

Agency of Civil Society Organizations¹

Introduction

The civil society and its organizations possess transformational dynamism which - somewhat paradoxically - provides the capacity to facilitate social sustainability in long term by facilitating to reshape the interplay among the societal macro-sectors. The civil society and its organizations are frequently seen as domains of twofold social innovation. Namely, these are private organizations which nevertheless serve public aims through the members' voluntary interactions (Salamon et al. 2003; Anheier 2004). Additionally, they bring about cooperation into competitive environments (Benkler 2011; Nowak 2006). The current working paper argues that these innovative features are linked with the civil society organizations' transformational dynamism that feeds back with specific characteristics and growing effectiveness of collective resourcing. Such enhanced effectiveness of resource enactment interplays with evolutionary changes driven by "natural cooperation" (Nowak, 2006) that enables to unleash "cooperation trap" (Csányi 1989)².

By contrast the market sector generates competition interlinked with colliding, conflicting and confrontational relational dynamism. It also creates increasing institutional isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) that feedback with robust marketization trends which affect both the civil society and the public sphere. The civil society exhibits two well distinguishable approaches as response to such pressures. Part of its organizations due to growing dependence on funding through private and public funds and grants "...arguably offers a mirror image to the for-profit mode of operating" (Bauwens and Kostakis, 2017c). However, the civil society organizations can and do exhibit conscious and effective opposition to such market-driven isomorphic institutional pressures. Moreover, since their dynamism has transformational character and capacity the civil society entities can generate association-prone isomorphic tendencies, promote cooperation and sharing even in environments characterized by competitive tendencies - as empirical data indicates (Veress 2016)³. The current paper elaborates on sources, mechanisms, and outcomes of the civil society organizations' cooperative transformational dynamism and analyses how it creates their capability to generate change - carry out social agency.

I. The civil society organizations' transformational dynamism

The previous research pays growing attention to phenomena similar to social and solidarity economy (Ehmsen and Scharenberg 2016), sharing economy (Chase 2012), on demand

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² The synergistic capability co-creation enables to improve the effectiveness of resourcing. Since it generates new capabilities and also (re-)creates motivation to broaden cooperation they interplay form feedback loops. These loops can become self-reinforcing by facilitating to improve the efficacy of collective resourcing.

³The detailed description of the empirical data and the research are available: <https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/handle/123456789/23392>

platform economy (Scholz 2016), commons based peer production (Benkler 2006; Bauwens and Kostakis 2016a, 2017 a, b) and platform cooperativism (Scholz 2016). These belong to growing number of large scale cooperation (Benkler 2011) which provides alternative forms of (primarily social) value creation. Despite their ostensible diversity these patterns are connected with the civil society organizations' transformational dynamism - argues the current paper. It draws on research on the civil society organizations' transformational dynamism (Veress 2016) which analysed empirical data from five clusters of communities representing broad array of civil society organizations. The research capitalized on constant iteration or 'triangulation' among empirical data, literature, and emerging pre-constructs. It enabled to select 25 cases (described in 44 research interviews), to identify 21 case-communities, and through recursive "quantitative scrutiny" grouping the latter into 5 clusters.

The explored clusters of mainly Finnish and Hungarian communities belong to "second order" (Vitányi, 2007) social entities⁴. The members of these civil society organizations:

- (i) act voluntarily, and are free to join or leave an organization;
- (ii) follow shared missions, visions and goals; decide together about fields, frames and forms, organizational principles and rules, structures and mechanisms of their common activities which embody the commonly accepted principles, i.e. these are self-governing;
- (iii) organize and carry out activities through mutually adaptive, parallel and distributed interactions, i.e. are self-organizing; and
- (iv) jointly identify, access and mobilize resources necessary for their common activities, i.e. at a certain extent are also self-dependent.

The research on community clusters followed process approach. It deployed methodological pluralism (Van de Ven and Poole, 2005) combining process narratives⁵, case study driven generality focused concept creation (Eisenhardt 1989, 2007; Tsoukas, 1989)⁶, resource driven approach (Veress 2016)⁷ and also structuration theory implemented as analytical tool

⁴ The current civil society organizations are associations of volunteer co-operators - belong to what Vitányi (2007) coins as second order social entities whose voluntarily participating members are free to join or leave. By contrast in the ancient first order social entities (Vitányi 2007) the members were practically fully dependent on the community where there had born and belonged. These communities enabled and controlled their members' life in full extent, in a sense even "owned" them. Ones exclusion from the membership threatened even the persons' mere survival (Vitányi 2007).

⁵ The process narratives are "process studies of organizing by narrating emergent actions and activities by which collective endeavours unfold"(Van de Ven and Poole, 2005:1387). These enable to carry out "...narrative describing a sequence of events on how development and change unfold..." (Van de Ven and Poole, 2005:1380).

⁶ Tsoukas (1989) argues for following realist approach (Bhaskar, 1978) what enables to distinct and consider the interplay "...between (a) causal laws and empirical generalizations and (b) real structures, actual events, and experienced events"(Tsoukas, 1989:559). Additionally, considering "structure related concrete contingencies"(Tsoukas, 1989) facilitates to shed light on the interplay among mechanisms, structures - structuration processes - and causal relations. It allows going beyond to simply explore pattern repetition in cases (Eisenhardt 1989).

⁷ The proposed resource-driven approach offers an alternative to complementary concepts of resource based view (Wernerfelt, 1984; Rumelt, 1984; Penrose, 1959) and relational view (Dyer and Singh, 1998). It emphasizes the resources' relational, transformational, and process character (Sewell, 1992). This consideration enables to analyse changes in resource identification, accession, mobilization, sharing, and multiplication and also their feedbacks with qualitative shifts that have impact in individual, inter-personal, and community context.

(Stillman, 2006)⁸. The deployment of an extended realist approach on science (Bhaskar, 1978; Tsoukas 1989) considered and explored - besides the empirical, actual and real - also a future domain⁹ (Table 1).

	Empirical Domain	Actual Domain	Real Domain	Future Domain
Tendencies				✓ * **
Mechanisms			✓	✓
Events		✓	✓	✓
Experiences	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Clusters of case-communities	Transformational impacts of communities	Sources, mechanisms, causal relationships of community dynamism	* Tendencies contributing to social agency ** Constitutive processes of new, associational societal kinetics

Table 1: Extended ontological assumptions of realist view of science based on indications of Tsoukas (1989:553)¹⁰ with reference to Bhaskar (1978:13)¹¹

The exploration started with the narrative description of a case-community serving as a sample case which was characterized by multiple transformations observed in the empirical domain, which followed diverse, occasionally even diametrically opposite directions¹². The subsequent systematic analysis of the data observed in empirical domain allowed identifying feed backing multidimensional change processes taking place as real events in the actual

⁸ The structuration theory deployed as analytic tool enables to examine how one's - intertwined individual and social - existence unfolds through simultaneous enactment of cultural schemas (Sewell, 1992) and resources and how this interplay is patterned, shaped by power relations.

⁹ The quasi-future domain allows generating Weberian ideal-type concepts and projecting long-term trends by exploring nascent, emerging phenomena, tendencies which are detectable only as weak signals (Ansoff 1975).

¹⁰ The proposed 'future domain' serves as a quasi-domain of yet unformed, nascent, rudimentary, emerging tendencies and trends - the domain of "pre-sensing"(Scharmer, 2007).

¹¹ "Note; The real domain is the domain in which generative mechanisms, existing independently of but capable of producing patterns of events, reside. The actual domain is the domain in which observed events or observed patterns of events occur. The empirical domain is the domain of experienced events. Checkmarks (✓) indicate the domain of reality in which mechanisms, events, and experiences, respectively reside, as well as the domains involved for such a residence to be possible. Experiences presuppose the occurrence of events in the actual domain, independently of researchers' taking notice of them. In turn, events presuppose the existence of mechanisms in the real domain, which have been responsible for the generation of events"(Tsoukas, 1989: 553).

¹² Due to the multiple changes which followed occasionally diametrically opposite directions the Neighbourhood Association in the Arabianranta district of Helsinki could fundamentally reshape the trajectory of the local development (Veress 2016).

domain (Bhaskar 1978; Tsoukas 1989). These changes affected simultaneously the volunteering individuals, their activities and relationships, as well as the very communities and their broader environments. The subsequent iterative exploration of these feed backing changes allowed (i) reframing and re-contextualizing the observed empirical data, (ii) identifying feedbacks among changes unfolding in diverse dimensions, and (iii) finding interlinked constructs constitutive of the communities' dynamism (Table 2). The subsequent analysis of the community clusters allowed cross-checking the presence or absence of these constructs as well as exploring typical patterns of their interplay.

