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Sharing economy: Approaches and distances between the notion and the practice of sharing

Economia do compartilhamento: Aproximações e distanciamentos entre a noção e a prática da partilha

Economía compartida: Aproximaciones y distancias entre la noción y la práctica de compartir

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ABSTRACT

This work aims to analyze the existing approaches and distances between sharing and what is practiced by users of organizations in the sharing economy. Sharing practices in two organizations were studied: Airbnb and Servas. Mauss' gift theory was used as a lens of analysis. Interviews were conducted with users / members of both organizations and content analysis was undertaken. Results revealed, while in Servas, there is a great similarity between sharing and the practices found in it, in Airbnb there is a certain distance. It is suggested to use terms and expressions that best represent the practices of organizations inserted in the sharing economy.

Keywords: sharing economy; gift theory; pseudo-sharing; Airbnb; Servas.

RESUMO

O trabalho tem como objetivo analisar as aproximações e distanciamentos existentes entre a partilha e o que é praticado pelos usuários de organizações da economia do compartilhamento. Foram estudadas práticas da partilha em duas organizações: Airbnb e Servas. A teoria da dádiva de Mauss foi utilizada como lente de análise. Foram realizadas entrevistas com usuários/membros de ambas organizações e empreendeu-se a análise do conteúdo. Os resultados revelaram que, enquanto no Servas, pode-se observar grande semelhança entre a partilha a partir da dádiva e as práticas encontradas no mesmo, no Airbnb o que se observa é certo distanciamento. Sugere-se a utilização de termos e expressões que melhor representem as práticas das organizações inseridas na economia do compartilhamento.

Palavras-chave: economia do compartilhamento; teoria da dádiva; pseudo-compartilhamento; Airbnb; Servas.

RESUMEN

El trabajo tiene como objetivo analizar los enfoques y distancias existentes entre el intercambio y lo que practican los usuarios de organizaciones en la economía compartida. Se estudiaron las prácticas en dos organizaciones: Airbnb y Servas. La teoría del don de Mauss se utilizó como lente de análisis. Se realizaron entrevistas con usuarios / miembros de ambas organizaciones y se realizó la análisis de contenido. Los resultados revelaron que, mientras que en Servas, uno puede observar una gran similitud entre compartir del regalo y las prácticas que se encuentran en él, en Airbnb lo que se observa es una cierta distancia. Se sugiere utilizar términos y expresiones que mejor representen las prácticas de las organizaciones insertadas en la economía compartida.

Palabras clave: economía compartida; teoría del don; pseudo-compartir; Airbnb; Servas.

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1 INTRODUCTION

'Sharing', according to Wittel (2011, p. 4), is used for different social practices with different functions and motivations. Being a word used for a wide range of social and ethical realities, there is always a risk of confusing the different social uses of 'sharing'. According to the author, the way it has been used in the digital age intensifies this confusion. Internet sites are filled by references to sharing. The term has been used more and more widely in social networks, where users are invited to share from photos, opinions, and videos to even their world, their life, their feelings, and many others (John, 2013a).

Sharing, however, is not a new practice (Belk, 2017; John, 2013a, 2013b; Morlighem, 2004). On the contrary, since prehistory, people used to share. Even sharing as part of an exchange system could already be seen in primitive societies. As can be seen in the investigations undertaken by Marcel Mauss on the social organization of some examples of these societies, sharing was already an usual practice for several purposes: to generate bonds, reciprocity, and trust relations. These purposes created a complex system of exchanges between tribes (Mauss, 1950).

Mauss (1950), in his *Essay on the Gift*, laid the foundations of gift, an exchange system based on the triad: give, receive, and retribute. Such a triad constitutes a continuous cycle of exchanges between tribes in which the relations established transcended any material value of the goods exchanged. The relations of bond, reciprocity, and trust established in the network created by the gift as an exchange system are permeated by a symbolism that allows it to be placed beyond any other exchange system based on monetary exchange.

The gift principle of Mauss (1950), an exchanging system immersed in social relations, comes close to what authors such as Wittel (2011), Belk (2007) and John (2013a, 2013b), for example, stated more recently about the act of sharing itself. To John (2013b), sharing implies interdependence, trust, a sense of community, giving, zeal, and companionship, even if the majority of people with whom we are sharing are invisible or unknown. However, to Wittel (2011), the way it is being practiced online, sharing can produce distortions, illusions, and delusions. Therefore, according to the author, the idea of sharing, especially after the popularization of the Internet, must be viewed with caution.

The practices called 'sharing' have expanded on the web and today they name a supposed new 'economy,' the sharing economy. This expression has been used to name the provision of goods and services in a shared way through physical or digital networks (Cantera & Vaquero, 2012; Chase, 2015; Christensen et al., 2015; Gansky, 2010; Rifkin, 2014). The set of practices that fall under the sign of the sharing economy has been increasing rapidly and tends

to grow even more in the coming years (Schor, 2014). Examples of this are the practices of sharing workplaces (coworking), rooms, apartments or houses (colodging), cars (carsharing and carpooling), collective financing (crowdfunding), and others.

According to Cornella (2012), Rifkin (2014) and Schor (2014), the sharing economy emerges in the 21st century as a proposal for change within capitalism, seeking to promote sustainability, cooperation, and collaboration through the use of technology. Thus, in line with the idea of change, the sharing economy would constitute an economic phenomenon that introduces an alternative to ownership and would increase conscious consumption and the proliferation of collaborative communities on the web, fueled by the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's) development (Botsman, 2013; Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Demsetz, 2002; Hamari, Sjöklint, & Ukkonen, 2016; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Richter, Kraus, Brem, Durst, & Giselbrecht, 2017; Wang & Zhang, 2012).

A range diversity of organizations has emerged under this umbrella concept. Airbnb, for example, is a hospitality platform (colodging) that intermediates the relationship between consumers and short-term rental rooms, houses, and apartments. Zipcar and Blablacar are examples of carsharing and carpooling organizations, respectively. The giant Uber, also inserts itself on this context in the transport and urban mobility sector. In addition to these examples, which constitute large organizations operating in several countries around the globe, other diverse forms and organizational models are part of what has been called the sharing economy. All of them are supposed to have something in common: to share something.

The notion of sharing to designate from a business model to the proposal for social change reveals the confusion that permeates discussions about the sharing economy. This is because the understanding of the sharing economy as a change in the way we understand and make economics disintegrates when "giant and invisible" companies take themselves as part of the same phenomenon. The performance of such companies seems to bring them closer to the notions of competition, materialism, and accumulation, introduced by the market economy, than to the notions of sustainability, collaboration, and cooperation.

Such diffuse practices of what has been called sharing leads us to question: how does the practice of sharing take place in what is currently called the sharing economy? What are the approaches between sharing and what is practiced by users of the services provided by the so-called "organizations of the sharing economy"?

Thus, the aim of this paper was to analyze the existing approaches and distances between what is sharing and what is practiced by users of organizations inserted in this context. In this paper, we utilized the notion of sharing based

on the gift theory, by Mauss (1950). The gift theory and its relationship with contemporary society is discussed and reviewed by Alain Caillé (2002) and Jacque Godbout (1992), authors who help us understand the theoretical foundations of the gift as a phenomenon in our society. In this theory, sharing is seen as the result of a social interaction process in which symbolic relations of trust, bonding, and reciprocity constitute a network of people willing to establish social exchanges. Here, an effort is made to seek out contemporary practices in terms of traces, approaches and distances to sharing, which will lead us to a deeper understanding of the organizational diversity existing in what is called the sharing economy initiatives.

