WHEN SHARING ECONOMY MEETS DIGITAL ONE: TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING OF NEW ECONOMIC RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The paper is dealing with economic relations known as “sharing economy”, “collaborative economy”, “participatory economy”, etc. and their recent development due to the combination of information technologies – that led to the emergence of new forms of “economies”. The authors conducted a literature review as well as a pilot comparative analysis of different projects based on the principle of “sharing” and tried to define the phenomenon of “new economy” by identifying its specific features and peculiarity of these relations as compared to other “economies” that existed earlier or exist now but do not possess these particular characteristics. The result of the study is a definition of what the “new economies” are and what they are not. Authors define a core of “new economies” as a combination of three elements that could be described as “peer to peer sharing i-conomy” and suggest prospective directions and methods for the further analysis of the inner structure and relations within the diverse field of “new economies”.

CCS Concepts

• Applied computing~Economics • Applied computing~Sociology

Keywords

Sharing economy, peer to peer economy, information economy, digital economy, collaborative consumption, capitalism, e-society

1. INTRODUCTION

Our research interest is because in recent decades we are witnessing a boom of particular types of relations and services, which seem to constitute a phenomenon of a new quality in the economic sphere. On the other hand, a rather wide range of projects could be attributed as such and a professional intuition suggests, there are serious differences between them. However, intuition cannot replace analysis and does not help understanding which of those differences are crucial, which are secondary, which characteristics constitute new phenomena and which ones point at slight differences between essentially similar projects.

Thus, the task of this pilot research was to formulate the essential features of the phenomenon we intuitively felt as “new” in the sphere of economic relations, to draw outer boundaries distinguishing this new phenomena from what they are not, as well as identifying inner borders between projects and relations within the set of what (presumably) can be called “new economies”.

Initially, the set of relations that by intuition we referred to in our research looked as follows:

- sharing economy
- peer economy
- participatory economy
- economy of access
- crowd economy
- collaborative consumption
- digital economy
- information economy
- wikinomics.

In our opinion, this list was at the same time too long and incoherent, and, on the other hand, incomplete. It contains phenomena of various in nature. More precisely, “economies” included in the list were defined in accordance to several different grounds – the terms refer to different types of relations. Alternatively, were there common features that forced us to include particular types of economic relations in the list? Which ones then? A wish to answer these questions was an initial impulse for the analysis and a pilot research.

Another question we wanted to answer was what made us name these relations “new”. What particularly is “new” about “new economies”? To answer the questions about novelty it made sense to start the analysis with one of the “oldest” and most analyzed concept form the list – “sharing economy”. This analysis provides us with a “pivot axis” allowing to address other forms of economic relations (and their conceptualization) that appeared in the recent decades - and thus to draw conclusions on the similarities and particularities of “new economies”.

We conclude that there is a set of three key elements, characterizing the “core” and drawing outer boundaries of the phenomena that we call “new economies”. In brief, these three elements could be described as “2p2 shared & ICT-based economic relations”. We also suggest an approach to the analysis of the inner structure of the field of “new economies”. We assume

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EGOSE '17, September 4–6, 2017, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation
© 2017 Association for Computing Machinery.
ACM ISBN 978-1-4503-5412-7/17/09…$15.00
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1145/3129757.3129774

that "axes-based" model, referring to the Max Weber's "constellations" concept, is an effective tool for performing such tasks.

2. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

Although we were unsure about the core characteristics constituting "new economies", we had a hypothesis about the significance of sharing principle combined with ICTs. Based on this hypothesis, we have chosen for our pilot research several cases - particular projects corresponding to the mentioned criteria. While we analyzed them, we, at the same time, tried to stay open to the new ideas and definitions.

We chose the case study as a method of research. This method allows us to understand the essence of the phenomenon through comparison of cases, and to identify those characteristics that help explain the nature of sharing economy.