Changes affecting the community members'	
Personal context:	Empowerment Individuation
Relationships:	Institutional changes Power relations
Activities:	Work Competition Value creation Resourcing Social agency
Alterations constituting the communities' self-transformation:	Networking self-upgrading New dialectics of cooperation

Table 2: Components of the transformational dynamism of civil society organizations

The further analysis of the interplay among these phenomena indicated that the multidimensional change processes unfolding as real events in the actual domain are the patterned aggregation of (and feedback with) the volunteering individuals' communicative interactions (Habermas 1972, 1987, 1995). These interactions generate and carry out feed b backing changes simultaneously in multiple dimensions and their interplay aggregates into patterned re-emergence of the volunteering individuals' community. The volunteers' interactions carry out simultaneously in real domain (i) (processes of) continuously unfolding self-organizing which are intertwined with the (ii) structuration processes' association-prone reconfiguration. Consequently, the interplay between continuously unfolding self-organizing and association-prone reconfiguration of structuration generates the civil society organizations' transformational dynamism - as the next section discusses.

Self-organizing

Members of the explored communities carry out multi-coloured activities in broad and diverse fields¹³. Their readiness to participate in a civil society organization could arise from multiple

¹³ Members of the various communities belonging to the life sharing cluster (i) elaborated and implemented a new model of elderly care, (ii) belonged to users and co-creators of a digital care platform, (iii) provided care for handicapped kids, (iv) formed an artist community, and (v) acted as elected members of a district's Neighbourhood Association implementing a new model enabling self-organizing mass collaboration (Tapscott and Williams, 2006) among the residents. The communities of the second cluster provided local professional enabling. Three of them acted in a city district, in the metropolitan area, or in the Oulu region, and two was created by farmers in Finland and in Hungary. The social networking and self-communication was the main

sources besides one's interest in a particular activity¹⁴. An important although often remaining tacit incentive or semi-conscious driver of volunteering is the wish to socialize - to participate for the sake of participation¹⁵. Such desire of socializing feeds back with the interplay among (i) underlying association-prone institutional tendencies, (ii) the motivation to participate in cooperative pursuits, and (iii) the volunteers' readiness to advance and re-create mutual trust (Figure 1).

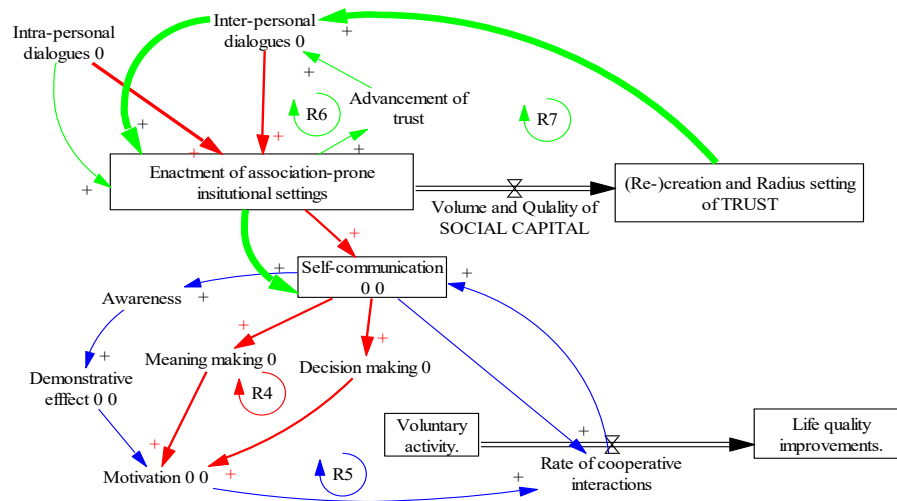


Figure 1: Motivation and trust (re-)creation

The volunteers during their intra-personal dialogue(s) of sense and decision making (Stacey 2000, 2010) enact association-prone institutional settings which (re-)generate their expectations about reciprocal readiness to cooperate (Figure 1). Such mutual advancement of trust allows entering into inter-personal dialogue which takes place through enactment of association-prone institutional settings. The volunteers in institutional dimension give primacy to non-zero-sum approach and interdependence, a constellation which allows and facilitates cooperating¹⁶. The association-prone institutional settings which the volunteers

activity in the third cluster. The participation and agency cluster promoted e-Democracy and civil society development efforts at national level or locally. In the sharing transformations cluster the community members were active in open innovation or open source activities, in Living Laboratories or intra-company communities, and promoted changes in value creation and other fields of knowledge economy developments.

¹⁴ The organizations of civil society may embrace and tackle nearly all and any kind of activity embracing from philately till sky diving, from gardening till Oriental martial arts.

¹⁵ Members of the civil society entities most frequently long for participation in collective efforts carried out as creative and meaningful non-wage work, as "...deep play...[which] is not frivolous entertainment but, rather, empathic engagement with one's fellow human beings. Deep play is the way we experience the other, transcend ourselves, and connect to broader, ever more inclusive communities of life in our common search for universality. The third sector is where we participate, even on the simplest of levels, in the most important journey of life - the exploration of the meaning of our existence"(Rifkin, 2011:268). This approach reflects both the deep notion of work as the process of personal and collective human self-creation and the individuals' wish to belong to civil society entities where they can feel and act as "person in community" (Whitehead, 1929; Cobb, 2007; Nonaka et al, 2008).

¹⁶ By contrast in market and public sectors the individuals follow and re-create the institutional twin-dominance of zero sum paradigm intertwined with the resource scarcity approach. This institutional constellation facilitates competition - generates dominance-seeking attitude and colliding, conflicting or even confronting relational dynamism.

enact during their sense and decision making intra- and inter-personal dialogues (Stacey 2000, 2010) re-create reciprocal expectations of readiness to cooperate, i.e. (re-)generate mutual trust. Such trustful atmosphere enables to “take the risks” to (start to) communicate (Luhmann 1995a) and the communication in turn regenerates and amplifies trust by strengthening (the readiness to) dialogue.

Since the volunteers wish to socialize and seek cooperation their dialogues enact association-prone institutional settings, which operate as social capital or “...an informal norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals... [and is] instantiated in an actual human relationship” - as Fukuyama (1999) points out (Figure 1). He adds that the social capital (re-) produces trust and establishes its radius. Indeed, the volunteers’ sense- and decision making dialogues generate growing volume of social capital which (re-)generates expectation of the reciprocal readiness to cooperate - re-creates mutual trust and settles its radius. The volunteers co-create and accumulate social capital which amplifies trust and extends its radius which in turn catalyses and strengthens their dialogue: “multiplies and diversifies the entry points in the communication process ...gives rise to unprecedented autonomy for communicative subjects to communicate at large...”- facilitates the aggregation of the volunteers’ dialogues into their self-communication (Castells 2009:135).

The volunteers’ self-communication unfolds through recurring enactment of association-prone institutional settings which provide and amplify the participants’ autonomy. This constellation facilitates to carry out cooperative interactions and to increase their rate even in environments which are characterized by competition. Indeed, the volunteers’ communicative interactions (Habermas 1972, 1987, 1995) facilitate to improve their (shared) life quality and their self-communication simultaneously creates awareness of such improvements. Their growing awareness can operate as demonstrative effect by enhancing the motivation to collaborate what in turn increases the rate of cooperative interactions (Figure 1). The increasing rate of cooperative interactions generates (shared) life improvements while the self-communication enhances both the participants’ awareness and motivation to participate in collective efforts. These interplaying phenomena form emerging feedback loop which has a tendency to self-reinforcement: the self-communication through enhancing the awareness can amplify the motivation to contribute to cooperative interactions by increasing their rate and by amplifying life quality improvements.

To put it another way the association-prone institutional settings which the volunteers’ enact during their self-communication operate simultaneously as (i) social capital and as (ii) institutional-type catalytic organizing platform facilitating to improve the volunteers’ life quality through (increasing the rate of) their cooperative interactions (Figure 1). The self-communication - which consists of the participants’ dialogic meaning and decision making - enacts association-prone institutional settings. These institutional settings, which operate as social capital by enhancing trust and extending its radius, simultaneously catalyse the volunteers’ communicative interactions that bring shared life quality improvements. The association-prone institutional settings serve simultaneously as active facilitators of cooperative interactions - operate as catalytic organizing platforms. This constellation allows launching, maintaining, and amplifying cooperation generating the volunteers’ commons’

(Bollier 2007) despite that the broader environment is characterized by (robust and often increasing) competition.