Two organizations were chosen as study object: Servas and Airbnb. Both organizations argue sharing is a fundamental practice for their activities. In them, people propose to share physical spaces, such as apartments, houses, rooms with people from all over the world. This study is justified by the need for researches to deepen the understanding of the sharing economy, especially by approaches that run away from the utilitarian, which is the predominant treatment (Silveira, Petrine, & Santos, 2016). If, on one hand, there is an increasing amount of researches that deals with it from the market perspective, as a strategy in business, innovation, and competitiveness (Huang, 2017; Ribeiro-Soriano & Zeng, 2018; Olya, Gazi, Aksal, & Altinay, 2017; Gibs, Guttentag, Gretzel, Yao, & Morton, 2018; Blal, Singal, & Templin, 2018); on the other hand, there is a lack of researches that deepens the discussion about the understanding of the practices and that seeks to clear the confusion prevailing in the sharing economy field (Park & Armstrong, 2019; Lindblom & Lindblom, 2017; Davidson, Habibi, & Laroche, 2018; Gregory & Halff, 2017; Acquier, Daudigeos, & Pinkse, 2017).

This paper is a qualitative study, in which 12 interviews were conducted with hosts and visitors from Airbnb and Servas. Despite having in common the fact that their hosts and visitors propose to share their apartments or houses with others, while on Airbnb there is a payment, a monetary exchange, for the service, at Servas the return is on the establishment of the social relation between hosts and visitors. More information about them and about the field research process will be found in the methodological choices section. The objective in choosing these organizations was to investigate how sharing relationships occur in different contexts. The paper is structured as follows: beyond this introduction, there is the theoretical background, where can be found the contradictory way the sharing economy is understood in the literature and the way it is practiced and the sharing from the Mauss' gift theory perspective, used here as an analysis lens; following, the methodological choices, the analysis, and discussions of the results; and, finally, the conclusions are presented.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The contradictory way the sharing economy is understood in the literature and the way it is practiced

As previously mentioned, the sharing economy emerges in the 21st century as a proposal for change within capitalism, seeking to promote sustainability, cooperation, and collaboration through the use of technology (Cornella, 2012; Rifkin, 2014; Schor 2014). To Rifkin (2014, p.7), "the capitalist era is passing... not quickly, but inevitably." According to this author, we are already experiencing a moment of hybrid economy, partly capitalist and partly collaborative (Rifkin, 2014).

Botsman and Rogers (2010) and Schor (2014), some of the most cited authors dealing with this subject, are in line with the idea defended by Rifkin (2014). To them, the sharing economy is a third industrial revolution, a new paradigm in terms of production, consumption, technology, and social changes (Spalenza, Ramalho & Doin, 2018). According to Richter *et al.* (2017), the sharing economy is rediscovering the idea of sharing and starting a new generation of business in which innovation and sustainability are central. To Hamari *et al.* (2016), the sharing economy is an emerging economic phenomenon enabled by Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), conscious consumption, and the proliferation of collaborative communities on the web.

The tone in the discussions by the seminal theoretical framework of sharing economy seems to suggest it constitutes a phenomenon capable to introduce deep changes in the current model of production and consumption (Spalenza *et al.*, 2018). However, this tone does not seem the same when looking at the business practices inserted in this context. As an example, several studies investigate large organizations, such as the new giants of the transport sector and the hospitality sector, respectively, Uber and Airbnb, as sharing economy initiatives.

To Chang and Wang (2018), for example, the sharing economy is just a new business model, a new type of e-commerce. Hong and Lee (2017), highlight the sharing economy as a new way of shopping and using services, cheaper and more efficient than in the traditional industry, intensifying market competition. Several other studies have addressed the sharing economy within the business vision, such as Weber (2016), who studied service pricing, and Etzioni (2017), which addressed privacy, security, and regulation issues. These studies join several others that also present a market-oriented sharing economy, as innovative business models, and not as a proposal for changes within capitalism, since its logic is untouched, like Martin, Upham, and Budd (2017), Huang (2017), Olya *et al.* (2017), Guttentag and Smith (2017), and Munoz and Cohen (2017).

The use of the notion of sharing to designate from a business model to the proposal for social change reveals

the confusion that encompass discussions about the sharing economy. As previously mentioned, 'Sharing' is used for different social practices with different functions and different motivations. It is the word used for a wide range of social and ethical realities. Therefore, there is a danger of "conflating different social qualities of sharing, which in turn may produce distortions, illusions, and delusions" (Wittel, 2011, p.4). According to Wittel (2011), the way it has been used in the digital age accentuates this confusion.

Examples of such use of the term are not restricted to organizations in the context of the sharing economy. As John (2013a, 2013b) demonstrates, internet sites are surrounded by references to sharing and the term is used more and more widely. Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, wikis, Tumblr, Amazon, Yelp, and many other sites invite us not only to click on a "share" button to draw attention to the content of our friends and others, but also to "share your photos," "share your opinions," "share your videos," "share your ideas," "share interesting websites," "share the experience," and "share love"(John, 2013a). The notion of sharing becomes even more confusing, according to John (2013a), when websites and online platforms invite their users even to "share their life," "share their world," "share their feelings," "share the real you" or simply "share."

The use of the term "sharing" has become the defining characteristic of social networking sites, where sharing came to mean online participation. For Wittel (2011), sharing can be divided into two eras: the pre-digital one, when it was conceived to produce social exchanges, and the digital age, which introduces the idea of sharing disseminated on a large-scale. The blur between such purposes, social exchange and dissemination on a large-scale, is what makes sharing in the digital age so difficult to understand (Wittel, 2011).

The sharing economy emerges in this context of sharing in the digital age. Such notion of "sharing disseminated on a large scale" by Wittel (2011), comes close to the discussion raised by Belk (2017) about pseudo-sharing, which is what many organizations inserted in the sharing economy context are practicing. Belk (2017) calls pseudo-sharing the business practices that mask their activities using the term sharing. Although they benefit all sides in their exchanges and are sustainable organizations, they do not promote sharing.

To Belk (2017), organizations like Zipcar and Airbnb, which propose to share cars and apartments and rooms as lodging, respectively, are examples of what he calls pseudo-sharing. Such organizations, to the author, do not stimulate the sharing, but simply commercial exchanges.

To Belk (2007), sharing can be an alternative to private property emphasized by the market. Instead of distinguishing what is mine and what is yours, sharing defines something as ours (Belk, 2007). However,

according to Belk (2017), what is seen very commonly today are commercial transactions through the Internet being called sharing. According to the author, in these transactions the feeling of ownership is much stronger than access.

According to Belk (2007), as a way to exchange goods, strangers exchange or use money as a payment, with no feeling of bond between individuals. Thus, there is a clear confusion between what is understood about sharing and what is practiced in the sharing economy. While in some practices the use of the term can approach sharing as a social exchange, in others, there is a noticeable distance.

