SHARING ECONOMY AND ECONOMIC LIBERALISM: NEW CONTEXT FOR PLATFORM COOPERATIVISM[1]

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Abstract

The current technological advance, driven by the generalization in the use of information and communication technologies and social networks, together with the dynamism of economic markets, has favored the emergence of the collaborative economy phenomenon. Its evolution has led us to the implementation of large digital mediation platforms that have created new business models that capitalize on the collaboration of users and appropriate the capital gains generated by their interaction. In addition, they have become promoters of a supposed new way of working that, in reality, is one more level of the flexibilization trend of the labor market and its consequent precariousness of labor relations. In fact, the existence of an employment relationship within these platforms is denied under a friendly discourse focused on freedom, proactivity, and cooperation. In this work, we intend to reflect on the concept of the collaborative economy and its raison d'être, the context in which this phenomenon occurs, and the consequences that begin to manifest themselves in the economy in general and in the labor market in particular.

Keywords: collaborative economy, digital platforms, precarious employment

Introduction

The evolution of information and communication technologies (ICT) in cooperation with the development of communication networks and their massive use in developed countries has completely modified the way in which people interact, both personally and in terms of communication. The significance of these changes leads us to think that we are facing a new paradigm such as the one that occurred during the Industrial Revolution and the invention by industrial capitalism of the "labor market" and, as Gorz (1997) pointed out, of what today we still mean by "work".

Thus, as Ruiz (2014) points out, we may be witnessing the deconstruction, or destruction, of expectations about work. in addition, we must be aware that there is intentionality; it is not the result of a natural event of technological evolution, but rather, as in the Industrial Revolution (Noble, 1987; Polanyi, 2021) there is an ideological impulse to eminently liberal vision backed by the Wall Street oligarchy and Silicon Valley venture capital funds (Ruiz, 2014). As Rodríguez-Piñero (2016) points out, it is not a matter of being flexible and agile in the face of the

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dynamics of current environments, but of a business strategy with the aim of reducing production costs and leading to less job creation, higher index rotation of workers, and temporary employment.

The current situation of the labor market and its relationship with the platform economy is heir to its flexibilization trend that exploded in the 1990s with the emergence of temporary employment agencies and the blessing of outsourcing for everything and that it promoted, from the neoliberal ideology, the labor reform of 2012 with the mantra of flexibility as a banner. Flexibility has been taken as a resource and an objective at the same time, by the dominant ideologies and those related to real power today under the argument of the search for competitiveness and the free market. But the reality is that such flexibility translates into increased capacity or unilateral power of employers to make decisions about hiring, firing, and changes in working conditions. This, together with the high unemployment rates, permanent since the financial crisis of 2008, gives rise to an unprecedented setback in social rights and an advance in job insecurity with falling wages, abusive working conditions, temporary employment, etc.

In these years we have witnessed the reality of the decoupling between the financial economy and the real economy and how it is the financial economy that controls the real economy and political decisions. To this, we must add that we are currently witnessing a new disconnect that takes place between the prospects for economic recovery and employment recovery, which is also precarious and unstable. For the generation that was born in the late 1970s, precariousness was a process that facilitated entry and that in the medium term allowed stability in a job with acceptable working conditions. However, it is now a structural characteristic of a whole generation that will accompany it throughout its life (Gentile, 2013), since it not only conditions the present but also the future social benefits to which it may be entitled.

In this context, the mediation platforms through the Internet burst into view, which are vulgarly integrated under the Anglo-Saxon range of the "sharing economy" and the mistranslated "collaborative economy". The friendly and current discourse of those who sell it is easily combined with the new digital habits of the population, the lack of opportunities in the traditional job market, and the official marketing that pushes us to become "entrepreneurs", "freelance workers"; owners of their own destiny, although, in reality, the destiny is in the hands of large transnational companies that capitalize on the value of our work. Thus, we have gone from searching for a job to working on projects; from providing a job to providing a service.

There is no doubt that we are facing an unstoppable process and if it is to maintain social cohesion, a clear and adapted regulation of labor law is necessary to the new forms of work (López, 2016). In the long term, the current configuration of the collaborative economy takes us away from direct employment with social protection and appears yet another turn of the screw from the neoliberalism that was imposed forty years ago. But what is the collaborative economy, what are its characteristics, in what way does it condition economic relations and consequently the world of work? In order to answer the previous questions, this descriptive research is based on the documental investigation.