As criteria for dropping out examples, we chose the following:

1. Use of online platforms (all projects are led primarily through the Internet)

2. Case is based on the principle of co-participation and sharing (benefits, services)

3. Another criterion was localization: it was crucial not only to deal with global services and to be able to position the results of our research in the international context but also to have easy access to communication with authors and users of the services, so their presence in St. Petersburg was important.

4. Cases were also chosen according to their relation to the principle of commercialization, as we assumed this feature to be significant "dividing line" among "new economy" projects. To understand the nature of the phenomenon, we looked at commercial cases (we chose Uber), intermediate, where people could benefit (Swopshop), and non-commercial (Give Away Free Saint-Petersburg, Sales Piter).

We chose the following service projects:

- *Uber,* https://www.uber.com/; project concept: passenger transportation (taxi);
- it is a large international platform and has a representative office in St. Petersburg;
- it is the most commercialized case in our sample;
- *SwopShop* http://swopshop.com/; project concept: technological platform for goods, services exchange;
- it is a Russian platform founded in St. Petersburg, but has representative offices in many cities of the country;
- in terms of commercialization this project is intermediate because people could get profit, though not in a monetary form;
- *Give Away Free in Saint-Petersburg* (Otdam Darom), http://vk.com/spb_otdam_darom; project concept: goods exchange;
- it is a city platform, where people exchange and give gifts in all areas of St. Petersburg;
- it is a non-commercial project, where profit is unwelcome by the authors and participants of the service;
- *Sales Piter*, https://vk.com/spb_sales; project concept: exchange of useful information about goods for sale; it is a local St. Petersburg case with a small number of participants;
- this project was semi-commercialized: authors of the service had plans of making it profitable in the future, but at the first stage it was non-commercial;
- we have chosen it as an "extreme case" in our sample: as it will be shown below, this service is an example of the project that failed, and in order to learn about the principles of success of the projects of this type, it was interesting for us to see why did this fail happen;

Within the pilot study, we took 12 qualitative (focused) interviews with the following groups of informants:

- Project authors/initiators,
- Web-site moderators for the chosen service-projects,
- Web-site/projects users (or potential users in case of car sharing).

There was no intention to make a sample of interviews representative. Our aim was to understand the motivations and values of the founder, users, and moderators of the services.

Interviews were based on the guidelines (three for different types of interviewees). The guidelines reflected our initial hypothesis rooted in the analysis of the literature on the topic of sharing and related economies.

Our hypothesis included a guess that several types of relations could be crucial for the phenomena we might attribute to "new economies". Apart from the division between "commercial/noncommercial", we expected the following issues to be relevant for "new economies":

- the blurring of the borders between production and consumption (prosumerism and related phenomena),
- transformation of power relations and emergence of "net-based" horizontal and de-centered relations;
- the significant role of social capital as potentially replacing financial one in "new economies".

Proceeding from our hypothesis, we addressed the following themes in the guidelines for interviews:

- general information about the Project: a history of creation and development, a number of users, technical details of used internet platform;
- idea & content of the Project:
- motivation for the creation of the Project,
- the role of monetization and commercialization in the Project;
- the role of technologies for the initial idea and for success of the Project;
- borders between "production" and "consumption", "producers" and "consumers" of the content and /or services in the Project;
- the role of social capital, trust, communication, collaboration in the Project;
- the role of power and hierarchy in the management of the Project;
- the most significant part of the Project – "the thing" without which it loses its meaning and makes no sense;
- perspectives of development of the Project - either technical or ideological.

In addition, we also analyzed the content of web pages of services - their architecture, a language used, and data from user forums. It allowed us to identify the relationship between the founders and users, assess security and other aspects. The guideline for the analysis of the web sites of the project/services was organized along the same lines as the one above for interviews.

3. WHAT IS SHARED AND WHY: SEVERAL DISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES ON "SHARING ECONOMY"

There are several approaches to defining and analyzing the sharing economy, represented by different expert groups: anthropologists, sociologists, business professionals, etc.