2.2 The contributions of Mauss' gift theory to understand exchanging systems based on social relations

According to the investigations undertaken by Marcel Mauss on the social organization of some ancient societies, sharing was already practiced for several purposes: to generate bonds and relations of reciprocity and trust. These purposes created a complex system of exchanges between tribes, called Gift (Mauss, 1950). In this paper we utilize the gift theory to analyze the modern phenomenon called sharing economy.

In the gift, relations are based on what connects each other, the bond (Godbout, 1992; Caillé, 1998). According to Godbout (1992, p.30), the gift is "any provision of goods or services made, without guarantee of return, with the aim to create, nurture, or restore social bonds between people." Godbout (1992) provides examples of the gift in modern times: when a grandmother takes care of her grandchildren, should she be allocated a nursemaid's salary to level the situation? No, because the grandmother does it for the value of the bond with her grandson, not for receiving an equivalence, as occurs in market relations. Likewise, according to Godbout (1992), organ donation and voluntary work are part of the logic of the gift, as they are serving the bond, instead of the market equivalence. Thus, what really matters in the gift is not the value of use or exchange, but the value of people (Caillé, 1998).

In addition, according to Mauss (1950), the gift is observed in all existing societies, traditional or modern, through a system of reciprocity arising from the process of giving, receiving, and retributing symbolic and material goods. This gift notion allows the interpretation of contemporary phenomena under the light of this theory, as we can see in Belk (2007, 2010), John (2013a, 2013b), and Acquier, Daudigeos, and Pinkse (2007). The gift today, as in ancient societies, continues in the shape of a threefold obligation. Even today, gifts are exchanged and reciprocated.

Flach and Susin (2006), exemplify such an exchange relation: when I receive someone at home, I am becoming a host, but I also create the possibility of becoming a guest of the one whom is now my guest. The same exchange that

makes me a host also makes me a potential guest. Giving and receiving imply not only a material exchange – because, when I host someone, I offer something, I give them something – but a spiritual exchange, a communication between souls (Flash & Susin, 2006). When giving, I always give something from myself. When accepting, the recipient accepts something from the donor. The gift brings them together, makes them similar through the gift exchanging.

While the gift is perceived as a cycle composed of three moments, to give, receive, and retribute, utilitarianism isolates only the receiving moment, fragmenting the sharing idea (Godbout, 1992). In calling the gift cycle of 'sharing,' Godbout (1992) allows to approach both notions. When seeing the gift as a relations network: of trust, bonding, and reciprocity with a strong symbolic dimension in all of them, Godbout (1992) lights the way to understand the sharing as the set of such relations.

Thus, the notion of Mauss' Gift presents the foundations of the sharing. According to Godbout (1992, p.70), sharing "is the core of the most modern gift. Monetary values are here irremediably immersed in the bond value." In the next paragraphs, some of the main points in which the gift theory is based and how they will constitute sharing will be better known.

Trust relations. According to Caillé (2002), the gift is the only way to establish trust. By establishing a relation not based on monetary exchange, the gift allows the emergence of other exchanging types than the monetary one. One of them is trust. While in the gift, trust is the relation core, in the market, money takes its place and introduces a relation of mistrust. Such a mistrust is explained by the flattening of the social tie in this kind of relation (Caillé, 2002).

Bond relations. The bond is constituted in the maintenance of nearness relation through time (Mauss, 1950). To Godbout (1992), the bond expresses the intensity of the relation between the grantee and the donor. While the gift keeps the memory of the relationships that have already been established, the market only keeps the price, being an immediate transaction. While the gift dynamics have a temporal extension, the market tends to eliminate the past (Godbout, 1992).

Reciprocity relations. In the gift, retribution does not occur nor in the accounting sense, neither in the sense of calculating equivalence, as in the market, but transcends the material sense (Godbout, 1992). The transformation that the donor goes through can already constitute the expected retribution. Returning to the example of organ donation, in doing so the donor has his life transformed by knowing that he was able to save another life through his gesture. This relation of retribution transcends any material value and does not take part into any quantifiable equation, being, this way, neglected by modern theories of utilitarianism (Godbout, 1992).

Symbolic dimension. According to Caillé (2002, p.37), "symbols and gifts are undoubtedly identical for

Mauss. Or at least coextensive." To Caillé (2002), the gift, due to its symbolic dimension, exceeds the utilitarian and functional dimension of market relations. In transcending the utilitarian dimension, the gift has all the relations established in it, permeated by the symbolic dimension. Nothing in the gift is linked to the utilitarian dimension (Caillé, 2002). While in the gift, the value of the relations is for what they symbolize, in the market, it is for what they are equivalent to.

Network notion. According to Godbout (1992, p.105), "in the perspective of the gift, we can see society as a network constituted by the sum of the unique relationships that each member maintains with the others." To the author, both archaic and modern gifts work in accordance with the logic of networks. Such logic becomes particularly important here, because this network makes possible the establishment of trust and, thus, social relations (Caillé, 2002). To Caillé (2002, p.65), "the network is a group of people with whom the act of maintaining relations, from person to person, of friendship, or of camaraderie, allows to maintain and hope for trust and fidelity." Such networks are created only through the gift and trust, and looking for the bond (Caillé, 2002).

We use this notion of sharing, as a process resulted of social interaction in which symbolic relations of trust, bonding, and reciprocity constitute a network of people willing to establish social exchanges, to look the sharing practice in the sharing economy. Figure 1 summarizes this notion of sharing, a result of what was presented in this subsection of Mauss' gift theory (1950).

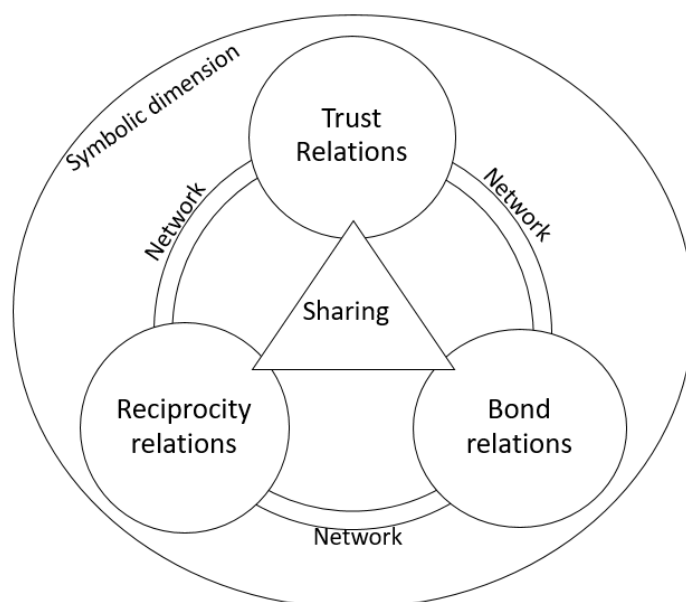


Figure 1. The sharing from the Gift Theory.

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Mauss (1950), Caillé (2002) and Godbout (1992).

Here, an effort is made to seek contemporary practices, and its approaches and distances to sharing, that lead us to a more in-depth understanding of the organizational universe existing in the sharing economy

initiatives, as explained in the objective of this paper. For this reason, in this section of theoretical background, the contradictory way the sharing economy is understood in the literature and the way it is practiced was initially presented and, later, the sharing based on Mauss' gift theory, which provides the theoretical basis necessary for the analysis of exchanging practices based on relations beyond the competitive and materialistic ones, such as sharing.