Indeed, the association-prone institutional settings which the volunteers' sense- and decision-making dialogues enact catalyse their dialogues aggregation into self-communication that provides autonomy, catalyses the volunteers' communicative interactions and facilitates their aggregation. The self-communication creates the volunteer's awareness of their (cooperative efforts') capacity to improve their (shared) life quality. The awareness of their ability to co-create associational advantage through their collaboration operates as demonstrative effect which enhances the motivation to participate in and contribute to cooperative efforts. Consequently, the association-prone institutional settings operate simultaneously as (i) social capital that (re-)generates trust and as (ii) active organizing platforms which actively catalyse and increase the rate of the volunteers' communicative interactions aggregating into the volunteers' enhanced cooperation which improves their life quality (Figure 2).

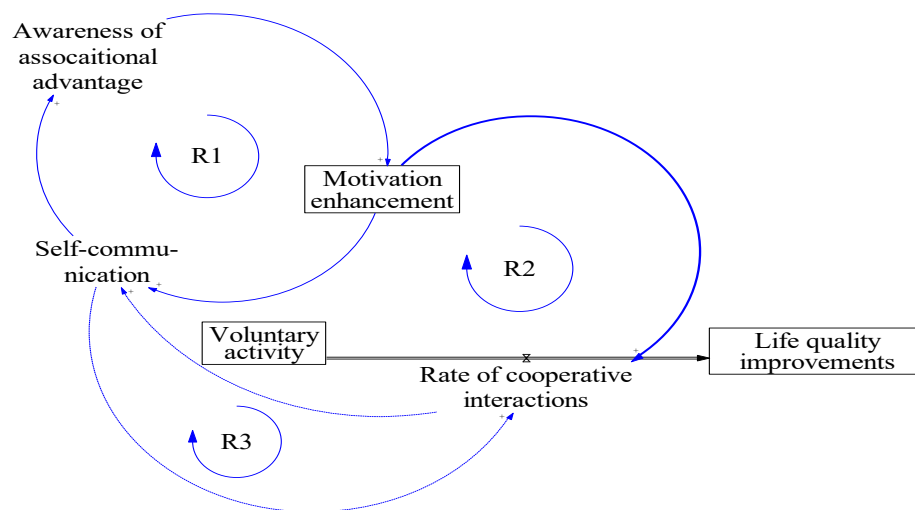


Figure 2: Enhancement of the motivation to volunteer and the rate of cooperative interactions

The volunteers cooperate most frequently through relatively simple interactions characterized by (often consciously) limited resource intensiveness. Due to such “modularity of contributions” - as Benkler (2011) coins this phenomenon - the volunteers' interactions simultaneously can identify, access, mobilize and share also due resources (Figure 3). Since they can enact and share distributed resources frequently from local sources. In civil society entities becomes redundant to accumulate and redistribute resources through top down hierarchies, which is characteristic pattern in market and public sector organizations. Instead, the volunteers through their communicative interactions simultaneously enact and share locally available distributed resources by following horizontal and decentralized patterns. Since the volunteers can contact and cooperate also with non-members their collaboration with external partners allows mobilizing also resources distributed (often highly dispersed) in the inter-organizational space¹⁷. Furthermore, the volunteers enact knowledge, information,

¹⁷ The current literature argues that the organizations are created in order to enable to accumulate and mobilize resources. Upon this approach the resources are highly focused in the organizations and are missing from (or

creativity, as well as emotional, psychological and relational energies, i.e. diverse soft resources, which are non-depletable and non-rivalrous (Bollier, 2007:28) therefore (self-) multipliable. Moreover, the volunteers' collaboration enables synergistic co-creation of new capabilities which provide improved (collective) access to resources - by facilitating to increase the rate of cooperation. These feed backing phenomena facilitate to (i) extend the collective resource base and (ii) improve the effectiveness of resourcing (Figure 3).

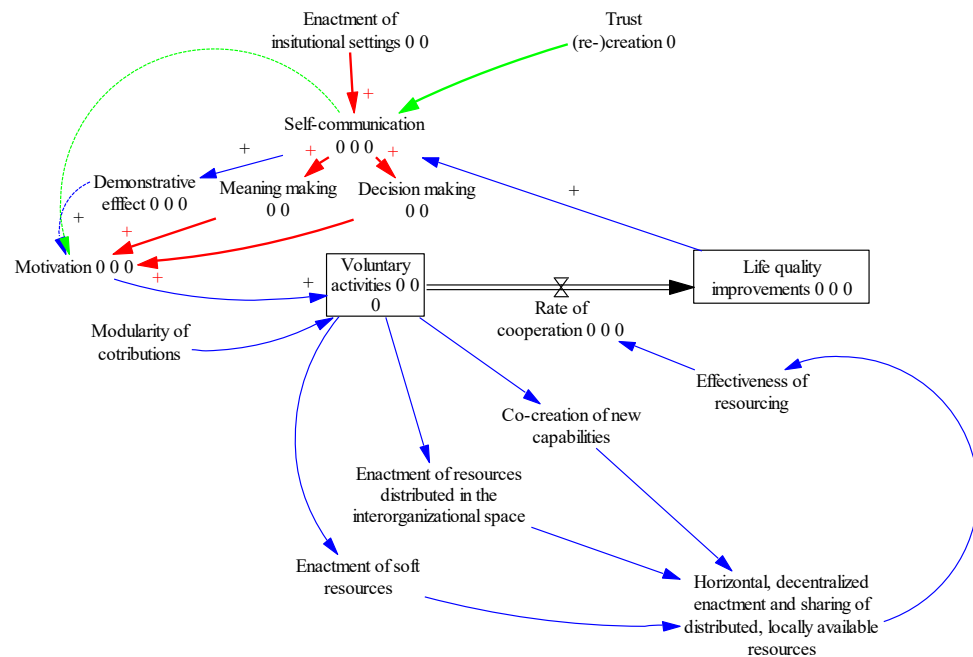


Figure 3: Increased effectiveness of resourcing

Consequently, the resourcing in the civil society organizations follows diametrically opposite logic than in the market - and in the public - sector organizations. The market (and growingly the public) players' business models aim (i) to maximise the individual contributions' size and resource intensity and (ii) to minimise the participants' number in order to increase efficiency and profitability. By contrast, the civil society organizations systematically divide the tasks into small and easy to fulfil individual actions by following the "modularity of contributions" (Benkler 2011) approach. It allows volunteers simultaneously enacting through their communicative interactions also due volume of resources¹⁸. This approach by decreasing the size and resource intensity at individual level facilitates to fulfil tasks by mobilizing locally available distributed resources. It simultaneously enhances the volunteers' satisfaction - re-generates their motivation to participate in and contribute to collective pursuits. This pattern somewhat paradoxically decreases the required individual contributions' size and resource intensity, however, by increasing the number of participating volunteers simultaneously increases the overall volume of their aggregate contributions and the entire resource base. This pattern of systematic modularization of contributions facilitates the smooth 'take up' of

highly dispersed in) the space among the organizations - what makes them unavailable. However, the volunteers through their cooperation with 'non-members' can enact (identify, access, mobilize, and share) resources that can be highly distributed in the space among the organizations, but in sum exhibit very significant volume.

¹⁸ Additionally, the horizontal, decentralized enactment and sharing of non-depletable and non-rivalrous soft resources enables to extend the base and increase the effectiveness of upgraded resourcing.

mass self-organizing by multiplying the number of volunteers participating in the solution of complex tasks.

As a consequence, the civil society organizations mobilize their capacity to improve the effectiveness of collective resourcing what in turn serves (i) as driver of (collective) creativity and (ii) as important evolutionary selective factor that (re-)shapes the primary pattern of organizing. The volunteers' self-communication through indicating perceived improvements in life quality can monitor their interactions' impact on the effectiveness of collective resourcing. Their awareness of (perceived) associational advantage can facilitate to recursively implement (patterns of) interactions which they identify as contributing to improved life quality. The particular interaction which is perceived through the volunteers' self-communication as capable to improve the effectiveness of resource enactment - for example through symbiotic co-creation of new capabilities - can create motivation to be repeated by increasing the rate of cooperation it can (re-)emerge (Figure 3). Since the self-communication simultaneously generates the participants' growing awareness operating as demonstrative effect it catalyses the volunteers' readiness to recursively implement such interaction (patterns). The volunteers' self-communication through enhancing their awareness¹⁹ generates a tendency to amplify collective (disposition to) growing creativity.

The volunteers' self-communication unfolds through enactment of association-prone institutional settings, which operate as active catalysts of the volunteers' communicative interactions. These interactions generate multidimensional feed backing changes (Table 1) and simultaneously catalyse their patterned aggregation. These alterations taking place simultaneously in multiple dimensions unfold as real events in the actual domain²⁰ and their (continuous) aggregation carries out the commons' permanent patterned re-emergence. In fact through exploring the commons' daily operation in the empirical domain one can also observe such re-emergence taking place as real event in the actual domain (Tsoukas 1989; Bhaskar 1978). This continuous re-emergence is the outcome of the volunteers' communicative interactions' patterned aggregation.