The controversial concept of the sharing economy

The delimitation of the sharing economy is ambiguous (Meelen, Frenken, 2013). If we go back to its possible origins, it may be heir to the collaborative consumption coined by Felson and Spaeth in 1978 from Hawley's theory (1950) on community structures and sustainable activities. Initially, the definitions focused on altruistic motivation (Stokes, 2014), but this does not apply to the whole due to the spread and extension to exchange models with eminently lucrative purposes. In fact, large companies have adopted the forms of the traditional community-based exchange movement to pursue their own economic interests (Codagnone, Martens, 2016). Therefore, there is a dichotomy between those who defend a fully open collaborative economy focused on sharing and those who see only a business opportunity and the opening of new markets.

The term "Sharing Economy" comes from the English expression and was disclosed separately by Lisa Gansky and Rachel Bootsman with Roo Rogers in 2010. This inappropriate translation helps to generalize and fictitiously transpose the original values of the sharing economy to the reality predominant today and that focuses on the consumption and intermediation of digital platforms between consumers or users. As Ruiz (2016) points out, consumption is only one of the economic activities; production, innovation, communication, and these, at the moment, are not controlled by users but respond to a commercial interest.

Other terms, such as collaborative consumption, shared consumption, peer-to-peer (P2P) economy, on-demand economy, etc. that describe a new scenario in which people, thanks to the new power represented by coordination among equals on a massive scale, are empowered to get what they need from each other directly (Heimans, 2014). However, the problem is that in most cases the relationship is not between equals, since there is usually a third party, typically the intermediary, which imposes its guidelines and interests even if it does so in a subtle way and which regulates its market while promotes non-regulation by the States.

The debate on the conceptualization of the collaborative economy transcends the existence or not of profit, which is mostly there (just look at investment data in large digital platforms), but rather, as Trillas (2014) points out, in the willingness or not of the service intermediaries to share the value created with the users who have helped them to generate it. If there is no provision, we are simply faced with new capitalist economy markets that in many cases are controlled by a large transnational company located fiscally in some paradise and that benefits from the unjust enrichment of the cheap or altruistic work of thousands of collaborators (Fuchs, 2014).

Therefore, we are faced with a dichotomy of two models that, although they share technology, are different in substance and in form. Fuster (2016) speaks of "Unicorn collaborative economy", which are private companies that maximize profit, and "platform cooperativism" which are "open source" and maximize the construction of a community. The former are part of what in turn could be called the corporate collaborative economy, which is a phenomenon that takes advantage of the post-crisis situation as a strategy to dismantle working conditions. As Diana Filippova (2015), one of the main representatives of the new integrating employers' association of large companies that owns digital platforms, recognizes that what characterizes the

collaborative economy is that it is a post-salary economy, where the person must proactively build their life and that it is based on monetizing private property with the consequent reinforcement of inequality.

Consequently, under the umbrella of the collaborative economy, we find a heterogeneous, emerging, rapidly changing, and evolving set that covers modes of production and consumption by which agents share assets, goods, or services that are normally underused, in exchange or not for a monetary value. The interaction of these new exchange relationships usually takes place through the intermediation of digital social platforms and, especially, the internet and web 2.0 (Hamai et al., 2014; Kaplan, Haenlein, 2010). It is a widely accepted phenomenon (Nadler, 2014) with important economic and social implications, a strong innovative component, very dynamic and heterogeneous (Bostman, Rodgers, 2010).

If we look at Stokes (2015), the collaborative economy is characterized by the use of the internet to connect distributed networks of individuals and goods in order to use idle assets, such as goods, time, capacities, spaces, and financial resources. In this way, the sector encompasses very diverse activities that allow individuals to share time and skills, parking spaces, toys, or boats, but also includes others such as those that allow public administrations to share data in applications of public transparency, to mention examples very far apart. Some of these activities incorporate money and others replace it with barter or alternative currencies of more or less diffusion.