3 METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES

This paper is an exploratory and qualitative study that had interviews as data collection procedure. Twelve interviews were conducted between September and December 2018, six with Airbnb users and six with Servas members. Respondents were chosen for convenience. The interviewed Airbnb users were contacted after reacting positively to direct invitations and to a post made on the Facebook group Airbnb Brasil. The intention of the post was to present the survey and invite users who were willing to participate. In the case of Servas, an initial contact was made with the regional coordinator responsible for the network in Bahia. He provided the list of 12 contacts of Servas members in the city. From these, six were willing to be interviewed. After the 12 interviews, we identified a data saturation, making it no longer necessary to include new participants. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed.

The data collection instrument used was a semi-structured interview script, divided into seven parts. The first one, dedicated to the interviewee's characterization data (name, age, gender, and profession); the second part sought to better understand how were the activities of the interviewee in the organization he was representing, Servas or Airbnb; the third part sought to get to know better the interviewee and the reasons why he became a member of Servas or an Airbnb user; the fourth part sought to investigate the interviewee's familiarity about the sharing economy; the fifth part sought to understand details of how sharing occurs in the experiences they already had through Servas and Airbnb; the sixth part aimed to better understand the relation between host and visitor; and the seventh – and last one – sought to investigate what the experiences mean to the interviewees.

The qualitative data analysis was made according to Bardin's (2011) content analysis. The data were pre-analyzed by reading the interview transcripts, when excerpts were taken. These excerpts were organized within the blocks created in the script. After that, the data were explored, when the analytical reading made possible the emergence of thematic categories. Subsequently, the thematic categories were subjected to theoretical interpretation, when the empirical data were related to the gift theory.

The themes found during the analyses were, for the empirical data of Airbnb users: the market relation and the seek for equivalence; the seek for financial advantage as a market relation facet; the confidence coming from the online platform; the difficulty in establishing reciprocal relations in market relations; and the weakened notion of sharing in market relations. And, for the empirical data of Servas members: the Servas Network as a starting point for trust relations; the "Servas profile" and the symbolic dimension of the relations established therein; bond relations as an invitation to reciprocity; reciprocity as spontaneous and voluntary return; and sharing as the exchange of everything. In each of the themes, detailed in the analysis and discussion section, key excerpts from the interviewees' speeches are presented to exemplify what is addressed.

Two organizations were object of study in this paper, Servas and Airbnb. All the research procedures, from choosing the organizations to data analysis, were made by the authors of this paper. We have chosen Airbnb and Servas because both intend to share physical spaces, such as apartments, houses, rooms with people from all over the world. Furthermore, despite being part of this same group of organizations in the sharing economy, Servas and Airbnb present fundamental differences in their organizational shapes.

Servas is a non-profit organization that, according to Molz (2011), is the first international hospitality network. Founded in 1949 by Bob Luitweiler, a pacifist who refused to fight in World War II, Servas came up with the ideal of promoting tolerance and world peace through the interaction between people that a hospitality network could provide (Luitweiler, 1999; Molz, 2011). The organization's objective is to help building world peace, goodwill, and understanding by offering opportunities for personal contacts between people from different cultures, backgrounds, and nationalities (Servas, 2018a).

Servas has a networked organization in which members can get to know each other through the exchanges of their travel experiences. To become a member, the applicant must undergo an interview with the Servas' regional coordinator where he must demonstrate he knows the organization, its purposes, and its ideals of non-discrimination by any type of gender, color, race, sexual orientation, political-partisan position, or any other reason (Santiago, 2011; Mulder & Viguurs, 2001). The most common way to enter Servas is by invitation or recommendation: a member of the organization invites or recommends another person who believes he would like to be a part of it and is in accordance with the network's principles and ideals. Servas has more than 15,000 members in more than 100 countries in all continents (Servas, 2018a)

Airbnb, the main example of what has been called the sharing economy, according to Blal, Singal, and Temlin (2018), is a for-profit organization founded in 2008 and

constitutes an online platform where users can provide rooms and apartments for rental, or for sharing, as stated by the company, with other users who are looking for them. Thus, Airbnb is characterized by giving the opportunity for the guests to have local experiences on their travels, by staying with local residents, with prices below those offered by the traditional hospitality market, represented by hotels and inns (PWC, 2015).

Airbnb provides access to more than 5 million stays in more than 81,000 cities in 191 countries around the world, which is more than the top five hotel chains combined (Airbnb, 2018b; 2018c). Since 2008, more than 50 million people have made reservations using the service (Airbnb, 2018d). According to Airbnb (2018b), the platform “uses technology to economically empower millions of people around the world, monetizing their spaces, passions, and talents to become hospitality entrepreneurs.”

Although they differ in several other aspects, both Servas and Airbnb are part of what can be understood as sharing economy, since it has been treated as an umbrella concept where a multitude of organizations take shelter, having in common the fact they propose to share something in different ways.

4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Servas: the set of relations leading to sharing

4.1.1 The Servas Network as a starting point for trust relations

Servas has a networked organization in which members can get to know each other through the exchanges of their travel experiences. Through this network, members exchange information and find a way to know each other better and feel safe. The relations established through the network enable trust and the bond establishment. Far from being placed under the aegis of commercial interest, the relations provided by the Servas

network are under the aegis of creating and maintaining ties. To Caillé (2002), this is what networks exist for. According to the author, “the network is the group of people with whom the act of maintaining relations, from person to person, of friendship, or of camaraderie, allows to maintain and hope for trust and fidelity” (Caillé, 2002, p.65).

An example of how trust is established in the Servas network is observed in the interviewee's I2 speech. According to him, he had been tasked with helping a co-worker who had just arrived in Salvador, but his colleague seemed too independent for someone who had just arrived in a new city. When questioned, the interviewee's I2 co-worker informed that he did not need his help because he was part of a network called Servas, in which, although he did not know the members of Salvador, he had trustfulness in them and in the informations they gave him. Trust seems to be already implied in Servas members relations, or internalized, as interviewee I8 mentions:

They [the couple who owned the house where they stayed] were in Europe, traveling. But they told me “you can go, my niece is there, in the apartment, but she stays out all day, so no problem. You will arrive and you will find her”... They asked the niece to receive me. Then, the niece went to take care of her life and I stayed with my niece in the apartment. I mean, there is already a trail there, something, of trust, this is already internalized in Servas. I mean, she was in Europe and gave me her house (verbal information).

This trust relations do not occur with difficulty because Servas has clear principles and, according to interviewee I8, “bad” people do not enter Servas simply because they do not believe in this type of free and disinterested relation built on the network. The Servas members’ perception of the trust relations establishment based on their experiences is especially important to the purposes of this paper. Caillé (2002) presents the gift as the only way to establish a social relationship and, consequently, the only way to build trust. In Table 1, we present other statements that corroborate the Servas as a starting point for establishing trust relations.

Table 1

Exemplary statements of “The Servas network as a starting point for trust relations.”