3.1 Sharing in anthropology

Anthropological tradition treats "sharing" as one of the most ancient forms of relations among socialized human beings – along with gift exchange, commodity exchange and reciprocity. Some scholars consider sharing to be a variety of reciprocity or gift exchange (see, for example, Mauss, 2000; Malinowski, 2002). Other scholars disagree with this approach and argue that "sharing" is unaffiliated with both, gift exchange and reciprocity, even generalized (see, for example, Belk, 2007, 2010, 2014). R. Belk states that the crucial difference lies in the fact that "sharing" does not imply symmetrical reciprocity or delayed gift exchange, because it refers to dissimilar entities where exchange and return do not make any sense. Second fundamental difference between "sharing" and gift exchange is associated with the fact that "sharing" is not ritualized. It takes place constantly and unnoticeably, consolidating community life. That makes it not less, but even more important for social life – as it is a routine. Belk sees sharing as a part of an existential experience and relates it to the notions of group and personal identity ("self"). However, none of the anthropological approaches explains clearly the difference between ancient and modern sharing or shows analysis of the development of the sharing relations from traditional communities to modern society and its transformation into "sharing economy".

3.2 Sharing in sociology

Sociologists, continuing anthropological perspective of selfness accentuation and group affiliation within the sharing relationships, nevertheless emphasize the importance of such type of the relationships for the new understanding of communities and social relations in present-day societies. They attract attention to the fact of revival of many forms of sharing relations in the second half of the twentieth century and analyze reasons for such a revival (Schor, 2014; Hamari, Sjöklint, & Ukkonen, 2015.). Attentive analysis of such retrospective sociological reflection allows to distinguishing several principles characteristic for sharing today. These principals make it different from the existential notion of sharing of traditional societies and make it closer to what can be called "sharing economy":

- The insufficient funds, economic shortage, cash-flow deficit and search for the ways of optimization of costs caused occurrence of the majority of the first examples of modern sharing economy of all types in the 1960s – as it happened many times before in the periods of economic crisis.

- Another reason for popularization of sharing relations in twentieth century has ideological grounds: it bloomed within the framework of criticism towards consumer society and capitalism. Sharing provided alternative forms of commodity-concerned relations based on the principles of post-consumer recycling, such as flea markets, garage sales or "library of things". "While the politics of these sharing efforts differ across the globe, what is common is the desire among participants to create fairer, more sustainable and more socially connected societies» (Schor 2014, P.1). At this point new term emerged, called to emphasize particular aspects of sharing relations in the new social, economic and cultural context in the twentieth century: "collaborative consumption" (or "collaborative economies"). The phenomenon of "collaborative consumption" was described in 1978 by M. Felson and M. Spaeth (Felson, Spaeth, 1978), but came into use as the established term only in the 2000s (Algar, 2007; Botsman, 2011). In the very beginning, the ideas of collaborative consumption were related to the ideas of sustainable development, information-oriented society and ethics. Collaborative consumption gained sociocultural value that places a premium on ethical, normative aspects of sharing as a cultural practice. Moreover, collaborative consumption allows solving social problems and opens access to goods and services to those who have not had the access before.

- In this respect, it also became important that not all forms of sharing are the same. Direct exchange between individuals became the crucial form that played both economical (cost saving through the directness) and ideological role, as it designated a value shift from mediated interaction allowing a mediator making profit to direct "peer to peer" interactions, and from consumption towards co-production. The most obviously this principle reflected in the latest appearance of sharing of productive assets and recent ideology of "participatory economy": "in the midst of escalating economic dysfunction, new economic initiatives are sprouting up everywhere. What these diverse "new" or "future" economy initiatives have in common is that they reject the economics of competition and greed and aspire instead to develop an economics of equitable cooperation that is environmentally sustainable" (Hahnel, 2015)

- The development of ICT and technological platforms played a very important role in the spread and considerable upgrade of those familiar forms of circulation of resource and turned former "individualized strangers" of the late modernity into members of the same community again. This time, they became members of imagined online community driven by the technological communication platform, which also sometimes re-enforced interacting in the real offline world. Online platforms based on the sharing and collaborative principle were supposed to lead to the formation of "sustainable market" development (Phipps et al., 2013) that was expected to contribute to the reduction of ecological, social and economic risks, caused by consequences of consumption, and thereby enabling well-being of next generations. (Luchs et al., 2011, p. 2).

