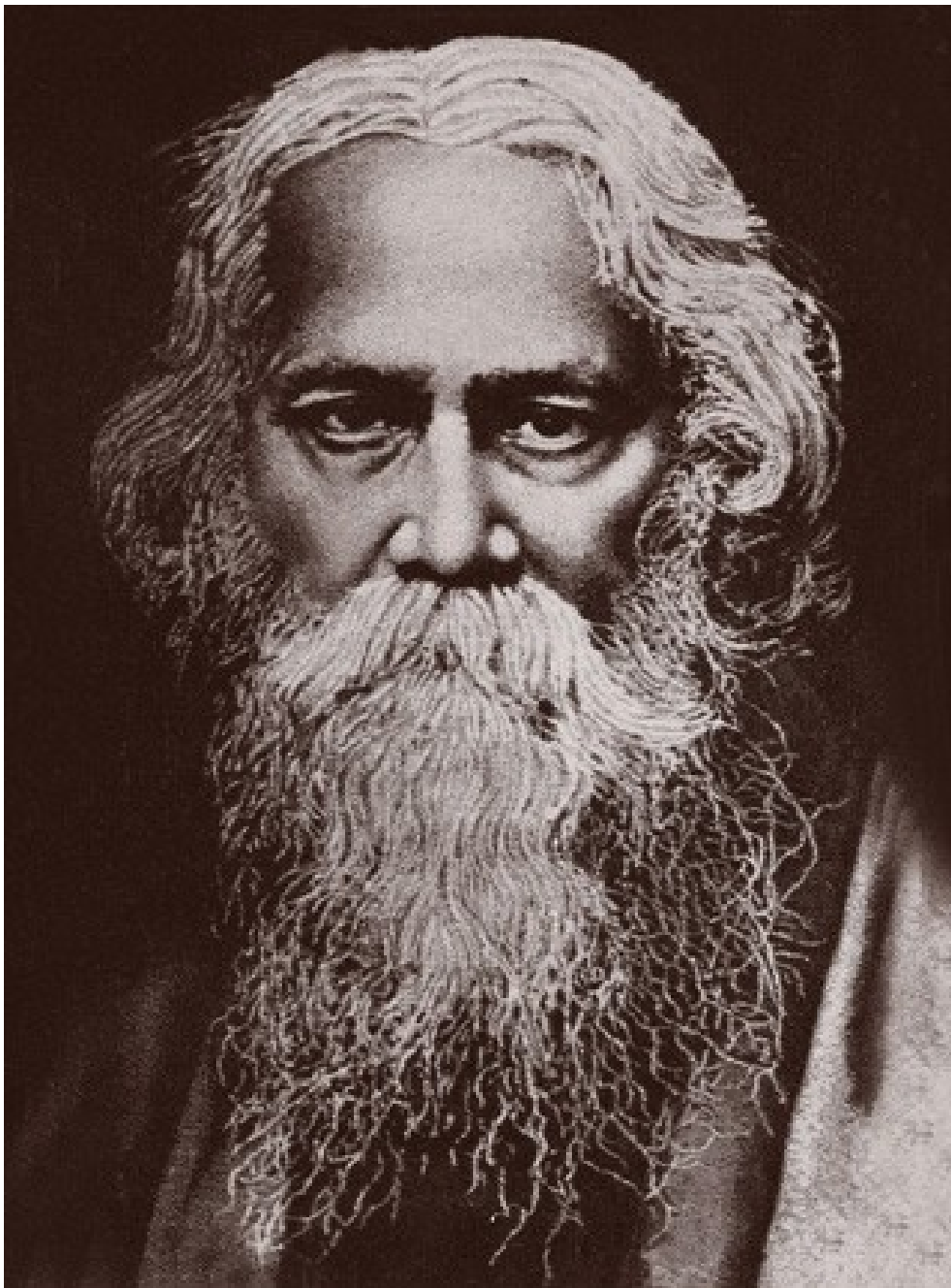


weave your own cloth!

weave your own code!