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I10	Through the network information existing between us [Servas members], you know who is the person you are hosting, sort of, because it's not just anybody they let in (sic).
I12	I think I feel very happy and very rich with the network relations I have. [...]. So, I always travel by myself but I'm never alone, I always have a family around (referring to Servas members).
I6	At Servas, there is [trust] all the time, since you arrive and the host gives you the house key, shows you the house social codes, so [the relationship] is very trustworthy.
I4	But in general, for us, it's easy [to trust]. It's like I said before, when you propose to be a Servas member you automatically have to be ready to open the doors of your house, to share your space, to receive someone you don't know.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

4.1.2 The “Servas profile” and the symbolic dimension of the relations established therein

Two interviewees mentioned the existence of a “Servas profile” that appears in people open to new experiences, to overcoming fears, and understanding of

what is unknown and different to them. It reveals people willing to establish relations far from the depersonalized relations introduced by the market (Caillé, 2002).

To become a Servas member, it is necessary this openness to new understandings. This predisposition to openness is part of what Servas, as an organization, seeks: the knowledge of peoples and cultures as a way to build peace; openness to the new, to the different, as a way to break paradigms, to destroy prejudices, to build new knowledge. This is expressed, for example, in the statements of interviewee I8, who presents the experiences at Servas as a way of “understanding that each people has its culture and that each person has its characteristic, its personality.” As it stands out:

[...] all of them [the Servas goals] are towards peace, to provide peace, to make way for peace. It is, breaking prejudices, strengthening your tolerance sense, and you understand that each people has its culture and that each person has its characteristic, its personality, are individualities that we try to understand. And you stay close with a person, talk to him, and you see that the differences are a challenge, isn't it? ... a challenge that

enriches the person and you defeat a cancer, a prejudice of several orders (sic) (verbal information).

To be open for understanding, for relating to other people, shows us the Servas members as people willing to enrich themselves from what is not palpable. Here, the enrichment is in the relation established, not in any monetary value. This notion of enriching oneself with what is not palpable is close to what Caillé (2002) affirms about the symbolic in the gift. To Caillé (2002), when transcending the utilitarian dimension of relations, the gift intimately approaches the symbolic dimension. According to the author “symbols and gifts are undoubtedly identical for Mauss. Or at least coextensive. There is no gift except the one that, due to its symbolic dimension, exceeds the utilitarian and functional dimension of goods and services” (Caillé, 2002, p.37). Thus, by focusing on strengthening ties, the relations established in Servas are very different from the relations based on the market “give and take” logic, in which the purpose is a utility satisfaction. Next, we systematize other statements that demonstrate the notion of the “Servas profile” built by its members.

Table 2

Exemplary statements of “The “Servas profile” and the symbolic dimension of the relations established therein”.

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I10	They [the Servas members] are not unknown, they go through a Servas profile, they go through a qualification, they have already been pre-selected (sic). The risk of not being what they said they are is very little ... you have to take this risk; in life everything is risk.
I8	When I go, I assume that person is a Servas member because he has that profile. They went through an interview in its country, in another state, and if they passed it is because their thoughts are like mine.
I4	I like to live here, I like to meet other people, to know other places, other cultures, to see different things, to meet different people. Not necessarily the ones that think the same as me or have the same ideologies or the same beliefs as me... because if they are like me, they won't add me too much. Has to be someone with something different to add me [...].
I2	With Servas there is a situation of putting the guns down. Where you question, you speak, you have tranquility to ask, to suggest... and this occurs in a mild way because it is precisely the environment that was shaped there. The person who is guest in a house, he expects a friendly environment, and when you receive someone you expect a person who is also friendly (sic).
I10	There is more acceptance, you learn to live with other people, with other cultures that you have to perceive, respect, understand and live with... actually the world has no doors, right? the people who put it .

Source: Prepared by the authors.

4.1.3 Bond relations as an invitation to reciprocity

According to Godbout (1999, p.148) “the gift keeps the previous relations, beyond the immediate transaction. It has a memory, unlike the market, which only keeps the price from the past, a memory of the bond between things, and not of the bond between people.” In the market, the bond is intentionally ignored in the name of mercantile freedom, which establishes depersonalized relations with the purpose of making the man a free consumer to negotiate with anyone who provides him the best calculation relations. Instead, in the relations established in Servas, as well as in the gift, the bond is celebrated.

As said by interviewee I8, “each person who has their experience is like a rhizome, it spreads and build a network, a family network, a network of friends, and each person

expands with this experience” (verbal information). According to the same interviewee, the experience at Servas is a starting point for establishing the bond. From that initial experience, “you will continue” (verbal information).

Respondents show a notion of the bond as a relation established by maintaining the tie over time. This notion is very close to what Mauss (1950), Godbout (1992), and Caillé (2002) expose when addressing the relation of the bond in the gift. According to Godbout (1992), the gift keeps the memory of the relations that have already been established. And that is this notion of maintaining the memory of the relations on which the bond is based, according to Mauss (1950). As in the gift, in the experiences at Servas the members keep the bond generated and it is

through the memory of the relations that the experiences will be kept alive.

Table 3

Exemplary statements of “Bond relations as an invitation to reciprocity.”

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I8	People today are very afraid to talk to strangers, to travel to some places... this is the reason why the people build a defense, protection, or safety network for you to travel to some places. It works opening the way.
I8	Otavinho stayed here [in Brazil] at a friend's house, but he got sick. So, I brought him here to my home, we took care of him... he got sick two or three times, but once it was more serious and I brought him here, and it all came from Servas, it came from this sharing (sic). And it creates friendships, it solidifies those friendships and, later, they take root, and we can consider it as a family (sic). [Otavinho is the son of a Servas member who the I8 met in one of its experiences. Otavinho was in an exchange in Brazil, living at a friend's house]
I6	At Servas, I think there is a great building of friendship, trust, until today I think. I have contact with all the travelers who stayed at my house; and also when I stayed at someone's house I got in touch and I feel very happy, very grateful for having hosted me, for going out with me, which is not even in the script (sic).
I12	You learn that the human race is a single family, that wherever you go, you have a family. It's about having friends all over the world.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Such bonding relations are also invitations to reciprocate. Servas members feel invited in their experiences to retribute what has been received. This retribution can be through intangible ways and also through tangible goods, as explained below.

4.1.4 Reciprocity as a spontaneous and voluntary return

The notion of reciprocity presented by the Servas members brings it closer to a free, voluntary, and spontaneous retribution of what is intangible. They reciprocate time, trust, friendship, acceptance, the “open doors” as a symbolic act. For interviewee I12 “reciprocity in the Servas environment is not always for that person who was kind to you, but for another human being who needs guidance” (verbal information). According to interviewee I12, “the return is always to establish a connection with that person, to know that life story, to collaborate with them and with their need” (verbal information). According to him, retribution for his attitudes can occur with other people and at other times in life.

Thus, differently from that existing in market relations, such retribution do not happen like a calculation, there is no seek for equivalence, but voluntary thanks for the welcoming. Thus, according to Godbout (1992), while in market relations things are exchanged through the price mechanism, in the reciprocity relation there is no occurrence of any quantifiable equation.

The relation established by the calculation, which takes shape through the use of money as payment, symbolizes the reduction of the social relation to a monetary one (Godbout, 1992). To Godbout (1992, p.285) “money devalues in everything that is equivalent.” In other words, the relations based on monetary exchange are reduced in itself, nothing is kept from it except the amount of money exchanged. And, according to the author, that is why the gift is priceless: the notion of price implies a seek for market equivalence; in the gift what matters is the bond value, and it has no monetary equivalence (Godbout, 1992).