- The last but not least: unlike traditional sharing, "sharing economy" of 20th and 21st centuries rests on the relationships between "strangers", and urban communities became the natural habitat for the sharing economy implementation (Davidson, Infranca, 2016). Cities are the places of peak concentration of the human and financial resources and places of maximum consumptions, often irrational, of other resources - goods, energy. It makes people think about the necessity of sharing economies and make their implementation feasible. Cities are characterized by significant density of life, on the one hand, and, a sufficient distance for the possibility to create new relationships with new people, on the other. These are places, where many people are concentrated – this opens a great potential for the peer to peer relationships. But the majority of them do not know each other – and it implies the diversity of the offers, new impressions, goods and services. At the same time, if desired, the resources that these people have and are ready to share, are available within the reasonable time range – due to the development and density of urban infrastructures. Finally, cities are the points of information and technology concentration - fundamental technological drivers of the “new economies”.

Sociologists, concerned about ethical and ideological aspects of “sharing economy” in the 20th century, have shown how situation rapidly changed. Solidarity, ethical imperatives and anti-capitalist message – all those characteristics that were constitutive for this phenomenon at the very beginning – soon merged with their antipodes. Business has found its way of appropriation of the principle of “sharing”.

3.3 Sharing economy for businessmen

From the business point of view, key elements of the new “sharing economy” model are: replacement of the “economy of ownership” by the “economy of access” (The sharing economy, PWC, 2015), i.e. replacement of the collection, possession and selling of the main assets (material resources) needed for particular (service) project by the tools that allow collection, possession and distribution of the information about assets (resources) owned by other individuals. “Uber, the world’s largest taxi company, owns no vehicles. Facebook, the world’s most popular media owner, creates no content. Alibaba, the most valuable retailer, has no inventory. In addition, Airbnb, the world’s largest accommodation provider, owns no real estate… Something interesting is happening.” (What is digital economy, 2016). Another business-consultant explains - what this “something interesting” is: “... an entirely new asset-light supply paradigm. They enable the disaggregation of physical assets in space and in time, creating digital platforms that make these disaggregated components — a few days in an apartment, an hour using a roomba, a seat in your drive from Berlin to Hamburg — amenable to pricing, matching, and exchange” (Sundararajan, 2013).

What is important here? First, that sharing here takes place at two levels. Firstly, sharing of the information about those who ready to share other resources in the p2p format. Therefore, information age became a precondition for the emergence of “new economies” and “information economy” was, probably, the first one of this type and “wiki”-projects were among the first species inhabiting this new economic reality (Tapscott, D., Williams, A.D., 2006, The Wikinomics playbook, 2008). Second, the new niche became profitable not least because of the mass proportions of these relations, which become possible due to the information technologies (ICT): the latter serves as a tool for sharing data and links in accordance with the “client to client” (c2c) model, and thus plays the critical role in this “sharing economy revolution”.

3.4 From archaic sharing - towards sharing economy

Consequently, it appears that defining the phenomena, that we are trying to understand, is not an easy task, and even the appealing to the existing academic views does not help to solve this problem easily and unambiguously. Even each of the “economies” of our interest, taken on its own, confounds experts longing to provide its definition: “Coming up with a solid definition of the sharing economy that reflects common usage is nearly impossible. There is great diversity among activities as well as baffling boundaries drawn by participants” (Schor 2014, 2).

However, we have drawn several important conclusions from our analysis.