This is the slogan of the new freedom movement.

Guruji



Feb 17th 2010

Free Software Movement

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Where the mind is without fear and
the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world
has not been broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls
Where words come out
from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection
Where the clear stream of reason
has not lost its way
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit
Where the mind is lead forward by thee
Into ever-widening thought and action
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father,
let my country awake

Rabindranath Tagore from Gitanjali.

scientists are hackers too!

because they find creative solutions to hard problems.

Richard Stallman



RMS invented copyleft

what is copyleft?

how does it work?

copyright

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copyleft

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four criteria of free (swatantra) software

freedom to run the program for any purpose

freedom to study how the program works

freedom to modify the program

freedom to redistribute the modified program

provided all these are granted to others.

Special character of code

And knowledge in general

An experiment with CD

Apples and Ideas

If you have two apples and I have two, when we exchange them, each of us are left with two.

If you have two ideas, and I have two ideas, when we exchange them, each of us have four ideas.

(George Bernard Shaw)

how old is swatantra software?

1984 GNU

~ 1991 LINUX

GNU/LINUX

I am using Swatantra Software for the last 19
years

why swatantra software?

open standards

stability

security

virus free

scalable

a culture

too good for IT education

economical

ethical

socially relevant

why not proprietary software?

eliminates history
therefore
it is evil.

IQ Test – 1

- who discovered the theory of relativity?
- who discovered the structure of DNA?

IQ Test – 2

- who is the author of MS Office, your favorite word processor?
- who is the author of the Win2k kernel?

IQ Test – 3

who is the author of GCC compiler?

of GNU/Emacs?

of Perl?

of Python?

of LINUX kernel?

in free software
software authors are
known by their names.

the history of free
software movement is
very well documented.

you know the names of
people in the free
software community.

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you know the names of
people in the free
software community.

in proprietary software
what remains in the
history books are
'windows' and
'gates'.

you know the names
of the companies.

In free software
the users are
participants,
and they have
a role to play.

It is technology shaped
by community and
belongs to them.

proprietary software
thrives on the
ignorance of their
users
(properly called
customers or clients).

it is made by a
company and
belongs to the
company.

proprietary software does not let
you repair it.

engineers become miserable.

cars and software

you have a right to repair your car, but not your software.

what is so special about software that you cannot repair it?

you are not the owner of the software, you have paid for the license to use.

free doesn't mean free of charge!