The volunteers' interactions are driven by multiple or multilevel motivations including their interest in a particular activity and their wish to socialize. These interactions and their aggregation are driven and shaped by the volunteers' perception about their capability and capacity to improve the participants' shared life quality. The volunteers repeat the interactions which generate associational - instead of competitive - advantage, i.e. that can improve the effectiveness of collective resourcing and simultaneously enhance their shared life quality.

In civil society organizations the volunteers' (i) self-communication provides and shapes the (ii) perception of their interactions' capacity to (iii) increase the effectiveness of (collective) resourcing and to (iv.) improve (shared) life quality, i.e. (v) co-create competitive advantage. Since these interplaying phenomena are mutually catalytic their interplay can unfold as -

¹⁹ In this constellation the self-communication simultaneously can catalyse also the volunteers' (capability of) reflexivity and reflectivity, i.e. knowledgeability (Giddens 1984).

²⁰ The altered patterns of the activities - including work, value creation, competition, and resourcing - enable empowering individuation in personal context which feedback with changes in institutional context and power relations (Table 1).

aggregate into - self-reinforcing feedback loops. These feedback loops can affect and shape the volunteers' communicative interactions and their aggregation. The more such feedback loops emerge and the more intense their interplay is the more complex tasks the volunteers are able to solve through their (patterned) communicative interactions. The interplay among these feedback loops can operate as self-regulatory mechanism that generates creative and innovative tendencies and dynamics by enhancing the complexity of the tasks that volunteers can solve through their cooperation²¹. Such self-regulation facilitates the communicative interactions' aggregation into continuous self-organizing providing the capacity to "organize without organization"(Shirky 2008).

Consequently, the association-prone institutional settings which the volunteers' self-communication enacts can operate simultaneously (i) as social capital and as (ii) organizing platforms. Serving as organizing platforms these association-prone institutional settings actively catalyse both the volunteers' communicative interactions and their patterned aggregation into continuous self-organizing²². Furthermore, these association-prone institutional settings catalyse and interplay with multidimensional changes which simultaneously reconfigure also the structuration processes (Giddens 1984) - as the next section describes.

Association-prone reconfiguration of structuration

The in depth analysis of the empirical data (Veress 2016) indicates that in civil society organizations the collaboration becomes the 'primary structure' which replaces domination (Figure 4 and 5). Accordingly, the volunteers prefer co-inspiration instead of authorization and (resource) enactment²³ instead of allocation. The volunteers perceive and exercise the power as non-zero-sum, non-hierarchical, associational, lateral, and shared. Since they share power it allows mutual empowerment instead of attempting to establish and maintain domination and control over other people seen as units "...of authoritative resources"(Giddens 1984)²⁴. As a consequence reciprocity and sharing become key facilities of power (sharing) by replacing authority and property²⁵. Indeed, the volunteers cooperate through (communicative) interactions driven by reciprocity instead of authority and they share resources instead of (attempting to) control them through ownership by establishing and maintaining their (exclusive) property.

Since the volunteers wish to socialize, in institutional dimension they accept and follow the dual primacy of the non-zero-sum approach and interdependence and their sense- and

²¹ Despite the growing complexity of the tasks which the communicative interactions (enable to) solve their aggregation do not necessarily enhance their organizational complexity. By contrast the market and public sector organizations tend to become large (often global) hierarchies which have strong tendency to bureaucratization, when enhanced organizational complexity don't facilitate and frequently even diminishes (organizational and also personal) effectiveness.

²² The previous literature focuses on self-organization which can appear also in market and public sector entities as temporary phenomenon carrying out a switch between diverse organizational configurations. By contrast in the civil society entities the self-organizing unfolds permanently and serves "mainstream pattern" of organizing.

²³ The enactment considers mutual impacts among actors and the mobilized resources (Orlikowski 1992, 2000).

²⁴ In context of structuration the agents' capability to command a phenomenon is more important for being (becoming) a resource than its materiality, specific form of organization, or any other aspect (Stillman 2006).

²⁵ The authority and property are facilities of power perceived and exercised through domination and control.

decision making dialogues (Stacey 2000, 2010) aggregate into self-communication providing and amplifying the participants' autonomy. Accordingly the volunteers' self-communication carries out signification by enacting association-prone institutional settings which operate as key interpretative schemas and semantic rules serving as modalities of signification.

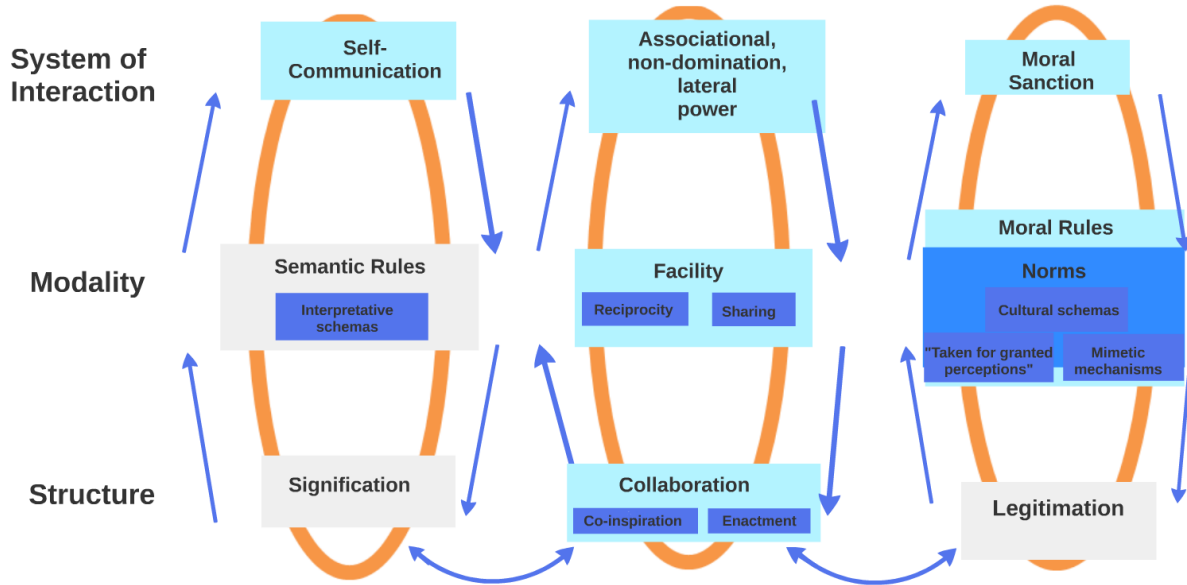


Figure 4: Association-prone reconfiguration of the Modalities of Structuration modified from Stillman (2006: 150)

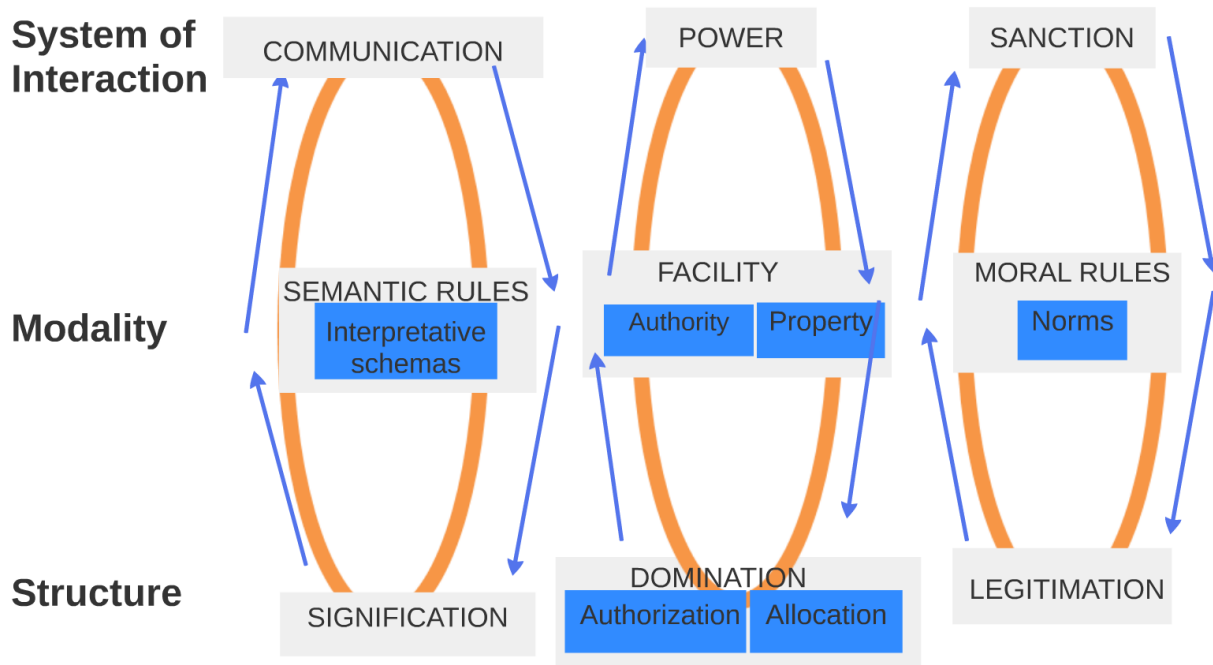


Figure 5: Modalities of structuration as hierarchies of domination (Stillman 2006:150)