Economic relationships concerned sharing in the 20th and 21st century can differ drastically from their archaic forms, and it seems three aspects played a crucial role here:

(a) Its urban character implicates unlimited “imagined” communities and therefore normalizes sharing with strangers;

(b) Its ideological background rooted in the protest against disadvantages of capitalism underlines the significance of the p2p principle of sharing, but could not protect sharing economy from commercialization;

(c) The role of ICT, although should not be overestimated, still seem to be quite important for the emergence of the relations of new quality - as a result of a mass quantity (of data, information and accessible customers) provided by ICTs.

We can conclude that the modified principle of “sharing” forms a background for the “new economies”. We find it in the core of collaborative consumption, participatory economics, digital economy, and other formats; but sharing itself is not enough for the economic relations to become “new”. What else is required for defining a phenomenon of new quality that we can designate as “new economy”? We needed results of empirical research to be able to answer this question.

4. DEFINING “NEW ECONOMIES”: “FAMILY RESEMBLANCE” AND OUTER BORDERS

Inspired by the above-cited literature, the research team conducted its own case-study based pilot research. Four different services presented in St.-Petersburg were analyzed: *Uber, SwopShop, Give Away Free in Saint-Petersburg* and *Sales Piter.* We conducted 12 interviews with authors, website moderators and users of the services. Besides, we analyzed the websites of the projects. The first and main task of this research was definition of the “essential core” of the phenomenon, which, as we assumed, was represented by all studied services.

The first result of the research, based on the analysis of interviews and websites, was for us quite unpredictable. Among other things, we concluded that an initial attempt to come up with a substantive definition for the “new economies” – i.e. an attempt to define “what they are” through the essential characteristics - is fallacious in itself. Instead, following other researchers of the phenomenon (Belk, 2010, P. 717) we tend to think that the definition through the Wittgensteinian “family resemblances” (Wittgenstein, 1953) is more relevant. We found Wittgensteinian perspective appropriate because it provides the possibility to consider the interrelationship of such phenomena that do not possess any feature intrinsic to all of them, but that has “overlapping resemblances” that link all the compared phenomena. Our analysis and description of particular projects did not allow us to provide the exhaustive list of all “family members”, but it gave an insight into the distinctive “family traits”, distinguishing members of this particular “family” of economic relations from the others.

Using the chosen cases as the examples that seem to be typical “family members” of “new economies”, we tried to understand whether our hypothesis was correct. Whether the consideration of the novelty is relevant and to what extent; whether the key constitutive features of the “new economies” were chosen correctly; whether the “family resemblances” traits lie where we expected them to, and are they similar to those that we expected them to be at the beginning of our research.

At the end, we combined Wittgensteinian approach with the initial one. Analysis of the literature has driven us to the conclusion about a minimal set of features that particular project should possess to be attributed as a representative of “new economy”. We think the minimal set consists of only three crucial distinctive features that characterize the emerging of the new phenomenon:

1. Sharing principle that refers to available resources that participants are ready to share with others;
2. Peer to peer relationships between the participants, i.e. it is the individuals themselves who share particular available resource and who are recipients (it can also be called “client to client” or c2c principle); the mediator’s role is reduced to a minimum;
3. The crucial role of ICT understood as the Internet, mobile communication, applications, etc. What seems to form a real novelty in economic (as well as social and cultural) relations around “sharing” is its combination with ICT where “Information”, “Communication” and “Technology” are equally important. They allow information to be shared, they ensure massive access to services, goods, information involved in projects and make this sharing model efficient and even profitable.

This unique combination of three key elements became characteristic and constitutive for the appearance of the completely new spectrum of economic relations. So far we called them “new economies” (in plural) – trying to emphasize its more general character and difference from the other known (particular) forms, named “economies” – such as “sharing economy”, “peer economy”, “collaborative economy”, etc. Our definition does not pretend to grasp all features characteristic for all sorts of relations, services, particular startup projects, etc. that can belong to the family of “new economies”. We only think that all of them should possess the “basic minimum” of “three key elements” which makes them “members of the family”; otherwise each “project” has many other features and relations particular for it only. The pull of these numerous elements can be shortly characterized as “p2p sharing & ICT based economy”.