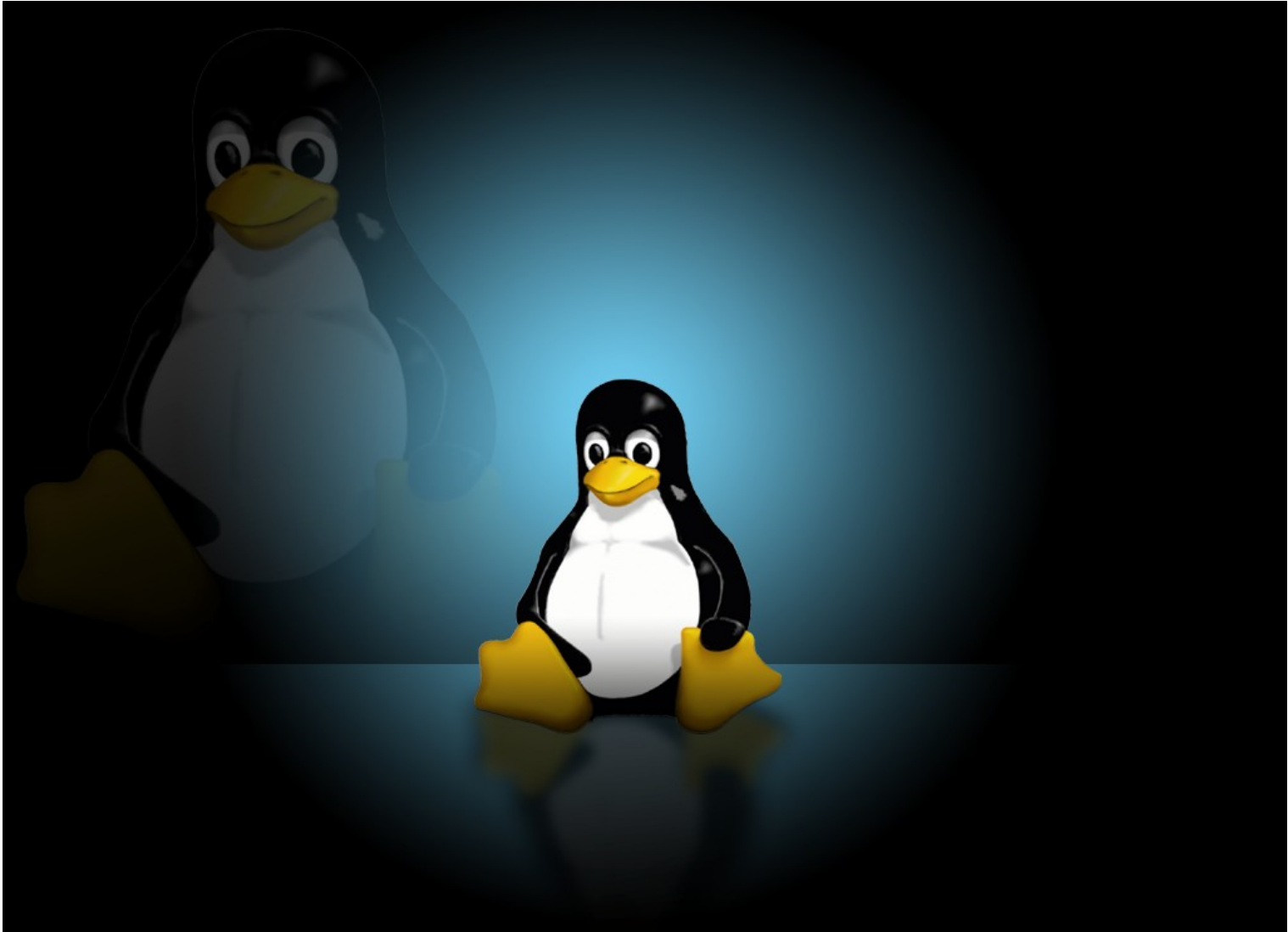
“free software” is a matter of liberty, not price.
to understand the concept, you should think of
“free” as in “free speech,” not as in “free
beer.”

