**The Sociology of the Sharing Economies: insights from sociology of markets**

Rafael A. F. Zanatta

What is the meaning of the “sharing economy”? Does it make sense to treat Uber, Airbnb and TaskRabbit as the same thing in economic terms? What is being sharedat all through these “platforms”? Can we say that there are sharing economies focused on *consumption* (the resource is shared for access and acts of individual consumption) and sharing economies focused on *production* (the resource is shared for collective production)? If yes, can we study more clearly how these markets are shaped by devices and technologies and what drives the act of “sharing”? Can we use the methodology and concepts of “sociology of markets” to study these platform-based sharing economies?

My provisional claim is that most part of the literature on the “sharing economy” (Juliet Schor, Yochai Benkler, Michel Bawuens, Janelle Orsi, Trebor Scholz) does not deal with key concepts of and methods from “sociology of markets” (Viviana Zelizer, Philippe Steiner, Michel Callon). In fact, the scholarship produced so far was only concerned with taxonomy (differences between platforms and what is being shared) and the lack of solidarity and democratic participation in these platforms (Juliet Schor, Trebor Scholz).

My basic idea is to explore how previous studies on the sociology of markets – a field that originated from economic sociology – might enrich the research agenda on the “sharing economies” with new methods and intellectual approaches. It seems plausible to conduct research on reciprocity and the culture of gift-giving on these new platforms (markets that are not based on market transactions), following the work of Philippe Steiner, and also to conduct research on how economic theories shape the creation of specific *dispositifs* and devices that will shape human interaction, following the work of Michel Callon.

In this paper I want to explore how the knowledge produced by scholars in the field of “sociology of markets” might help us to better understand what these sharing economies are about and what is the form of economic action that exist mediated by technologies of information. Furthermore, I want to discuss methodologies for empirical research from a sociological perspective.

As a researcher in the field of the sharing economy in Brazil, I have the feeling that these “two worlds” are still separate from each other. Scholars in the field of “law and technology” talk about these sharing economies from a regulatory perspective, but they do not use key concepts from economic sociology and sociology of markets. I do not know much about the field of sociology of markets, but it seems that the same might be true: sociologists did not pay close attention to these platforms that claim to facilitate acts of sharing.

To sum up, this is not an empirical research but an essay about how sociology of markets can provide important insights and methods for research in the field of the “sharing economy” (that I like to call *sharing economies* for reasons explained elsewhere).