Table 4

Exemplary statements of “Reciprocity as a spontaneous and voluntary return”.

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I2	The reciprocity expected is respect, education and the experience exchanging. I don't expect more than that.
I6	I think that reciprocity is not just me receiving benefits... besides giving it is also giving back. If I'm only receiving, it's not being reciprocal, it's being unilateral, it's just being good for me (sic) ... and it has to be bilateral to be reciprocal.
I8	I think that reciprocity is going out of yourself and offering your home, offering your person, being able to welcome, to benefit, to exchange (sic).
I12	To Servas, this is a culture of distributing solidarity, because it does not mean that, if I will host you, you consequently have to host me, no... You can do this for someone else, for another traveler, who may be Servas or not.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

4.1.5 Sharing as the exchange of everything

Although there is a sharing of physical aspects, such as the house, the car, meals, sharing at Servas transcends

such material aspects for a sharing of experiences and learning. Servas members see sharing as an exchange, a way of giving and receiving in different ways.

For interviewee I2, sharing is “giving and giving back time” (verbal information). According to I2, “spending time together” leads to sharing experiences. Similarly, for respondent I4, sharing is exchanging worldviews. According to I4 “from the moment I start to have contact with a person, I start talking, and then I'm sharing a table at a meal, a space in the house, and I'm seeing how that person sees the world, his behaviors” (verbal information). To the interviewee I10, “when you receive a person at Servas, you exchange knowledge, culture, human relations... it's a general exchange, basically everything.”

By presenting sharing as an exchange, in which it is given and given back, the Servas members interviewed bring it closer to the understanding of the gift. It is in these exchanges in which the members establish the relations of trust, bond, and reciprocity previously presented. Such exchanges are immersed in a symbolic dimension that becomes clear when the interviewees expose them as a way of learning and enriching themselves through the experiences. Thus, the triad giving, receiving, and giving back, in what constitutes the gift and where the relations are established, is the same in what consists the sharing, which, as exposed by the interviewed Servas members, can be synthesized as “an exchange of basically everything”(verbal information).

Table 5

Exemplary statements of “Sharing as the Exchange of everything.”

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I2	Sharing, for me, is spending time together. Basically, the greatest value I see in sharing is time. Sharing space in the bedroom, sharing a meal, all of this also involves time. Analyzing from the Servas experiences, I think that sharing is giving and giving back time, enjoying time together.
I4	To me [sharing] is an exchange of views, worldviews. From the moment I start to have contact with a person, I start talking, and then I'm sharing a table in a meal, a space in the house, and I'm seeing how that person sees the world, his behaviors.
I10	Clearly, when you host a person at Servas, you exchange knowledge, you exchange culture, you exchange human relations, it is a general exchange, of basically everything.
I6	I think I can say that what I had shared the most at Servas was... experiences. It was not something material. But I shared good times, a wealth of moments.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

4.2 Airbnb: the seek for the best cost-benefit ratio

4.2.1 The market relation and the seek for equivalence

The relation established through Airbnb, to the interviewee I5, cannot even be called “sharing.” Interviewee I5 sees what happens on Airbnb only as renting an apartment, a house, or a room and not “this sharing 'poetic' thing.” In addition, according to I5, the renter receives a payment, which makes both sides in this commercial relation financially satisfied. Thus, the bond relation is avoided in the name of the “professional” relation, as interviewees I3, I7 and I9 called it. To the interviewee I9, the relation established on Airbnb does not exclude friendship, “but it is not the intention.” There are cases in which hosts and visitors are able to establish some close relationship, although these can be considered exceptions.

According to the interviewees, Airbnb relations are guided by the seek for the best cost-benefit ratio. In addition, the monetary exchange, the payment for the service, stiffs the relation, which is exhausted from the moment that such transaction is carried out. Regarding such relations, Godbout (1992) states they are reduced in their monetary dimension.

To Godbout (1992), for manifesting a kind of price allergy, where there is a monetary relation, there is no gift. According to the author, such allergy occurs because the

price “implies the seek for market equivalence” (Godbout, 1992, p.252). While the value of the gift depends on the relation between two people, in the market the value is defined based on monetary equivalence (Godbout, 1992).

In the relations established through Airbnb, there is a preference for depersonalized relationships. This way, more and more relations are established and the financial gains are greater. Even contact seems to be restricted. The use of technology, which could be done with the purpose of bringing those involved closer, seems to distance them. Whatsapp is used to prevent face-to-face meetings.

The denial of the bond in the name of a depersonalized relation is fundamental in market relations. According to Godbout (1992, p.268) “mercantile freedom essentially consists on the possibility of leaving.” According to the author, market freedom allows the removal of the bond by minimizing its importance in the transaction: to make business you just need to pay the price. To Godbout (1992), to deny the social bond inserted by the market is, at the same time, to deny the gift. Such denial erases the relations memory and keeps just the price and the value of things. In modern culture, instead of the concern with what connects us to each other, the greatest concern is to free ourselves from each other, to emancipate ourselves from social ties (Godbout, 1992).

Table 6

Exemplary statements of “The market relation and the seek for equivalence.”

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I3	Because of the monetary issue, Airbnb still seems to be a customer and consumer relation; this gives a greater seriousness, you have to deal with monetary values...
I3	At Airbnb, because I'm paying to use, I'm more careful with privacy, to not invade their privacy...
I5	So... I don't even know if this [Airbnb] is into this 'sharing' thing. For example, at Airbnb you sublet a room in your house, you sublet your apartment or your house, and not this sharing 'poetic' thing...
I7	I have the number of these people [Airbnb hosts], but they are not people I communicate constantly. I don't send them any kind of message. Maybe I have these contacts because, if I return to the city, it is a contact that I have, and I will look for them directly. But there is no friendship that continues from that. From both sides, I think there is a very professional, symmetrical treatment, but we can find this affective relation through respecting each other.
I9	It's a professional relation, a financial relation, I don't see anyone who comes into my house as my friend. I try to be pleasant, welcoming, but I don't want to have a bond.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

4.2.2 The seek for financial advantage as a market relation facet

The seek for financial advantage is considered here as a facet of the market relation previously presented, which, as it is present in several interviewees' statements, deserves to be better explored. To respondents, Airbnb is a win-win relation: guests save money on their travels while hosts earn it.

Respondents I3, I5, I7, I9, and I11 highlight the savings in financial resources that Airbnb represents in their budgets. According to them, in their experiences it was cheaper to use the hospitality app than to seek accommodation in hotels. The I3 interviewee, for example, claims he paid approximately three times less on Airbnb for an eight-day stay; while the interviewee I7, in his calculations, states, through Airbnb, he is able to have a reduction of at least 50% of the budget; to interviewee I9,

while paying two hundred reais in an inn, paid one hundred reais in shared accommodation; and, interviewee I11, states he used Airbnb to reduce travel costs in the United States. Respondents I1, I9, and I11, who are also hosts, highlight in their speeches it was due to the opportunity to increase their incomes that they started to offer available spaces on Airbnb. For interviewee I1, it was because it is an untaxed income; interviewee I9, because he had just closed the doors of his business; and interviewee I11, because he wanted to change his car.