In other words, projects missing any of these features cannot be assigned to a “new economy”, because in this case there is either no “new” or no “economy”. Sharing without p2p principle (even when ICT is employed) is just a variety of renting relations; and without ICT there is nothing new about p2p sharing. While p2p plus ICT can be just a (smart)phone call or internet communication, but only sharing adds economy in these relations. Otherwise, when more traditional forms of mediated business replace sharing, it is nothing new, but just updated digitalized entrepreneurship, i.e. not all form of “digital economy” can be attributed to a “new” one, as we define it. As already cited consultant Arun Sundararajan explained in 2013 when he compared two car-renting services (both seemed to be “new” at the time): “it’s no longer sufficient if you leverage digital technologies to rationalize and optimize your internal production” (Sundararajan, 2013). The matter of difference is that although their [Zipcar] members can rent the (more urbane and green) Zipcar fleet by the hour and pick up their vehicle at a local parking space using a smartphone app, this is still a dedicated fleet, still inventory that the company has to acquire, manage and monetize. Under the hood, the business model is fundamentally not very different from that of a traditional rental car company. ... Contrast Zipcar with RelayRides and Getaround, both genuine peer-to-peer car rental marketplaces that tap into the existing (and massive) installed base of cars that people already own. /.../ Their business model advantages are clear — the “fleet” renews itself naturally, there are no parking or logistics issues, geographic expansion and scaling are more seamless. Reputation systems and active supplier screening maintain quality and the need for insurance keeps customers from bypassing the marketplaces” (Sundararajan, 2013).

An important result (already partly proven by the analysis of the literature on sharing economy) was that we could find evidence proving that ICT-based sharing economy naturally implies an alternative to capitalism - even though originally that was a thrust for its emergence. In the course of the analysis of literature we came to the conclusion, that there is nothing new neither in the relationships based on the principle of sharing (alone), nor in its role of an alternative to capitalism. Such alternatives (non-capitalist relations) have always existed (for example, peer to peer goods or service exchange as shared tools in neighboring communities). In the empirical research, we have found that while some initiators and participants underlined the “non for profit” character of their project's ideology, at the same time for some other authors of recently emerging ICT and share-based projects commercialization was a significant part of the entire idea. Both, history of development of sharing relations and real experience of current projects proves, there is no inner self-contained protection of the “sharing” principle from the commercialization of these relations, and even peer-to-peer sharing can be monetized and become profitable at a mass scale. Therefore, the “nonprofit” character of economic relations did not become a part of a core in our version of the definition of “new economies”».

5. DEFINING “NEW ECONOMIES”: INNER STRUCTURES AND "CONSTELLATIONS"

Thus, we determined the common features of “new economies” as “*p2p sharing & ICT based economy*”. Nevertheless, we have discovered that at the same time “new economies” possess more than three significant characteristics that determine relations among them and towards them. Above we pointed out the similarities among the projects belonging to “new economies”, but after analyzing given cases, we concluded that despite the resemblance, they have important differences. This is a combination of the three key elements with others (by no means all, but some of them are mentioned below in this paper) that constitutes particular projects within the field of meanings and practice of “new economies”.

In each particular case (project, service, startup, etc.) many features form a unique combination that constitutes this case and differs it from other projects among “new economies”. But what are these “features” and “elements”? We believe, it is fair to say, that they are mostly certain *relations* – new and well known, which (not the least due to the opportunities provided by ICT but also due to deep changes in social and cultural patterns) can form new (not existing earlier) combinations that constitute particular form of “economy”. They are relations, for example, in the following spheres:

- between the client and the product: access vs ownership,
- between the clients: client to client (c2c) as additional to the known b2c and b2b,
- between the author of the project idea and its participants: main role of mediator is now reduced to the IT-platform/app and the security agreement,

- between customers and the resources: utilizing underutilized, care about "second life" of things within the discourse of ethics, not deficit,
- between the service/goods "producer" and "customer": as both roles may be merged into one and performed by the same person within the same service (like Uber or Airbnb),
- service users – with the Internet and gadgets (applications, widespread character, simplicity and new skills),
- etc.