In addition to the way in which the participants relate to each other, the importance of the objective sought is pointed out as a defining element. In this way, different types of digital platforms can give rise to exchanges with identical operations but at the same time with very different objectives. These include activities and agents that seek to obtain profit under market approaches and many others that seek to obtain totally altruistic objectives and are financed through donations. In this sense, Belk (2010) distinguishes the "truly collaborative" economy (true sharing economy), which would be one that allows temporary access to the property without the need to pay fees or compensation and without transferring ownership. We speak of living with less dependence on money because collaboration with others also means that less is needed. This is related to one of the most widespread revolutions underway among young people from digital culture and that is the disregard of the property value (Rusiñol, 2013). It means rebuilding the value of collaboration, cooperation, sharing, and trust.

But, as we have said before, a good part of the exchanges made through digital platforms, many of which are for-profit, would not fall into this category. This is the case of large organizations such as Uber or Airbnb that are of «access-based consumption», which is the set of transactions that are carried out through the market but that does not imply a change of ownership (Bardhi, Eckhardt, 2012) but that respond to capitalist economic models.

Botsman (2013) understands the collaborative economy as the space in which different labels can be encompassed such as "collaborative economy", "peer economy" or "collaborative consumption" allows the development of ideas such as "community sourcing" (crowdsourcing), "maker movement" or "co-creation". This author defines the collaborative economy as the one

built on distributed networks of connected individuals and communities that transforms the way of producing, consuming, financing and learning, and contrasts it with the traditional one based on centralized institutions. The four concepts on which it is based are:

- Production, which involves the design, production, and distribution through collaborative networks;

- Consumption. It involves maximizing the use of assets through efficient models of redistribution and access to share them;

- Finance, without financial intermediaries, from person to person using decentralized investment financing models (crowd-driven investment);

- Education, open with person-to-person learning models that allow the democratization of education.

This definition seems especially significant to us, which supposes a broader concept than collaborative consumption and which puts the focus of interest not only on what is consumed but also on how it is made and what for.

Of course, we must pay the attention it deserves to the phenomenon of the development of digital technologies as the engine of the collaborative economy, and that in the opinion of Sundaranjan (2016) has acted in three directions. In the first place, much of the information has become digital and this facilitates the emergence of new forms of handling and transport at a very low cost. The second element has been the exponential growth in the capacity of the hardware coupled with the third, programming. The confluence of these factors bases the generation of four consequences that are the basis of the appearance of the collaborative economy:

• The first consequence is that individual consumers have become the main customers of internet companies;

• The second consequence is the digitization of the physical that is reflected in the internet of things and in the transformation of traditional production processes;

• The third is decentralization in economic decisions that implies the disappearance of intermediaries and direct contact between consumers and producers thanks to web 2.0. Although we must remember at this point the majority presence of large companies that act as digital mediation platforms;

• The fourth pillar of economic relations arising from the digital economy is the expansion of the collaborative component and the act of sharing. The new internet-based schemes make it possible to access a good part of the resources without receiving anything in return and have generated communities that allow people to use things for free. But in addition, such forms of information sharing have been disruptive models for entire industries such as record companies, which were based on a form of property rights incompatible with them.

Consequently, the creation of a digital trust is an indispensable element for the existence of the collaborative economy (Rivera, 2016) and which we will deal with in detail later. In addition, providing greater access to information generates a positive impact on the economy (Rivera, 2016). However, from a critical point of view, we can also think that these systems constitute, in many cases, a way that has allowed capitalism to commodify the kindness of people. In short, and to offer a conclusion to this epigraph that by the very nature of the concept we cannot close and that invites more reflection than internalization, we are left with the definition provided by Noguera et al. (2014).

According to these authors, the collaborative economy refers to the processes of exchange of goods and services converted, for the most part, into exchange models in which activities are facilitated through the use of platforms where collaboration between the different parties involved creates a market open, with easy access and exit, both for bidders and demanders and where the product cannot be understood as finished or simply does not exist, without the participation of the public.