Richard Stallman

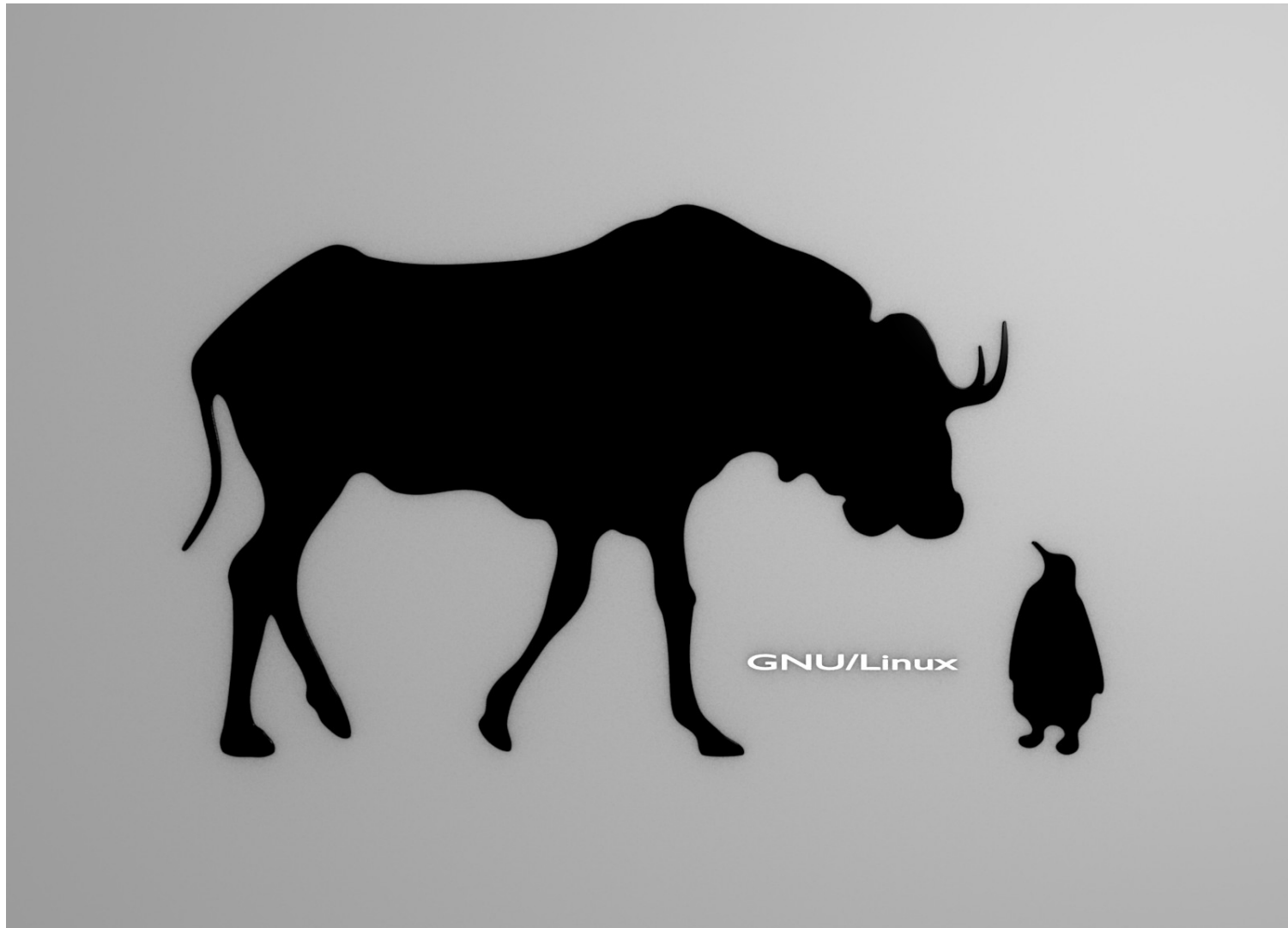
GNU



Linux



GNU and Linux



and several other projects

- Apache
- Free BSD
- Mozilla
- OpenOffice.org
- ...

some FAQ

- how do we make money?
- what is the difference between open source and free software?

clarification of terms

swatantra software

open source software
(OSS)

public domain

freeware

shareware

few thing to show

gnu.org
gnu.org.in
gnowledge.org

what you can do

you can donate your time

you can support us

by migrating to exclusively free software for all
your work.

if you don't have time

you must be making enough money,
so you can donate money
to FSF India or several other agencies

Last word.

Granting others the right to read and write is your duty.

And claiming this is your birth right.

Never ever let others take away your
right to stream and dream

Creating proprietary code

is neither an invention nor an innovation,
because code is arbitrary.

Proprietary code is a cheat.

And a language which cannot be read by public
cannot be used for communication.

your intervention is required for

keeping the interpretation and code as close as possible.

and not

to keep them separate.

using swaatantra software is the answer.

Our freedom struggle

is to declare proprietary software **criminal**.

Since we have to eliminate crime from society, let us eliminate proprietary software!

This struggle is between the two camps

those who are innovating to **preserve** cultural assets
(free software community),

and those who are innovating to **control** the cultural
assets (proprietary software community).

**public bodies and governments should decide who they
want to support in this freedom struggle.**

Thank you!

If you have questions

you can ask me now.



Thank you

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