The volunteers perceive co-operation as value and frequently provide unilateral contributions what don't require to sanction collaborative behaviour. In civil society organizations the legitimation of the collaboration goes beyond 'mechanical' compliance with norms serving as

moral rules under (pressures of external) sanctioning. To become volunteer means to perceive cooperation as norm which can appear in the form of cultural schemas (Sewell 1992), mimetic mechanisms constitutive of the cognitive, third, institutional pillar (Scott, 1995)²⁶ or taken for granted perceptions (Perez 2002). In fact (attempts of) sanctioning ones (non-)readiness to volunteer seems to be an oxymoron²⁷.

The volunteers' self-communication (Castells 2009) creates growing awareness of the mutual advantage that the cooperation offers - especially compared to domination-seeking competition. Such awareness can interplay with the acceptance of cooperation as a norm - a fundamental moral rule - legitimizing collaborative behaviour. In normative changes that support the primacy of cooperation (the capability of) unlearning (Scharmer 2007) can play significant role. It can accelerate to overcome "residual pressures" appearing from the broader environment surrounding the civil society organizations frequently characterised by the institutional twin-primacy of zero-sum approach and resource scarcity view. Besides quick emergence of the association-prone tendencies in mimetic mechanisms (Scott 1995) the unlearning (Scharmer 2007) can facilitate accelerated changes in cultural schemas (Sewell 1992) as well as in taken for granted perceptions shaping (the most significant part of) daily recursive activities (Perez 2002). Consequently, the association-prone character of the institutional dimension can pervade the norms. It can amplify cooperative dynamics in the local culture of volunteers and offset competitive pressures 'radiating' from the volunteers' commons' broader external environment often characterized by competition and domination seeking. Such trends facilitate kind of 'moral sanctioning' of cooperative behaviour by incentivizing culturally ones readiness to collaborate - by replacing domination-seeking.

* * *

The exploration of the empirical data (Veress 2016) indicates feed backing changes unfolding in the actual domain as actual events and affecting simultaneously multiple dimensions (Tsoukas 1989). The interplay of these multidimensional changes generate, aggregate into patterned re-emergence of the civil society organizations. The more in depth analysis points out at the interplay between association-prone re-configuration of structuration and continuously unfolding self-organizing unfolding in the real domain and generating ultimately the civil society organizations' dynamism. This dynamics provides robust transformational potential providing the capability of agency which feeds back with a tendency (i) to networking self-transformation and (ii) to qualitative changes in the character and dialectics of the very cooperation - as the next sub-chapter describes in details.

II. The capacity of agency by "going after the small picture"

The volunteers' wish to socialize what facilitates to enjoy collaborative relational dynamism, to share team spirit, to belong, and to make a difference through participating in and

²⁶ The mimetic mechanisms are constitutive and generative of a cognitive-cultural third institutional "pillar" which gains increasing significance compared to regulative and normative pillars (Scott, 1995).

²⁷ To oblige somebody to volunteer in other way than through moral condemnation seems to be not only ineffective but even irrational: to achieve one's voluntary participation and contribution through formal sanction(s) seems to be rather ineffective (and even illogical) attempt.

contributing to collective efforts²⁸. The civil society organizations allow volunteers to enjoy ‘being themselves’ since these provide a casual environment without pressures to play various, often conflicting roles by fulfilling expectations and perceived obligations. The commons are domains of altered non-wage work unfolding as passionate co-creation which enables experiencing flow (Csikszentmihályi, 1990) - the ‘happiness of co-creation’. The volunteers through participating and contributing can fulfil their various higher-level needs (Maslow, 1943; Koltko-Rivera, 2006) including to enhance their self-esteem, carry out self-activation and potentially even self-transcendence. The participation in the collective pursuits through the communicative interactions simultaneously contributes to their self-empowerment (Page and Czuba, 1999)²⁹ and individuation (Grenier, 2006)³⁰.

The volunteers capitalize on the enhanced autonomy that provides their vivid self-communication (Castells 2009) carried out by enacting association-prone institutional settings. These serve simultaneously as active organizing platforms and as social capital that (re-)generates trust and calibrates its radius. The organizing platforms facilitate the volunteers’ communicative interactions and their aggregation into continuous self-organizing, while the (accumulation of the) social capital enhances mutual trust and facilitates the extension of its radius. The growing mutual trust and the extension of its radius enable to carry out dialogues taking place also among members of diverse civil society organizations and aggregating into self-communication. It facilitates communicative interactions and their aggregation into lasting cooperation among volunteers belonging to diverse civil society organizations - as the empirical data indicate (Veress 2016).

As the volunteers’ communication and interactions more and more frequently cross and reach beyond the boundaries of particular organizations their cooperation can become growingly un-fragmented and inclusive - their commons start to form quasi-fields characterized by association-prone dynamism. The civil society organizations transform into project (Castells 1996) or third level (Vitányi 2007) social entities that interplay with the levelling up - the qualitative shift of - their collaboration and with simultaneous transformation of the competition. Consequently, the commons have a tendency to networking self-transformation and their (organizational) self-upgrading is intertwined with the emergence of inclusive and un-fragmented cooperation unfolding “without boundaries” and following a new dialectics (Figure 6).

²⁸ Since the volunteers perceive cooperation as a value in itself it can serve as important motivator to participate in and to contribute even unilaterally to collaborative efforts.

²⁹ The cooperation facilitates the volunteers’ mutual (self-) empowerment “...[unfolding as] multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important...”(Page and Czuba, 1999).

³⁰ “...There is an important distinction between... - what could be called selfish individualism - and what is sometimes referred to as individuation ...Beck and Giddens...argue. Individuation is the freeing up of people from their traditional roles and deference to hierarchical authority, and their growing capacity to draw on wider pools of information and expertise and actively chose what sort of life they lead. Individuation is...as Beck points out... about the politicization of day-to-day life; the hard choices people face ...in crafting personal identities and choosing how to relate to issues such as race, gender, the environment, local culture, and diversity” (Grenier, 2006:124-125).

