Sharing cities rising to the challenges of technological change and democratic crisis

From imagined community to community of practice

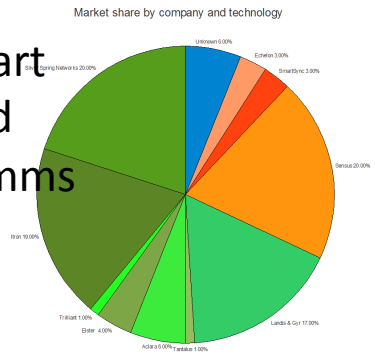
Sharing Cities Summit
November 12, 2018
Barcelona

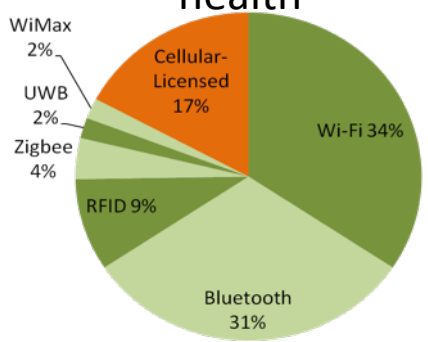
Yochai Benkler, Harvard University

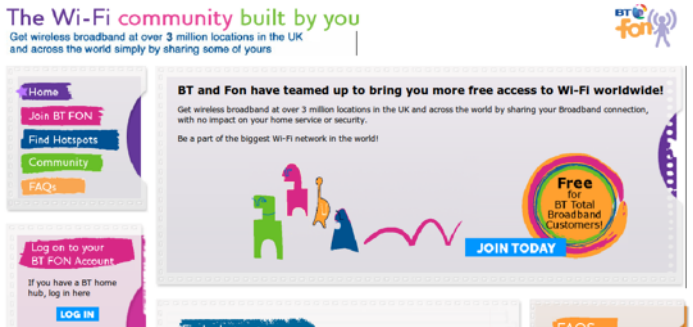
I E T F®

Smart Grid Comms

health

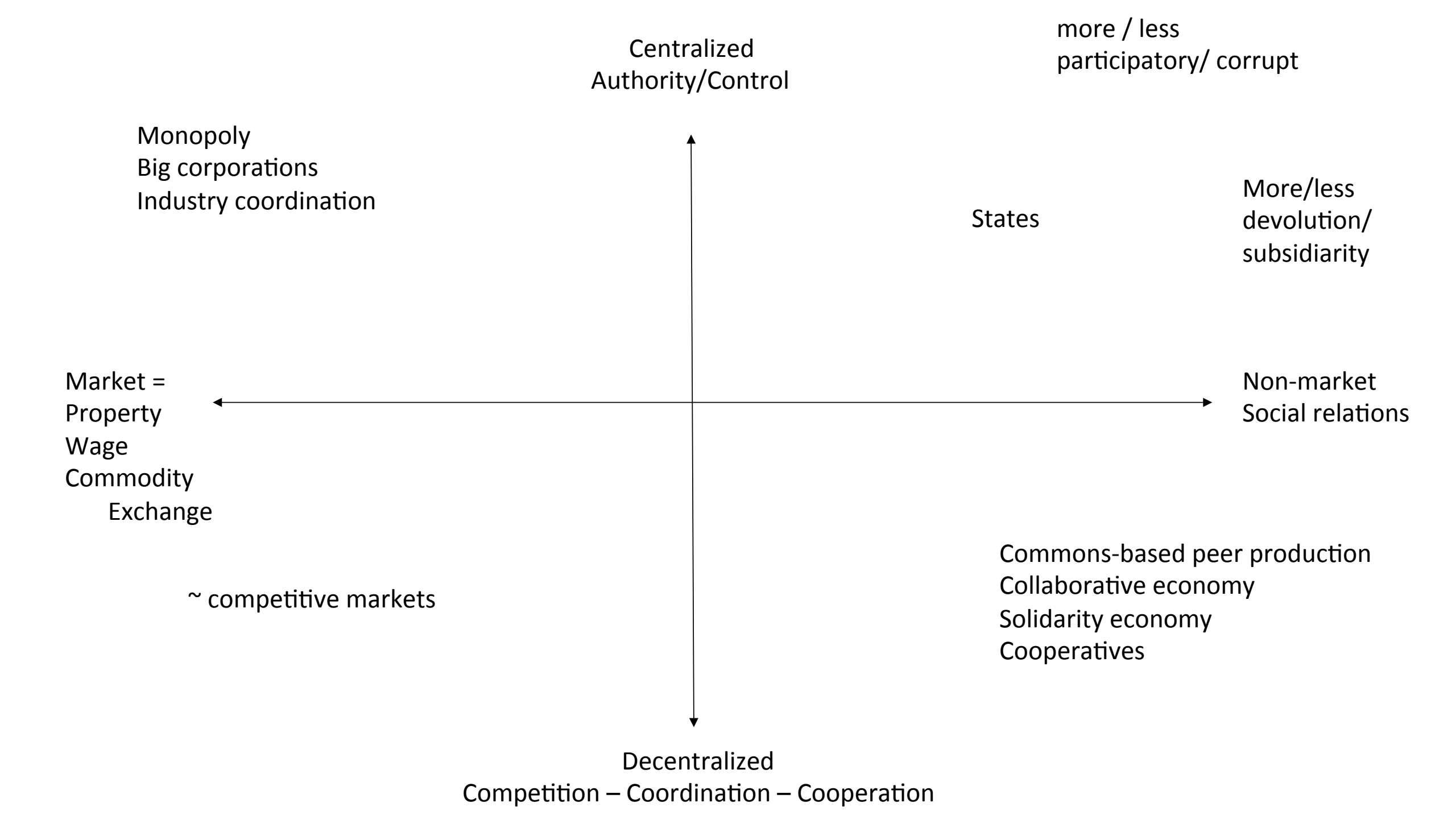






connectivity

Across the information and communications infrastructure, commons-based strategies succeeded over years in providing the basic infrastructure of communications and knowledge


