

Ethics and Rhetoric in the Sharing Economy

The so-called Digital Economy offers several different aspects and concretions, all of them interrelated among them, and firmly connected with the resulting innovations from the information and communications technologies. On one side, mentions are made to Industry 4.0, or to Connected Industry -supposedly distinctive of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in which we have already entered. On the other hand, it is talked about Big Data and Analytics, as the new mine where it is going to be obtained the new combustible that will bolster the new economy in the near coming future. Between one thing and another, we can also hear of On demand Economy, Sharing -or Shared- Economy and Collaborative Economy. This new, disruptive, way in performing the economic activity, without any shadow of a doubt, will spawn new scenarios; and whether it will bring new opportunities, it will entail as well new challenges. It will make disappear obsolete business models and accordingly many jobs that today offer the chance of make a living to vast swathes of society. It will also demand innovation and creativity. As a consequence, it will bring impact in quite relevant aspects of our lives. Let say, in the social, educational, productive, cultural, persona aspects In the worst of the nightmare, we could think of the problems related to the cyber security and the threat of the not so impossible institutionalization of the Orwellian dystopia where a Big Brother could know about ourselves better than owe could do. Anyway, with that in mind, we could affirm that, for the time being, we are even able to anticipate surely the new socio-economic world. All we can probably assure is that the changes we will face in the coming years are going to be of great relevance and high depth. Assuming all that, consequently it is worth to reflect about those circumstances and the sustainability of working life from an ethical point of view too.

Objectives and input of this Communication Proposal The main objective of this communication-paper is to pick up some of the ethical dimensions about the so-called Sharing Economy. Beyond the well-meant rhetoric of the legitimizing discourse for this type of business models, it could nest an ideological proposal, not so desirable as it could seem at first glance, if it have not been critically examined. At the very least, this new reality would need a much more calm analysis, with regard to the strong points and the problems that such a kind of approaches might imply. At times one feel beset by the doubt of whether, under those approaches to the quest for shared value and good neighborhood, would it not be concealed a new, dangerous, new version of libertarianism, even more atomizer of social, cultural, politic and economic dynamics. Is it a social movement or is it rather just a wolf business, disguised in the sheep's clothing of progressive-politically-correct thinking Will not it be perhaps a combination of both things? Anyway, cui prodest? A utilitarian approximation to the problem should, at least, need to ask questions like the following: Whom does the phenomenon of Sharing Economy benefit the most? And within which timeframe?...: In the short, in the medium, in the long run?... Does it benefit society as a whole? Does it exclusively benefit those who earn some extra money by sharing cars, cooking for strangers, or housing guests? Does it benefit customers?... Are there any relevant losers? What about laws, bylaws, rules, regulations, conventions, agreements that until now have served to set the economic playing field in our developed societies? Will they be put away, like antiques, like hindrances from the past, for the sake of a -supposed- panacea where all of us became overnight good, charitable, benevolent and beneficial What kind of trade-off, or unanticipated consequences, could it going to have?... Are not already taking place contentions and disputes about the ethics of such Sharing Economy? Is there at stake any value that it is worth to maintain in order to assure a more developed society, a fairer economy, a more human world? To sum up: Is it Sharing Economy a real contribution to the Common Good or, by contrast, just a way in growing private profits at the expense of boost deregulatory movements that, in the middle term, will atomize and undermine social ties and in the long run, also personal ones? Ultimately, is this a phenomenon as new as they use to try to present it, from some institutions and advocacy groups; or rather should we understand that it represents a new version -and above all, a technological one- of timeless practices ? What contributions should we undertake from the Sharing Economy movement, and which myths and misconceptions should be banish? Paper's tentative contents

1. The Landscape and Rules of Digital Economy 2. Terminology and Concepts: The Rhetoric of Sharing Economy as a new version of the Californian Ideology? 3. Assessing Collaborative Economy from an Economic point of view 4. Ethics, Politics and Democracy inside the Sharing Economy's Movement

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