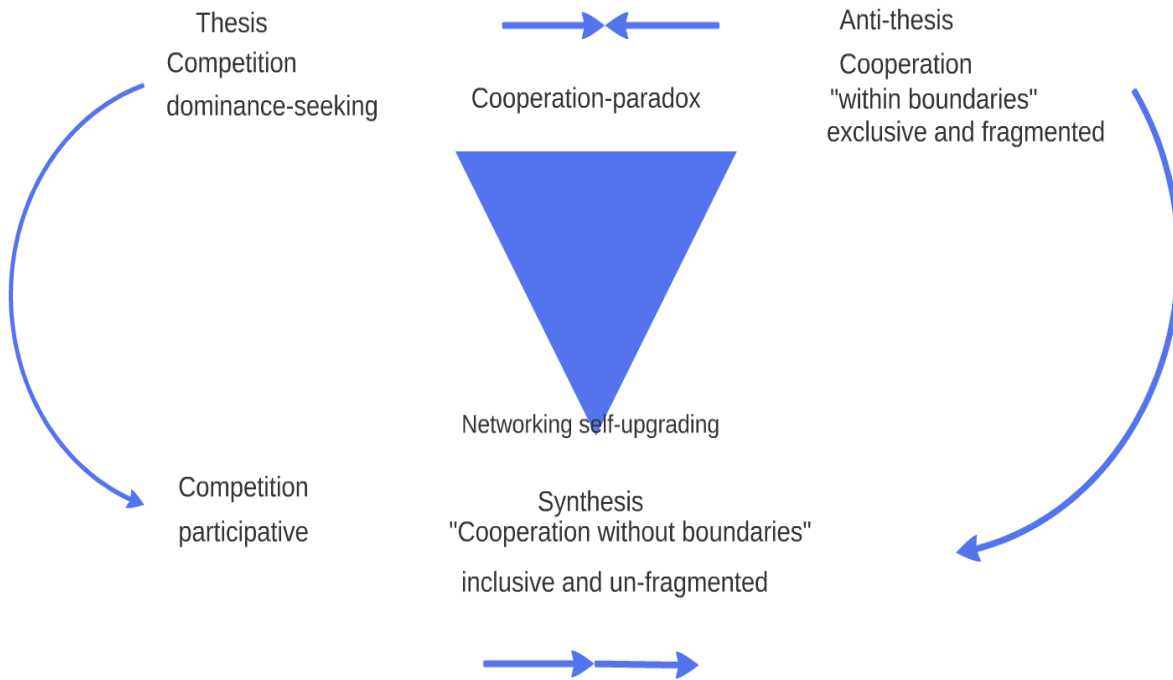


Figure 6: Dialectics of inclusive and un-fragmented cooperation

The volunteers' self-communication (re-)creates their awareness that their communicative interactions enhance their life quality partly because enable to socialize. Due to this - at least tacit awareness - the volunteers participate for the sake of participation and are ready to contribute even unilaterally. Since they co-create trustful atmosphere and aim to socialize they are ready and willing to propose and contribute to the implementation of improved solutions facilitating growing effectiveness of their collective pursuits. Consequently, the volunteers compete on an altered manner - through proposing better solution(s), through improving and making more effective their cooperation. Such altered competition aims to reach associative - instead of competitive - advantage³¹ and has participative instead of trying to seek dominance and a winner takes all type victory.

This altered, participative pattern of competition feeds back with the fact that the volunteers' strong motivation to cooperate arises simultaneously from multiple sources. It is at a significant degree independent even from the outcome (the success or failure) of their concrete activity. Since the particular collective pursuit(s) serve as domain to socialize the volunteers are ready to provide contributions to collective efforts without requesting direct and immediate 'compensation' or 'remuneration'. Since they prefer co-create social - rather than economic - value they provide contributions and share the (collective) outcomes instead of sticking to the exchange of equal economic values through bilateral 'clearing'³². Such

³¹ The volunteers aim to improve their life quality through increasing the effectiveness of the enactment of resources – their identification, accession, mobilization and sharing.

³² "I'm working very much there, and I'm not asking how much I get money, because I put a little bit more into the community all the time. And I have realized, and all of us have realized, that when you have that kind of attitude ... you are not asking what do you get, but you ask, how can you help, where is your expertise needed... And when the whole community is successful, then you get that what you need. And that what I ...need..."

flexible and broad perception of mutuality allows asymmetry and asynchrony for both (i) their contributions, and (ii) the fulfilment of the volunteering contributors' needs. Hence the members of civil society organizations can de-couple or unbundle their voluntary contributions and the fulfilment of the (contributors') needs. This unbundling is enabled by mutual acceptance of the primacy of social - rather than economic - value. This shift in (value) perceptions is intertwined with institutional twin-primacy of non-zero-sum approach and interdependence. It feeds back with the relationships' trustful character and interplays with the (at least tacit) acceptance of the differences in individual capabilities and responsibilities.

This constellation makes redundant and obsolete attempts to 'equalize' and 'match' the economic value of various needs and contributions and don't request bringing them to a common, monetary denominator. Such 'demonetization' seems to be part of broader trends of appreciation of social value and of the (primacy of) relationships perceived as having intrinsic value³³. This feeds back also with a networked model in value creation - as well as in resourcing and power relations. The networked model has a "...core assumption...that giving oneself to the larger networked community optimizes the value of the group as well as its individual members...[similarly to] Internet"(Rifkin, 2011:268). It is characterized by mutual advantage-seeking enabling to accept and co-create multiple wins among (increasing number of) participants.

Consequently, in civil society organizations the volunteers wish to socialize, and are ready to participate in and contribute to collective pursuits facilitating life quality improvements. They follow asymmetric and asynchronous, 'open ended' and multi-party patterns of reciprocity what enhances their readiness to provide also unilateral contributions to collective pursuits³⁴. These changes feedback with the civil society entities' tendency to qualitative transformation - networking self-upgrading into third level (Vitányi 2007) social entities and also facilitate to transform their cooperation into inclusive and un-fragmented unfolding "without limits".

The volunteering individuals during their communicative interactions due to "modularity of contributions"(Benkler 2011) can also enact - identify, access, mobilize and share - the necessary resources. The horizontal, distributed, mutually adaptive, and stigmergic, communicative interactions can carry out simultaneously also resourcing by following horizontal and decentralized patterns. Moreover, the volunteers' communicative interactions simultaneously can ensure also synergistic re-combination of their individual capabilities by improving the effectiveness of collective resourcing (Csányi 1989). The self-communication creates growing awareness of associational advantage, cooperative patterns which improve their perceived and shared life quality through increasing effectiveness of collective resourcing. This awareness generates a tendency to repeat (patterns of) interactions enabling

spiritual care, not...money"(100-20-4-5:252-256) - explains the coordinator of the Finnish community Silvia koti providing healing for handicapped children.

³³ The "...trend is moving to digital exchange more than monetary exchange...without transaction and banks to share content and value added..."(100-20-5-5:714-716) - points out at the related broader tendencies the open innovation expert of a global company.

³⁴ These alterations are connected with - and even partly are driven by - significant changes in resourcing which serve as catalysts and selective factor of quasi-evolutionary changes unfolding in civil society entities.

to increase such associational advantage. Consequently the improved effectiveness of resourcing perceived through life quality improvements can serve as important selection factor facilitating the repetition and aggregation of certain (relevant) communicative interactions. This constellation facilitates to re-combine and upgrade the complexity of the interactions and tasks that the volunteers can solve through collective pursuits³⁵. It creates and amplifies innovative tendencies in the civil society organizations and contributes to their enhanced transformational dynamism.

The volunteers' communicative interactions generate feed backing changes simultaneously in multiple dimensions and facilitate their aggregation into patterned re-emergence of their commons. These aggregating changes are also generative and constitutive of the civil society organizations' networking self-upgrading into project (Castells 1996) or third level (Vitányi 2007) social entities. These organizational changes are intertwined with growingly inclusive and un-fragmented character of the volunteers' cooperation unfolding increasingly "without borders".

In second level (Vitányi 2007) social entities the members' collaboration is exclusive and fragmented and often is oriented against 'non-members' - individuals or teams who do not belong to the particular entity. As a consequence the cooperation remains intra-organizational. Such "collaboration within borders" frequently becomes the source of inter-organizational competition generating colliding, conflicting or confronting relational dynamism across social fields. Consequently, the intra-organizational cooperation which remains exclusive and fragmented somewhat paradoxically generates disruptive inter-organizational competition, i.e. triggers its self-alienation. By contrast in (emerging quasi-fields of) the third level (Vitányi 2007) or project (Castells 1996) social entities the collaboration becomes inclusive and non-fragmented. It is intertwined with participative pattern of competition and their interplay generates altered dialectics of collaboration unfolding "without borders"(Figure 6). These feed backing multidimensional changes are constitutive and generative - and simultaneously capitalize on - the spread of growingly association-prone dynamism across social fields.

Consequently, members of the civil society (organizations) can create significant transformational outcomes through their recurrent everyday activities carried out at their home, workplace or local community - as Giddens (1984, 1990) points out. This powerful transformational dynamism interplays (i) with growingly inclusive and un-fragmented character and a new dialectics of cooperation taking place 'without borders' which feedback (ii) with the commons' networking self-upgrading into quasi-fields of third level social entities. The civil society organizations' transformational dynamism interplays with changes affecting (i) the individual volunteers and (ii) their interactions, (iii) the very commons and (iv.) their broader environment. In a sense the quasi-fields emerging through the civil society organizations' networking self-upgrading into third level social entities can serve as two-way micro-macro bridge that amplifies the "strength of weak ties" (Granovetter, 1973). Their emergence carries out and catalyses also scale-free, fractal-like transposition (Plowman et al.,

³⁵ Due to continuous self-organizing which enables to "organize without organization" (Shirky 2008) the growing complexity of the interactions don't necessarily increase the organizational complexity what in market and public sector organizations generates robust bureaucratization tendencies.

2007) of the association-prone local dynamism across social fields. The civil society organizations' transformational dynamism facilitates the volunteers' self-empowering individuation, brings about a new dialectics of their cooperation, and provides the capability and capacity to generate broader cooperative changes. It enables to carry out social agency by "going after the small picture" (Giddens, 1984, 1990) - as the next section discusses.