In this list, we see the significant axis of relations that structure the field of "new economies". The relations characteristic for particular "project" could be described as certain positions taken at the significant axis, and combinations of these positions (implying mutual interrelations between them) constitute its unique "profile", clearly demonstrating the difference between one case from another. This approach refers to the Weberian "constellations" (Weber, 1941). Its advantage over Wittgensteinian "family resemblance" lies in the dynamic and relational potential of the former. "Constellations" put emphasis not on the set of elements, but on the particularity of their combinations and on the uniqueness (or likeness) of (inter)relations that emerge out of particular combinations of elements and conditions.

This approach still requires methodological elaboration and specification such as consideration of the axis-scales, their values etc. For an initial explanation of a basic principle, which we believe we have discovered, a metaphor of "equalizer" seems to be useful. It allows speaking about several significant axis, along which the relationships within the field of "new economies" are organized, and about particular values within each axis, representative for specific projects within the "new economies".

Our conclusion is that some of these axis existed before, some of them appeared or have extended their range due to ICT, but the most important became the possibility of the new combination of these values, on the new and old-established "relational axis", development of unique constellations of new and well-known elements. Combination of values of specific practices/relations on particular axis - significant for the field of "new economics" - create a unique "pattern" which can be compared to the "axis that affects the noise". Therefore, the proper tool for describing these constellations could be a sort of an "equalizer". The combinations of values on significant axis and of relations between them form new and unique "noise", or, in our case - new economic phenomena. Moreover, even in the situation, where the majority of the elements (relationships, practices, actions) seems familiar, they assemble and reassemble in such combinations that has been unknown before. It makes these relations new and lead to the emergence of the "*new* economies".

In particular, analysis of the cases allowed us to propose the existence of the following "relational axis" that seem to be especially meaningful for the "new economies" – as significant likenesses and divergences, unions and tensions within and between the new economy projects emerging and existing along these lines:

- axis of profit: with the continuum ranging from "100% for profit" (think of Uber and Airbnb) to the "by definition non for profit" relations (think of Blablacar or Couchsurfing – in the same niches of economic activities), with partly commercialized projects (like SwapShop) in the middle;

- ethical axis: from the project where ethical issues (like second life of things, utilization of underutilized, support of power, eco-issues or anti-consumerism) are the most significant one – to the purely pragmatic projects aimed at saving only resources of the startup and maximizing efficiency (with the "ethics or pragmatism" as an interim position);

- axis of emotions: here project can take radical positions; in one emotions replace money (like in Give Away Free), in another one emotions could be seen as a burden (think of Uber with whose drivers we are not going to meet for beer afterwards, or of Airbnb where "separate apartment/house" is often much more popular option than "shared" ones);

- axis of "production/consumption" relationships with the recently emerged possibility for the new position of "switch" on it – the one that lies at the border between production and consumption – i.e. combining both, the position that can be considered a novelty in modern economy; think here of Uber or Airbnb, Blablacar or Coachsurf where the same person within the same project can take a productive role of a "driver" or "host", or a consumerist role of a "passenger" or the "hosted";

- axis of "control and power" offers positions from almost invisible presence of the service (like fully technologized Uber where even a right to be a part of service is determined by p2p evaluation via app) to the obvious presence of the author and moderator who guarantees security of transactions (like it happens in Give Away Free or SwapShop where service-author fully moderate and control website and communication, or Airbnb where service blocks payment for both parties until the positive feedback); this axes is probably related to the

- axis of "trust and security": all participants of projects (authors, moderators, clients - in interviews) say in interviews and consultants state in literature (The sharing economy 2015) security issue is one of the most significant axis of relations, which more than any other one define the prosperity or death of a project in new economy.