Characterization of the collaborative economy and its different variants

The collaborative economy is based on creating meeting spaces, usually digital, where people with common interests or complementary needs exchange value or collaborate for a common goal (communities). The use of information technologies provides the necessary trust and reciprocity, while drastically reducing coordination and transaction costs (Cañigueral, 2014). Undoubtedly, the sharing economy has taken advantage of technological advances such as the increase in the use of the internet or the proliferation of smartphones. The use of mobile applications generates a feeling of belonging to a group and reinforces trust and the internet reduces the costs of searching and evaluating partners, customers, and suppliers/workers. According to the European Commission (2016), collaborative economy processes involve three different agents:

- Service providers who share assets, resources, time, or skills and who can be individuals or professionals;

- The users;

- The intermediaries that, through an online platform, perform the function of the interconnection of the markets.

At the same time, there are three main models of collaborative economy organizations depending on the way in which the exchange takes place and always starting from the cornerstone of the web: (Codagnone, Martens, 2016):

- Peer-to-peer (P2P) model also called (C2C): goods or services are shared between individuals and the company simply acts as an intermediary between supply or demand. This service may or may not be free for users;

- Business-to-consumer (B2C) model: the company provides the intermediation platform and supplies the goods or services. It differs from traditional business models in that the interactions are based on ICT;

- Business-to-business (B2B) model: it can take the form of either of the two previous models, with the only exception that the interacting parties are business organizations.

Einav (2015) describes the common characteristics and the innovative elements that differentiate the collaborative economy or P2P markets that he identifies with collaborative digital platforms that favor exchanges between a large number of fragmented buyers and sellers, generally for profit. These markets take advantage of the technological possibilities, the use of data, and the search algorithms created by the platforms to increase the chances of meeting between bidders and buyers and implement flexible pricing systems or based on auctions. The consequence of this has been that P2P markets have reduced the entry costs of sellers, which has allowed individuals and small companies to compete with traditional companies. Belk (2014) also points out the reduction of transaction costs as an essential element that has made it possible for individuals to access instruments that were previously only accessible to companies. The other bases of its operation are the maintenance of the quality of the goods through the reputation and the feedback mechanisms between the participants.

Reputation and recommendation systems developed by platforms have been pointed to as the root cause for the development of P2P markets or 'sharing economy' markets, even to a greater extent than the explosion of smartphone use. Horton and Zeckhauser (2016) or Belk (2014). Comprehensive taxonomies and classifications are made of individuals and goods that compensate for the lack of physical contact, which is the way in which traditional markets solve this problem. The information provided by such reputation systems makes it possible to alleviate the regulatory needs of traditional markets. Although from our point of view, when we find that said classification is the result of a patented system by a company that is the owner of the digital intermediation platform, what really happens is that it creates its own self-regulating monopoly outside of a legal framework state or supranational.

In addition, the ease of use of the platforms and access to information, as well as the classification systems for consumers and providers based on experience ratings have made it possible to generate the aforementioned required trust (Finley, 2013; Allen, Berg, 2014). These systems allow participants to review classifications before deciding to exchange, reduce information asymmetry and encourage feedback (Fradkin et al. 2015) while constituting a form of self-regulation (Allen, Berg, 2014; Koopman et al., 2014; Thierer et al., 2015).

According to Demary (2014), the most radical impact of new business trends comes from P2P, which differs strongly from traditional companies and B2C. P2P models connect individual customers and providers through virtual networks.

In the case of companies, these are based on the exchange promoted by individuals to use their own assets. The success of Uber and the like is a consequence of capitalizing on network individualism in their favor over collaboration through a digital platform that mediates to close a

transaction that will provide income via commissions. The common characteristics that will promote the success of these platforms are described by Shy (2011):

• Complementarity: without a provider to provide the good or service, the platform, and the sharing economy are unable to meet the demand. And, without demand, suppliers can't do business;

• Compatibility: supply and demand have to be compatible for a network to work;

• Standards: a consensus on the internal rules of the network is necessary;

• Externalities: the number of participants using a platform is positively related to the value of using the platform and, furthermore, the number of users on one side attracts more users on the other side;

• Network change costs: the network change involves training and learning costs, search costs for the new platform, and loyalty costs due to the fact that trust mechanisms are formed through interactions;

• Economies of scale: there are fixed costs to operate the platform and to maintain it regardless of the volume of users.