III. Transformational outcomes of the civil society's agency

There is an ongoing global associational revolution bringing about the "...rise of the civil society... [that] may, in fact, prove to be as significant a development of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries as the rise of the nation-state was of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" - indicate Salamon et al. (2003:2) by summing up findings of the first truly global research³⁶. The civil society's globally growing activity feeds back with its self-empowerment unfolding through and feed backing with association-prone patterns of the societal macro-sectors' convergence - driven and shaped by the emergence of a new, digital second economy (Arthur, 2011)³⁷. These tendencies are mutually catalytic and can be constitutive of an emerging Next Society (Reichel, 2012) of a new, collaborative era - a networked knowledge-driven civil society characterized by a more cooperative and sharing social dynamism (Toffler, 1980, 1995; Perlas, 2000; Benkler, 2006, 2011; Rifkin, 2004, 2011; Reichel, 2012; Chase, 2012).

The empirical data indicate (Veress 2016) that the civil society entities can and do generate 'non-conventional' institutional isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) which possess association-prone character. Their cooperative dynamism provides significant transformational potential and its systematic enactment can affect and even (re-) shape patterns of mutual approximation among the societal macro-sectors by generating association-prone trajectories of their convergence. Recent phenomena similar to sharing economy, on demand platform economy, commons based peer production, platform cooperativism, social and solidarity economy - to name but a few - exhibit broadening range of practical solutions providing alternative patterns of value creation. The data indicate that the civil society players are important employers³⁸ who provide on average 5 % of the GDP in the most developed, including the OECD countries³⁹. The cooperative dynamism characterizing and amplified by

³⁶ The Johns Hopkins University carried out the first global research of civil society, the Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon et al., 2003). The program launched in 1991 with local researchers in 13 countries currently covers 45 countries (<http://ccss.jhu.edu/research-projects/comparative-nonprofit-sector/about-cnp>).

³⁷ "...another economy - a second economy - of all ...digitized business processes conversing, executing, and triggering further actions is silently forming alongside the physical economy ...[P]rocesses in the physical economy are being entered into the digital economy, where they are "speaking to" other processes...in a constant conversation among...multiple semi-intelligent nodes...eventually connecting back with processes and humans in the physical economy"(Arthur, 2011:3).

³⁸ "...In the last decade, the most developed market economies in Europe, North America and Asia-Pacific have seen a general increase in economic importance of non-profit organizations as providers of health, social, educational and cultural services ...the non-profit sector accounts for about 6 percent of total employment ...or nearly 10 per cent with volunteer work factored in (Salamon et al, 1999)..."(Anheier, 2004:3).

³⁹ "A 2010 economic analysis...reported that...in the United States, Canada, France, Japan, Australia, the Czech Republic, Belgium, and New Zealand ...third sector represents, on average, 5 percent of the GDP. This means that the nonprofit sector's contribution ...now exceeds the GDP of utilities, including electricity, gas, and water and, incredibly, is equal to the GDP of construction (5.1 percent), and approaches the GDP of banks, insurance

the civil society organizations, the civil activism can enhance association-prone patterns of enactment of the primarily digital new technologies by shaping the emerging digital second economy (Arthur, 2011).

Sharing economy, commons based peer production, platform cooperativism, social and solidarity economy is just a few of the emerging new, “non-traditional” patterns of value creation. Despite their visible diversity these are characterized by underlying association-prone institutional constellations typical for the civil society organizations⁴⁰. These phenomena are increasingly interconnected and their interplay can propose systemic approach which can facilitate to overcome the “tyranny of short-termism” (Barton 2011) and to exit from the emerging Anthropocene (Heikkurinen et al. 2017) by forming a counter economy (Bauwens and Kostakis, 2016a).

The commons based peer production (CBPP) approach indicates a triad (Bauwens and Kostakis, 2017a) where (i) self-organizing commons and (ii) for benefit associations, which serve as service units and enabling infrastructure for commons, cooperate with (iii) entrepreneurial coalitions. These coalitions emerge around commons and communities of contributors and provide resources to ensure the livelihood of commoners and to extend and upgrade the commons’ activity. The commons based peer production similarly to open or platform cooperatives consciously try to re-integrate the externalities into value-creation process (Bauwens and Kostakis 2017b) and facilitate in multiple ways the extension of the collective resource base. These local or micro trends interplay also with an emerging macro triarchy consisting of (i) the enabling and empowering partner state focusing on common good; (ii) solidarity and ethical economy tendencies in the markets, and (iii) the Civil Society with contributory commons (Bauwens and Kostakis, 2016) (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Reconfigurations of the macro-economic level (Bauwens and Kostakis, 2016)

companies, and financial services (5.6 percent). The nonprofit sector is also closing in on the GDP contribution from transport, storage, and communications, which averages 7 percent..."(Rifkin 2011:266-267)

⁴⁰ The civil society organizations are domains of the institutional dual primacy of non-zero-sum paradigm and interdependence overcoming the twin dominance of the zero-sum paradigm and the resource scarcity view.

There is an emerging civil economy which “...is about how people live in communities”(Bruyn 2000:235). Its participants focus on common - rather than on total - good by re-joining Economics and Ethics (Zamagni 2007, 2014) and overcoming and preventing the mass production of social and environmental externalities. These developments facilitate the transformation of the civil society into a function system of society (Reichel, 2012) whose role “...is the provision of stability for joint collective action ...for the common good and social coherence ...to solve those [often wicked] problems that are not solved by any other part of society”(Reichel, 2012:58-60). It interplays with fractal like scale-free transposition (Plowman et al., 2007) of the association-prone dynamism characteristic for the civil society organizations and their aggregates. Their transformational dynamism facilitates and shapes the mutual approximation among market and public sectors and the civil society - as the next section describes.

Patterns of macro-sectorial convergence

The exploration of the transformational dynamism of civil society organizations can provide weak signals of potential long term developments by facilitating to identify nascent patterns and trends and elaborate on their ‘ideal-type descriptions’ (Weber, 1949)⁴¹. An amended version of scientific realism (Bhaskar 1987; Tsoukas 1989) considering also a quasi-future fourth domain (besides empirical, actual and real) (Table 1 - above) facilitates to explore emerging trends and phenomena in early phase of their development (Veress 2016).

The civil society is the domain and the outcome of its members’ activism also in historic perspective starting from their - intertwined with the industrial society - emergence. This activism played crucial role in practical implementation of the ‘glorious triad’ of freedom, equality and of fraternity currently recalled as solidarity. The industrial society facilitated robust increase of social productivity, but it was the civil activism which enforced the (implementation of) potential social changes - including shortening of ‘standard’ worktime and alterations in patterns of social distribution. While the growing productivity provided the potential to liberate time through shortening ‘standard’ wage work it was the civil activism which enabled its ‘mobilization’ as free time. The activism could ‘enact’ the potential that the growing productivity proposes and simultaneously (re-)shape characteristic patterns of social division of labour - and distribution.

The current emergence of a digital second economy (Arthur, 2011) creates growing urgency of contemporary robust civil activism capable to affect the macro-sectorial convergence (Figure 8) and catalyse its association-prone patterns. This activism has to enforce new standards of shortened work time and altered patterns of re-distribution - including ‘proper level’ of taxation and deployment of basic income (Mason 2016). The necessity to increase the employee salary level goes beyond to overcome and prevent the accelerating growth of inequality in incomes and wealth (Milanovic 2010, Piketty 2014). It is also necessary in order to mobilize large investment flows required to finance digitalization at genuinely mass level

⁴¹ Such ‘ideal-type’ constructs necessarily remain partial, blurred, incomplete and ‘utopic’. They synthesize, as Weber (1949:90) points out, “...one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct (Gedankenbild). In its conceptual purity, this mental construct cannot be found empirically...in reality”.

by enabling to overcome the productivity paradox (Avent 2016)⁴². The civil activism is also important to ensure open access to knowledge, information, creativity, and to non-rivalrous and non-depletable soft resources (Bollier, 2007:28) - in general to prevent recurrent attempts of (second) enclosure⁴³ (Boyle 2005; Hess and Ostrom 2007).