The 'lever' position on the axis is significant for the establishing of the inner boundaries in the field of 'new economies', for the constituting of the specific projects, presenting the unique combinations of these positions within the 'new economies'. Composition of "switches" on particular axes form the unique ornament or shape – "the profile" of each project. Researcher can compare these shapes and analyze essential similarities and differences between particular projects. We see this "equalizer approach" as a practical tool of analysis and description allowing comparison of particular projects assigned to the "new economies".

We do not claim that our analysis is complete at this stage of the research, and we only seek to indicate the directions for further study, distinct (one of many possible) perspective for the consideration and research of the "new economies". However, we see that other scholars considered "axes-based" approach applicable and useful as well. For instance, Boyd Cohen (2016) criticizes the well-known "Honeycomb model" by Jeremiah Owyang (2014) as "it does not provide any insights on the underlying business models across the 12 different sharing-economy sectors that Owyang identifies"; and Boyd himself suggests a "Sharing Business Model Compass" based on four axes.

Further analysis of the inner structure of the "new economics" field can progress in the direction of the sophistication of suggested schemes – ours and the one by Boyd Cohen. Moreover, it is likely that two schemes sharing the same methodological approach could be combined in order to create a more comprehensive model for analysis of “new economies”.

We understand that the number of significant and meaningful axis - along which the inner differences between the various forms of “new economies” are organized - is much bigger. In other words, suggested here list of the “axis”, according to our hypothesis, structuring the relationships in the field of “new economies”, is not complete. In addition, the aspects of relations, included into each axis, after more detailed study may appear to be insignificant, or, on the contrary, some of the vitally important aspects might have escaped our attention yet.

6. CONCLUSION

We would like to emphasize that our assumption about the nature of the phenomenon we dealt with - its basic features (“family resemblance”), its outer boundaries and inner structure of the field of “new economics” - has a status of the working hypothesis, based on the analysis of the small number of cases within the pilot study. We suggest it as the direction towards the further analysis of the aspects, presumably playing important role for the organization and constituting of the phenomenon that we called “new economies”. In our opinion, it deserves more profound examination at a later stage.

To conclude we would like to mention briefly the aspect that was not marked in this paper, but that deserves attention in terms of understanding the studied phenomenon. An interdisciplinary character of the phenomena of “new economies” that implies a strong need for the interdisciplinary approach. Though we are talking about economics, the features that characterize the appearance of the new phenomenon in economic relations are related to the transformation of social, cultural, economic and political relationships that lie beyond the boundaries of economics. In this sense, working with the cases of Uber, Airbnb, Swap shop or “Give Away Free”, we inevitably face a wide range of socio-cultural processes, that came around earlier than these economic changes, but with the time passing found their particular reflection in the field of economic relations. This means that through the analysis of the economic phenomena, we are able to reach the phenomena and relationships, in our opinion, even more profound. Among these are:

- social capital, trust,
- “light” and “liquid” relationships characteristic for the late modernity,
- mobility,
- social networks,
- new power relations,
- denial of the impersonal and indirect culture,
- reasonable consumption, etc.

Transformations in the field of these social relations became the context for the appearance of “the economy of new relations”.

So, if we continue speaking about the phenomenon that, as we think, we are dealing with and that we are trying to define and describe – it resembles in its effect not what Healy (Healy, 2009) called isolated and pitiful “islands in the sea of capitalism”, but rather the “effect of the global warming”. It is a phenomenon penetrating all layers. It does not have the dominant status represented in numbers (yet), but is entirely new. It has potential to change the whole system of relations. In addition, in this respect the role of capitalism, so often discussed in concern to the newly emerging forms of economic relations, is secondary. As we have suggested, relation about profit is only one of many axis organizing the field of “new economies”. Perhaps, even the economics is secondary, in its narrow meaning. Instead, technologies are moving to the forefront, continuing their development and changing the social, cultural and economic interactions, forming new constellations of relations and thus - new phenomena.

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