However, Bucland et al. (2016) point to something much more basic: the success of digital platforms is based on scalability and expansion. So, the more users they have, the better. In addition, success belongs to the one who arrives first and the winner takes it all. But this growth is only guaranteed with external capital. This is reflected in the data of the National Market and Competition Commission (2016). The total investment in collaborative economy digital platforms during the period 2000-2015 was 25,972 million dollars, of which 8,489 correspond to the year 2014 and 12,890 to the first nine months of 2015. In fact, according to this same source.

For the same period, the great dominators of the market received multimillion-dollar amounts of investment: Uber, more than six billion dollars, Airbnb or BlaBlaCar, more than two billion dollars. If we go down to the national level, Wallapop has an investment of more than 219 million dollars and a market valuation estimated at about a billion dollars and all it does is mediate between users. According to Ruiz (2015), the main objective of investors who support internet platforms for collaboration or exchange is to create new markets or expand existing ones, based on intermediating the supply and demand of underused goods or services. And, of course, in exchange for an expected benefit in the future that outweighs the high risk of investing in new business models.

Even so, and probably with greater difficulties, citizens can be co-owners of the platforms in which they operate and thus become empowered (Gansky, 2011), and they can do so through cooperative platforms that bring social responsibility closer to cooperative values. to these new economic environments. It is true that platform cooperatives, owned by users,facet more difficulty because the cooperative movement, precisely because of its values, does not have the

same financial capacity (Bucland et al., 2016) but other factors such as cost reduction entry or decentralization of economic processes make it possible to design new forms of governance, where economic decisions do not have to be based on the exchange through price, but rather on sharing, giving the option to new economic processes outside of commodification (Bauwens, 2014). Bostman and Rodgers (2010) indicate that the horizontality of exchanges is the main characteristic of the collaborative economy.

However, a large part of the literature identifies the sharing economy with for-profit digital platforms, which allow their clients to have access to tangible and intangible assets, instead of owning them. This narrower vision is being imposed not only in the scientific field but also in social consciousness. Codagnone and Martens (2016), in their report for the EU, make an exhaustive list of definitions trying to determine the activities that the collaborative economy comprises, and with this they establish the clearest characterization of the sector, pointing out the bases of what can be its adequate delimitation. Specifically, they establish three broad categories of activities that the collaborative economy encompasses and that link with traditional markets:

1. Recirculation of goods, links with the markets for second-hand or surplus goods.

2. Increases in the use of assets, related to the markets for production factors.

3. Exchange of work and services (labor markets). The latter can be considered encompassed in the latter.

Main consequences

To finish the work, we reflect on the effects that such a development may have, focusing on the economy, especially the functioning of the market, as well as in the workplace. Among the works that have contemplated this general perspective, the analysis by DeLong and Froomkin (2000) stands out. These authors consider that the characteristics of the collaborative economy will qualitatively and profoundly modify the resource allocation system through the market. The system relies on prices conveying the appropriate information that generates the correct incentives so that they inform about scarcity or abundance. However, there are supposedly exceptional circumstances in which such information is not adequately transmitted: market failures. Their existence leads to an inappropriate allocation of resources.

According to DeLong and Froomkin (2000), revolutions in data processing and communication have changed the fundamentals, totally modifying the nature of goods and services and the exchange process. The result is that the economic activity framed within the digital economy has characteristics that make the market stop being a correct guide to allocate resources. For the market to be able to organize and distribute production, it is necessary that prices exclude non-paying consumption, that there is rival consumption and that there be transparency in the sense that individuals can know what they need, the characteristics of the goods they buy, and the degree to which it meets those needs.

But, in addition, when it comes to the digital economy the main source of exchange is information, processed in different forms, and in these circumstances, the price, when it can be established, does not meet any of the aforementioned requirements. The object of exchange, the information, does not allow individuals to be excluded from their consumption once it has been generated. On the other hand, its consumption is unrivaled, so acquiring knowledge by one person does not limit the availability of the same one for another to acquire. Finally, it cannot be transparent because when the information is known you no longer have incentives to pay to acquire it.