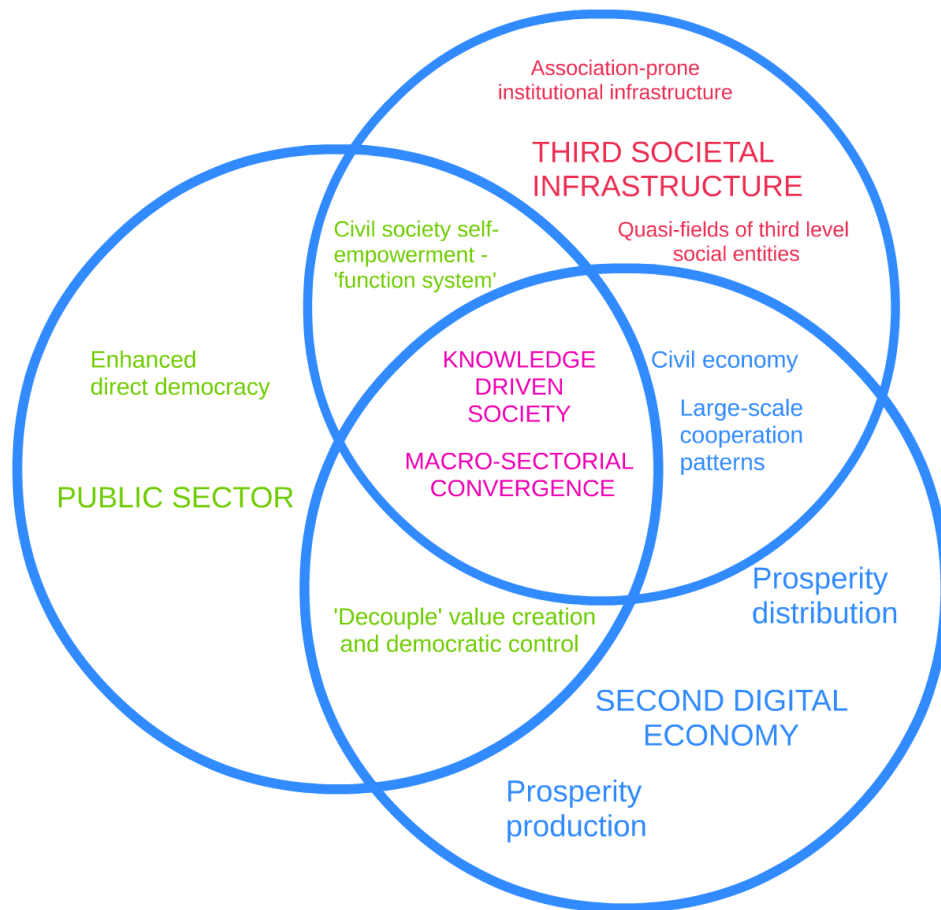


Figure 8: Components of macro-sectorial convergence

The exploration of the civil society players' patterned communicative interactions indicates their capacity to improve the effectiveness of collective resourcing (Veress 2016). The volunteers' communicative interactions which are capable to provide more contribution to improved resourcing have higher probability to recursively reappear. This capability of the volunteers' patterned interactions to improve the effectiveness of resource enactment operates as important "selective mechanism" which generates the civil society organizations' innovative character. This constellation provides the capacity to affect and reshape also the civil society organizations' broader environment. It facilitates to generate more association-prone patterns of the digitalization, by (re-) shaping 'breaking the path' of the macro-sectors' mutual approximation - potentially catalysing a new trajectory of their convergence.

⁴² Only high enough level of employee salaries can trigger due level of mass investments accelerating digitalization by overcoming the paradox situation when despite deployment of new, including digital technologies the social productivity stagnates or does not grow significantly (Avent 2016).

⁴³ Attempts of second enclosure aim to re-turn knowledge and soft resources into rivalrous and depletable in order to ensure the capacity of generating profit also in context of zero marginal cost of the information products by generating monopoly and artificial scarcity (DeLong and Summers 2001).

The civil society can operate as a contemporary “third estate” and play similar role in the emergence of networked knowledge societies of a new collaborative era as merchant capital did⁴⁴ at the dawn of the industrial society. By “...heading toward the civil society...civil work may create the ‘culture of creativity’ [and] the horizontal democracy...[of] new socio-cultural movements and communities (Beck, 1992, 2000)...”(Vitányi, 2007:177). The civil society through its activism can catalyse the successful transformation of work into passionate and sharing co-creation. It feeds back with the emergence of participative democratic tendencies and simultaneously generates new, non-wage work focused patterns of social division of labour. These tendencies require breaking the institutional dominance of (fault) dichotomies similar to „market vs. state” which are rather effective in blurring, even hiding the transformational potential that the civil society’s dynamism creates (Ostrom 2009). Even the mainstream academic epistemological trends often depict the civil society as residual and incapable of offering an alternative⁴⁵. This approach excludes the viability of any third variant and the capacity of the civil society to provide genuine alternative.

This dichotomic approach follows a rather mechanistic in linear approach, however: “Social systems belong to the class called multi-loop nonlinear feedback systems” (Forrester 1995) what creates their “counterintuitive behaviour”. By recognizing such dynamic and nonlinear approach (Onyx et al. 2017) the question becomes whether and how the civil society can catalyse individual and collective empowerment without simultaneously facilitating to (re-) produce new, upgraded variants of disempowering tendencies⁴⁶. It has crucial importance to prevent a trend when mutual approximation among the societal macro-sectors continues to generate destructive trends, the emergence of the Anthropocene threatening with acceleration of mass extinctions (Heikkurinen et al. 2016). By considering a broader context an institutional, in a sense paradigmatic shift is required in order to enact the civil society’s potential to facilitate social change and to provide effective agency.

Conclusions

The civil society players’ everyday activities generate - often as ‘positive unintended consequences’ - feed backing micro-level changes in multiple dimensions whose aggregation can create an association-prone dynamism possessing robust transformational capacity. Its emergence interplays with the volunteers’ capability to carry out agency through their recursive daily activities - by going after the small picture (Giddens, 1984, 1990). This dynamism can capitalize on and amplify the “strength of weak ties” (Granovetter, 1973)⁴⁷ by creating self-reinforcing feedback loops among local interactions and association-prone changes in large-scale patterns of society. The civil society organizations transformational

⁴⁴ This similarity indicated Professor Risto Tainio in connection to the research of the community clusters (Veress 2016).

⁴⁵ Since the civil society is and remains under-researched (Anheier, 2004), it makes more difficult to clarify and enact potential transformational role.

⁴⁶ By ignoring to consider such non-linearity can generate numerous unintended consequences (Merton 1936). The resulting duality of outcomes leads to recurrent reproduction of increasingly sophisticated variants of disempowering mass-alienation appearing together with growingly robust empowering trends.

⁴⁷Such micro-macro bridges enable that “...interaction in small groups aggregates...becomes translated into large-scale patterns, and that these, in turn, feed back into small groups...”(Granovetter, 1973:1360).

dynamism can operate as two-way micro-macro bridge which carries out and catalyses scale-free, fractal-like transposition (Plowman et al., 2007) of the association-prone local dynamism across social fields.

The civil society is the domain and outcome of the activism that can facilitate important institutional changes ensuring practical implementation of the principles built on the triad of freedom, equality and solidarity (the current version of fraternity). The civil activism has the potential to facilitate feed backing changes in institutional and multiple other dimensions. These alterations can include (but should not be limited to) the shortening of the standard work time, altering patterns of redistribution including solutions similar to basic income and the overcome and prevention of new enclosure attempts (Boyle 2005). These interplaying changes have to facilitate to re-enact increasing “volume” of “idle” creativity which the recent, austerity driven jobless growth generated, and which can further grow due to accelerating spread of digitalization driven by the disruptive logic of capital accumulation. By contrast the emergence of a civil economy can enable and it also presupposes to re-join Ethics and civil Economics focusing on common - instead of total - good (Zamagni 2007, 2014). These tendencies can facilitate to overcome and prevent the mass-production of social and environmental externalities and to promote the emergence of cooperative, sharing and genuinely sustainable knowledge-driven societies.

Recently the research literature pays growing attention to alternative patterns of value creation which frequently are variants of large-scale cooperation similar to social and solidarity economy, sharing economy, on demand platform economy, commons based peer production, and platform cooperativism. The various patterns of “...large-scale cooperation ...[are] a core vector through which the transition to a networked society and economy was happening”(Benkler, 2011:Acknowledgments). These alternative patterns of value creation can prove to be constitutive and generative of an emerging civil economy that “...is about how people live in communities”(Bruyn 2000:235). A civil economy can capitalize on and also catalyse the transformational dynamism of the civil society. This transformative dynamics is intertwined with growing ability of social agency carried out by “going after the small picture” (Giddens, 1984, 1990) and can facilitate (the aggregation of) association-prone alterations and dynamics across the social fields.

This agency emerges through and can facilitate interplaying multidimensional change tendencies which are mutually catalytic and can aggregate into self-reinforcing feedback loops. These trends at significant degree are dependent on the effective mobilization and scale-free fractal-like transposition of the association-prone local dynamism across social fields. It provides significant transformational potential also at macro level, facilitates association-prone patterns of the digitalization and ultimately also of the macro-sectorial convergence. Consequently, the civil society through catalysing cooperation and sharing proposes a transformational dynamism which - somewhat paradoxically - provides the (potential and the) capacity to facilitate genuine socio-economic sustainability in the long run.

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