In order to further increase their earnings, hosts can even deceive the platform rules. As a way to avoid paying the site fees, according to interviewee I1, some users often book only one day through the app and the rest of the trip they deal directly with the host. Thus, the visitor pays only the amount charged by the host and no longer the Airbnb fees.

Table 7

Exemplary statements of “The seek for financial advantage as a market relation facet.”

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I1	The [Airbnb] service gives me an income that is not taxed, what is good because it does not harm me at the end of the year.
I3	On Airbnb I stayed 8 days in one place and budgeted the same days at a hotel... it was, I don't know, I paid 3 times less on Airbnb in comparison to what I would pay at a hotel (sic).
I7	[...] I think that the budget issue always speaks louder (sic). The budget is infinitely cheaper, infinitely [referring to the use of Airbnb in comparison to hotels]. Making the calculations, you have a reduction of at least 50% in budget. And that's a lot!
I9	It is economical to me, I have income, no matter how small, but it helps, right?... and the other person too... let's suppose, if you would pay 200 reais in a hotel, you pay 100 reais in a shared hosting.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

4.2.3 The confidence coming from the online platform

To interviewee I1, the confidence in hosting strangers at home comes from the fact that people are registered on an online platform where they can have information about the visitors. An example of this is the interviewee I5, who says he always sees as much information as possible about the place on the website before booking it, to feel safe. Similarly, interviewee I11 states “having references,

comments from other people who were able to stay with this person is essential” (verbal information).

In a market relation, since there is no trust based on the gift, other mechanisms must exist so those involved in such relation can feel safe. At Airbnb, the comments, evaluations and information founded in users' profiles constitute this mechanism. Thus, to the interviewees, the confidence in hosting unknown people in their homes comes

from the good evaluations that their visitors receive on the platform's website.

Here, trust serves to establish utilitarian relations and not to establish ties between people. The online network is used as a way to satisfy your interest in finding the best cost-benefit, not as a way to seek a bond. Thus, the notion of the

network as “the group of people with whom the act of maintaining person-to-person relationships, of friendship, or of camaraderie, allows to maintain and hope for trust and fidelity” (Caillé, 2002, p.65) is lost in the midst of this market relation.

Table 8

Exemplary statements of “The confidence that comes from the online platform.”

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I1	I am sharing my place, something that is mine, that is my home, that is sacred to me, with people I don't know, but who are part of a network. [...] But you have the confidence because that's a person registered on the platform.
I5	I always see as much information about the place [on the site] as possible to try to feel the energy of the house, of the place, and feel safe.
I11	Having references, comments from other people who stayed with that person is essential. Because we can get a sense of how this person is like, if they take care of the place, if they are organized, if they don't cause any problems...

Source: Prepared by the authors.

4.2.4 The difficulty in establishing reciprocal relations in market relations

According to Godbout (1992, p.130), retribution does not occur “in the accounting, economic sense, in the sense of calculating an equivalence between the things.” Still according to the author, retribution is in the gesture, not in the object or in the service provided, because, “in the material sense, there is nothing.”

Airbnb respondents have a view of reciprocity that connects it with retribution, return for their actions, exchange, a bilateral delivery relation. That is, they have an understanding of reciprocity that approaches the gift. However, at the same time that they have such an understanding, they understand that this relation does not occur at Airbnb. According to these interviewees, the existence of a financial motivation rules out possible traces of reciprocity.

About this, interviewee I3 draws attention to the difficulty in having a reciprocal relation where there is a

financial return. interviewee I3 finds “this reciprocal relation difficult because there is a market relation involved” (verbal information). This interviewee presents an idea of reciprocity that brings it closer to an exchange relation, where there should be mutual benefit, which does not happen at Airbnb. According to interviewee I3, “at Airbnb you can only have money exchange and maybe not exchange so much.”

However, while such reciprocal relation is perhaps inhibited by the prevalence of a market relation, they are not impossible to happen. There are cases in which interviewees affirm there have been situations of reciprocity that can approach that described by Godbout (1992). However, beyond the situations in which retribution occurs, reciprocal relations are also transformative. The notion of reciprocity as an inducer of transformation, by Godbout (1992), loses itself in these financial exchange relations. According to Godbout (1992, p.136), “retribution does not fit into any quantifiable equation of measures of equivalence,” as the transformation of the donor or the recipient has no equivalent in modern society.

Table 9

Exemplary statements of “The difficulty in establishing reciprocal relations in market relations.”

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I5	I think it's giving back... giving back what they do for you.
I3	At Airbnb, I think it's possible you just give the money and maybe have no other exchange situations. Maybe you only benefit from the lodge, it's a more limited relation.
I7	I remember a place we stayed in, I think it was Recife, that the person knew that we would arrive in the morning, while traveling, and they made breakfast for us. So I felt an obligation to do something like that in retribution. But not like a real obligation, like “oh, what a burden!”, but because they had this care with us, knowing we were arriving early in the morning and, obviously, without eating, and [I thought] "What can I do for that too?". So we bought flowers and left them at the house. To me, this is an affection exchanging relation.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

4.2.5 The weakened notion of sharing in market relations

Such reciprocity notion is an important component to understand the sharing in the gift. According to Godbout (1992, p.70) “sharing is the core of the most modern gift.

Monetary values are here irremediably immersed in the bond value.” In line with what Godbout (1992) states, all Airbnb users interviewed considered sharing as a practice that goes beyond sharing physical spaces, or the monetary relation established between those who pay and those who provide the service, but as a practice of exchanging with others what is intangible.

Just as the reciprocity meaning, Airbnb users also have a vision of sharing that comes close to the gift but, at the same time, they are aware that this relationship is not fulfilled throughout their experiences. The invitation to share in these relations is not something intrinsic, but something that can happen according to the “openness” of those involved, or how willing they are to establish such relation. According to interviewee I3, the level of contact that hosts establish with guests depends on how open they are to such contact. While there are guests who seek to be away from their hosts, others, such as interviewee I3, seek a closer relation.

Although there are examples of sharing experiences, they are considered exceptions to the relations established through the platform. There are also examples of bond relations that, because they are few, are recorded in the users' memory as “that case in which this occurred...” Even so, the existence of the possibility of establishing bond relations shows other relations, besides the financial one, can occur.

About this, when asked to expose positive points in his experiences with Airbnb, interviewee I7 mentioned the fact he was able to meet other people, the interpersonal relation, the fact of being in a lodging that presents itself as a “family” configuration that makes a lot of difference for people who spend long periods away from home, and the interaction with the hosts. Thus, traces of the gift can be identified in specific experiences at Airbnb.

However, while in some punctual occurrences, a trust relation, or bond, or reciprocity is established, for the most part, the market relation is stronger than all the others.

Table 10

Exemplary statements of “The weakened notion of sharing in market relations.”

Interviewee	Speech excerpt
I1	Sharing is dividing what you have with someone, with others. [...] I'm sharing an environment that is mine, something that is mine, my home, that is sacred to me, with people I don't know [...]. Not only the room, not just spaces in the apartment, but I am also sharing even my own personality.
I7	If I go in a philosophical way to view the sharing, when someone leases this service to me, they are sharing something with me (sic). And, mainly, because the house is a place you built with your things (sic). And it is a shared place for a price cheaper than the market.
I9	There are those boring people [visitors], who don't even look at your face, don't even say good morning and complain about everything and, on the other hand, there are those wonderful people, who I didn't want them to leave, I wanted them to stay.
I11	I think you can share in many situations... we are sharing our property; it is not a property that was bought to do this type of practice. It is our place, where we live, so we are sharing our stuff, our life, our culture with people who are from different cultures, different points of view.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

4.3 Main approaches and distances between the practices found on Servas and Airbnb

From the analyses previously presented, some points deserve to be highlighted about the practices found at Servas and Airbnb. They are: the environment where the relations begin, the purpose desired, the expected reciprocity, and the occurrence of sharing, as shown in the Table 11.