Some authors go one step further and consider that these circumstances make it possible to speak of a new stage in historical development that they label as cognitive capitalism. In cognitive capitalism, the maximum incorporation of knowledge into productive activity has been reached, in a process that had been taking place since the industrial revolution to repress the variety and variability and indeterminacy of the world, to conform it to the demands of production (Rullani, 2004). Such information revolution has modified the very nature of value and the ways to extract it, compared to the previous stages of development. Cognitive capitalism is characterized by the disappearance of scarcity as a basic element in the functioning of the system. Knowledge, once created, can be disseminated, at zero marginal cost, and therefore, the basis of the creation of exchange value, in Marxist terminology, is linked to the limitation of its free diffusion.

Knowledge-based societies are characterized by the increasing importance of positive externalities. However, even though the activity of continuous generation of knowledge is the main source of value in today's societies, it surpasses everything that traditional economic thought has considered work capable of receiving remuneration. As Boutang (2004) indicates, social cooperation, the knowledge generated by a multitude of cooperating agents, constitutes a source of immeasurable value and increasing size, but it incorporates a considerable amount of activity that is not recognized as work with the right to remuneration.

But the technological revolution that we are considering also generates numerous uncertainties regarding its long-term effects. In particular, it is concerned about the effect it may have on employment, updating a controversy present in all technological revolutions since the industrial revolution. The reality is that we are faced with the possibility posed by Keynes 1930 in his economic possibilities of our grandchildren of a technological world in which machines were the ones to work. Keynes points out that ways of reducing the human labor force in today's economy advance much more rapidly than forecasts of using surplus labor in tomorrow's economy. Leontief also raised this possibility from a much more pessimistic position, assuming that labor would be replaced by capital in most activities in the near future. There is, therefore, the substitution of capital for labor, giving priority to the interests of capitalists over those of the people, whose work is considered expendable.

Acemoglu and Restrepo (2016) foresee that technology generates two types of opposing forces and the equilibrium depends on the one with more relative importance. On the one hand, technology makes it possible to automate complex tasks that previously performed work. That is, it substitutes labor for capital, but at the same time creates more complex versions of existing tasks for which labor will have a comparative advantage. In short, the revolution of the digital

economy is no different from previous technological revolutions, and therefore, it is destroying jobs at the same time that it is creating another in which workers perform new tasks. But empirical studies (Frey, Osborne, 2013) consider that current technological development is not creating employment in the same amount that it destroys it, and they foresee that a good part of current occupations will be automated in the near future. If automation exceeds the creation of new tasks for humans, the net effect will be the destruction of employment or the technological stoppage that would have alarmed Leontief. We would find that the spread of digital technologies results in the destruction of jobs.

Both processes are related, since automation itself creates the technological changes that give way to the creation of new and more complex versions of existing tasks, for which work will have a comparative advantage to undertake these new tasks. In addition, the relative price relationship generates a counterweight so that both forces remain in equilibrium in the long term. Likewise, they establish different scenarios regarding the evolution of inequalities, which is another of the concerns generated by technological development. Once again, opposing forces are produced that determine dynamics that lead to different scenarios in which inequality can grow but can also evolve in the opposite direction. However, these authors demonstrate the theoretical possibility of a displacement of the innovation possibilities frontier that ends up breaking the balance towards the automation of tasks.

On this last possibility, the scenario in which the digital economy ends up increasing inequality, Sachs (2016) has also reflected. The author compares the effect of what he calls "intelligent machines" with international trade, since both phenomena generate considerable growth in economic activity, modifying their distribution significantly. Overall, he expects jobs and earnings to continue to be shifted to higher-skilled workers, but he also believes that artificial intelligence and robots are likely to make income even more concentrated in the capital, along with an intergenerational transfer from youth with each and fewer possibilities of employment towards greater owners of these machines.

If there were the strong displacement of the innovation possibilities frontier pointed out by Acemoglu and Restrepo (2016), it could lead to the situation that Kurzweil (2005) has called “singularity”, a situation in which machines would be better than humans throughout. In such a situation, young people would only possess skills that would have been replaced by capital that would increase their share of income, causing a strong concentration of income and wealth in the hands of capitalists and initiating a vicious circle to the extent that young people could not save money. It is likely that this situation is already occurring in all developed countries and explains the growth in the share of income that capital appropriates in all of them.