At Servas, relations of trust, bonding, and reciprocity are always and clearly present in the interviewees' statements. Such relations are established in a network and permeated of symbolism. The environment in which relations start at Servas, the network, is serving the bond. The notion of network, as present in Godbout (1992), as the place where the gift system exchanging occurs, is close to the environment conceived at Servas. For this reason, these practices are very similar to what Mauss (1950), Godbout (1992), and Caillé (2002) present in the gift, when

understanding sharing as a set of relations that occur in a network.

In Airbnb, such an environment, the online platform, is serving the market relation. From the interviewees, the relations built on the hospitality platform are, primarily, “professionals,” because what is sought is the best cost-benefit. The fact there is a payment for the hospitality service constitutes the expected return. That is, the financial retribution becomes the expected retribution.

The “professional,” or market, relation, seems to be stronger. In this type of relation, established by Airbnb respondents, it is possible to observe the seek for financial advantage as a main component. Whether for the economy or for the financial gain, the calculation and the seek for equivalence, market relations features, are remarkable in the relations intermediated by Airbnb.

Thus, the practices found at Airbnb differ from the practice of sharing. However, saying this does not mean there are no sharing relations, it means such practice is not

the purpose of the relation established. Affective exchange, bonding, trust relations that transcend the market relation, may occur, but it is not the purpose of the Airbnb users. The

purpose is to make a good deal when traveling: paying less for accommodation and having a good service.

Table 11

Main approaches and distances between the practices found at Servas and Airbnb.

	Servas	Airbnb
The environment where the relations begin	Network: relations begin in a contact and information exchanging network which provides the trust, the starting point for the relations at Servas	Online platform: the online platform provided by Airbnb is also intended to establish trust so that users can reach their purpose.
The intended purpose	The bond: it would be surprising to see a relation at Servas that dissolves over time. Even if they do not become close friends, the bond established is maintained by the interest in the social relation.	The best cost-benefit ratio: the priority is to establish a “professional” relationship between someone who provides a service and the consumer. The hosts look for extra income and the guests, lower costs.
The expected reciprocity	Respect, understanding, sharing. Spontaneous and voluntary retribution for your acts.	Financial remuneration (payment for the service) compromises the establishment of reciprocal relations.
The sharing	Sharing occurs, based on trust, bonding and reciprocity relations at the Servas network.	It can occur in exceptional cases, but it is not the purpose. In most cases, it is surpassed by the market relation.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

5 CONCLUSIONS

From what was exposed in the previous section, and seeking to answer the research questions, we can say, while the notion of sharing is present in the practices presented by Servas members, such notion is distant in the practices presented by the interviewed Airbnb users. The existence of these two answers to the same question was foreseen in the assumptions and justified because they are two organizations that differ greatly in their practices. On the one hand, an organization that represents the market side of what is called the sharing economy, which is based on market calculations and seek for financial equivalence as a way of providing a more cost-effective service to its consumers. On the other, an organization that represents the non-market face of the sharing economy, which is based on the culture and experience exchange as a way of building lasting and peace-keeping relations.

Thus, the relations of trust, bonding, and reciprocity, permeated by symbolism, established in the Servas network, are very similar to what Mauss (1950), Godbout (1992), and Caillé (2002) presented in the gift, when understanding sharing as the result of a set of relations that take place in a network. At the same time, at Airbnb, what we can see is a distance between sharing and the practices found there. Like said for some interviewees, the kind of relationship that take place on the hospitality platform is, primarily, professional. Such understanding about Airbnb practices is close to what is seen in several studies presented throughout the theoretical background, as in Chang and Wang (2018), Weber (2016) and Martin, Upham and Budd (2017), which address the Airbnb just as an innovative company in the hospitality sector, or, a new challenge to be faced by the established hotel chains, as in Etzioni (2017). In addition to this dissonance found between

practices at Airbnb and sharing, it is also observed in the results that the understanding of the sharing economy as a change in the way of realizing and doing economics, as seen in Botsman and Rogers (2010), Rifkin (2014) and Schor (2012), disintegrate when “giant and invisible” companies see themselves as part of this same phenomenon. The performance of such companies seems to bring them closer to the notions of competition, materialism and accumulation, introduced by the market economy, than to the notions of sustainability, collaboration and cooperation.

Thus, the results founded confirm the assumption presented. According to it, the practices at Airbnb are closer to what has been called pseudo-sharing, when the notion of sharing is used to mask a business to enjoy the benefits that the use of the term can add to it (Belk, 2017). Airbnb, while inserting itself in the context of the sharing economy and preaching trust and diversity in its marketing actions (Airbnb, 2018a), has in its practices the market competitive logic untouched.

When assuming the usefulness of the relationships established at Airbnb, there is an important aspect for its users that we must not ignore: the financial one. All the more for the hosts, who see it as a way to earn income, as for the guests, who save resources by opting for a cheaper option than hotels. For this purpose, the use of Airbnb is quite common. Despite the existence of approaching points, the seek for the satisfaction of a utility should not be confused with the seek for the bond. On the other hand, this study also does not wish to vilify Airbnb users, or the platform itself, for its practices that are far from sharing. The seek for income or savings, depending on the case, is not only not blamable, but understandable given that in a market society the need for money is related to survival. However, all such activities practiced at Airbnb must not be confused with sharing.

Thus, due to such dissonance between a long-existing concept, the sharing, and a set of practices that have received such name, like Airbnb, we suggest the use of terms or expressions that better represent what has been called the sharing economy. Expressions that have emerged in this context, and that seem more appropriate, are demand economy, access economy, or platform economy. Platform economy, because it happens on the online platforms and in the mobile phones apps; access economy, because it is based on the access to goods and consumption instead of their ownership; and, demand economy, for making the momentary, temporary, and non-lasting character of such relations explicit. We also suggested the expression “sharing economy” be dedicated to organizations that really base their practices in establishing sharing relations, and in promoting collaboration and cooperation between communities, whether online or offline, such as Servas.

We suggest further studies that seek to better present and analyze the practices of organizations that practice sharing. Such as Servas, a universe of other organizations can be considered “from the sharing economy” and, however, the studies, in a massive way, prioritize researches about the giant market organizations, such as Airbnb. As long as research in sharing economy continues to focus its efforts on calling large companies of shared based organizations, confusion over the use of the term will remain. Thus, there is a clear need for more studies that deepen the understanding of organizations that, effectively, have the sharing relations as their purpose and that maybe are made invisible.

By shedding light on the practice of sharing, this paper has contributed to a better understanding of how such practices take place in organizations that can be considered examples of what has been called the sharing economy and how such practices can approach or distance themselves from the practice of sharing. Such contribution is constituted in an attempt to undo the prevailing confusion in the use of the expression “sharing economy”.

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