We must remember at this point the ideological depth of these phenomena that overwhelm us. As in the Industrial Revolution, the main innovation was not technological, but ideological (Polanyi, 2021), the digital economy and the platform economy show us these same impulses. During the Industrial Revolution, these impulses were fostered by what Noble (1987) called “robber barons”, that is, the bankers and industrialists who dominated the basic industries of the time such as electricity, oil, chemicals, etc. Today they are the oligarchs of the Internet, with the ultraliberal backing of the big companies of Wall Street and the venture capital of Silicon Valley.

Agents like Goldman Sachs or Morgan Standley, as well as the demagoguery of the Singularity University. A whole hidden face of giants like Facebook, Uber, Airbnb, etc. For this reason, States cannot allow the rhythm to be imposed by private interests disguised as great friendly marketing campaigns but must set the direction of this technological evolution that responds to the general interest and not to the interests of a minority. In this regard, media is as little suspicious of being labeled anti-system as The Economist has spoken.

What does seem clear is that the large digital intermediation platforms have managed to expand the scope of the market economy by implementing new business models thanks to the application of new technologies and the influence of social networks, as well as the fruit of campaigns marketing that have popularized and deified their business models while convinced that access is the new property. Although, as pointed out (Benítez, 2015), it is a misleading statement because to share someone has to previously possess. That is, to be inserted in it you have to possess that capital, be it a good, a skill, a knowledge, etc. (Dagnaud, 2011) from which an intermediary will benefit through the capitalization of its use. It is an eminently market trend that has managed to put a price on what began as community altruism (Benítez, 2015).

This expansion of the market economy, towards new horizons previously non-existent or previously minority, causes it to become a disruption of the existing regulation. In general, the criticisms are focused on the taxation of the new commercial relationships that take place on these platforms and on the new framework in which labor relationships are carried out that either escape the current legal framework or praise in its essence precariousness.

In fact, one of the slogans of collaborative consumption is to facilitate that consumers also act as producers, achieving a favorable state of opinion so that individuals assume the responsibility of acting as entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs themselves. However, in this way, ways of contracting services are promoted that avoid the obligations that labor legislation imposes on the employer. The consequence is to erode through the facts the legal protection of employed workers. (Ruiz, 2016) It is about continuing with the promotion, which already borders on satiety, of entrepreneurship and self-employment, of the proactive individual as a reason for being, without noticing that self-employed workers have a greater social lack of protection in Spain and that In cases of need (to which we are also led by the high long-term unemployment rates) they will be willing (and they are) to auction their workforce downwards, doing so, in addition, in conditions of clear negotiating disadvantage.

These new business models impose a series of changes that especially affect the organization of work (Dagnaud, 2011) and that from our point of view is rooted in the same principles that have been used by neoliberalism to promote the outsourcing of services in all levels, both organizational and geographic. The argument put forward over and over again is that the specialization of production units increases efficiency and provides flexibility to large companies. However, the reality is that this increase is not a consequence of better performance, but lower cost. A reduction in costs is supported by the fragmentation of the process, cutting labor costs (salary, contributions, dismissal), reducing the size of the workforce and their fixed costs, individualizing labor relations, and hindering union action. But, in addition, outsourcing processes promote competition from the subcontracted force that encourages new cost reductions

and that is mainly due to the working conditions of those who finally do the work (Recio, 2016). As Rodríguez-Piñero (2016) points out, in practice subcontracting has acted as a "precariousness mechanism" by providing any service with the temporary component and with worse working conditions.

Ultimately, as Benítez (2016) points out, it involves the replacement of thousands of employed workers by fictitious self-employed, whose real employment relationship is not with a platform, but with a company. The idea is to apply the just-in-time model implemented by Toyota in the eighties to the labor market to reduce costs and charge suppliers with all the risk. Now companies save salaries, social contributions, training costs, social protection costs, vacations, etc., and with the guarantee of having a qualified workforce, proven and ready to provide their services with full availability and obedience. Otherwise, if the client is not satisfied (it is really the employer), the user (worker) may lose a score in the assessment they have within the platform and a lower assessment means losing work options.

And all this, in a context like Spain with high unemployment rates and job insecurity. In this regard, the majority presence of temporary contracts has become, together with unemployment, a hallmark of our labor market (Rodríguez-Piñero, 2016), to which we must add the high number of workers with a time shift partial involuntary and the generalization of working conditions, beginning with decreasing real wages, long before democracy. The demands of the economic gurus sponsored by neoliberalism have led to a permanent and continuous erosion of Labor Law since the approval in 1980 of the Workers' Statute. On more than fifty occasions, this rule has been reformed with a clear objective: to make labor regulation more flexible (González, 2016). In this scenario, it is almost worrying that the legislator must face the challenge of regulating the new work relationships that are the protagonists of the world of the collaborative economy and digital platforms.

As Trillas (2016) points out, collaborating remotely is not equivalent to teleworking, for example. We are talking about things like outsourcing of functions, freelance work, project work, casual work, freelancers capable of developing micro-projects, crowd-employment, gig economy, etc. All this, yes, sweetened with the marketing of modernity, of being proactive (as if looking for a job and working every day is not), of being "free" and not depending on bosses, and so on. But what these formulas suppose and intend is a brutal impact on the social vulnerability of the worker for two fundamental reasons: to disarm him as a worker member of a group with common interests and to reduce costs to increase the profit margin. It is, if the expression is allowed, the return to the square of any town in Andalusia eighty years ago when the day laborers offered their workforce every day in a public wait while the landowner chose who would have work that day; But yes, now we do it through a digital platform.

Concerning the fiscal area, and saving the difficulty that the taxation of companies entails for the State, referring to the large transnational platforms, which are the result of countless shell companies, with opaque accounts and that if they declare profits, they do so in some paradise tax, the debate seems to focus on user taxation. This is also the result of the ability and capacity to influence the institutions of these large companies that have been able to divert the debate from their own taxation and the use of tax havens to the user who rents a second residence during

vacation periods or the teacher who gives private lessons. In addition, at this point, the debate on the professionalism or not of the users arises, of the competitive disadvantage that for traditional professionals the emergence of thousands of providers of substitute services supposes. But what they do offer in a transparent way is the option of facilitating the monitoring for the payment of taxes of those citizens who demand or offer services in them.

In general, if adequate fiscal policies are articulated, the welfare of the entire population could be increased. Undoubtedly, we are facing a disruptive historical stage with previous societies from which we are already experiencing changes in the way of producing, consuming, and even relating, although the essence that is the control of resources remains. For this reason, the reflection of Pérez (2002) seems very correct when he affirms technology only defines the space of what is possible, but creating an environment where everyone benefits is a socio-political choice, and that is the debate that as Citizens cannot lose: it is not a natural phenomenon, it is not just an economy; It is a matter of priorities and of policy.

Conclusion

Cooperatives, as observed, have a contradictory character since their first initiatives, due to their modes of insertion in the capitalist system. Contradictions are accentuated in the current stage of capitalism, with distinct as platform cooperativism projects and a cooperative as a radical project, both existing in media and digital. The accent of the latter is in the political and social transformation realism denaturalizes the capitalist. On the other hand, platform cooperativism, although a more critical accent theoretically from Scholz (2017), mainly in its opposition to the "sharing economy", shows – both in the opening text of the sharing platform. of the initiatives present on the site are its enunciation marks by a grammar of enunciation, in which the marks are publicized as a media, and marked – they are publicized as "saved in media places, and marked as expressions of political transformation". They address that there is democracy in the world of work, but there are no details about associative work and the distribution of surplus value or the issue of the "common" is not mentioned, to list the points mentioned by De Peuter and Dyer-Witheford (2010).

On the one hand, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of collective organization and alternative forms of work organization in the area of communication, which prevent the flexibilization – along with individualization and precariousness – of work in the current neoliberal hegemonic model. On the other hand, the debate is not whether it is "reform or revolution", but to what extent platform cooperativism, based on the statements of media initiatives, presents itself as more of a "platform" than effectively "cooperative", adjusting to the prescriptions of cool capitalism. Thus, we ask ourselves to what extent platform cooperativism is discursively closer to platform capitalism than one might imagine.

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