Centralized
Authority/Control
more / less
participatory/ corrupt
Monopoly
Big corporations
Industry coordination
States
More/less
devolution/
subsidiarity
Market =
Property
Wage
Commodity
Exchange
Non-market
Social relations
~ competitive markets
Commons-based peer production
Collaborative economy
Solidarity economy
Cooperatives
Decentralized
Competition – Coordination – Cooperation

Centralized
Authority/Control

States: more / less
participatory/ corrupt

Monopoly
Big corporations
Industry coordination

More/less
devolution/
subsidiarity

"Golden Age"
of capitalism
1945-1973~

Market =
Property
Wage
Commodity
Exchange

Liberalization/
Neoliberalism
1980s=>2007~

Non-market
Social relations

~ competitive markets

Social production
Freedom in the commons

Decentralized
Competition – Coordination – Cooperation

States: more / less participatory/ corrupt

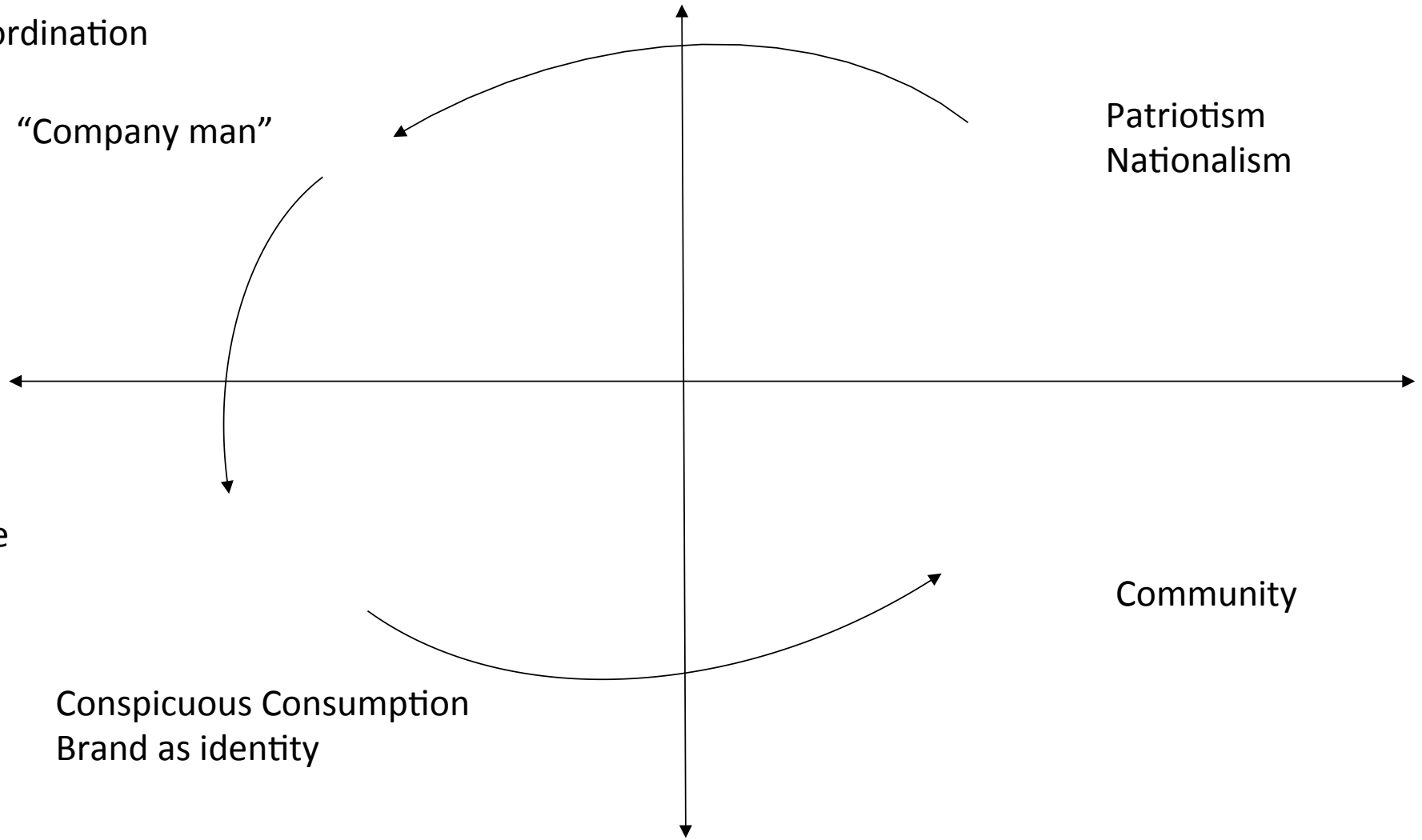
Centralized
Authority/Control

Monopoly
Big corporations
Industry coordination

More/less devolution/ subsidiarity

"Company man"

Patriotism
Nationalism



Market =
Property
Wage
Commodity
Exchange

Non-market
Social relations

Community

Conspicuous Consumption
Brand as identity

Decentralized
Competition – Coordination – Cooperation

Centralized
Authority/Control

States: more / less
participatory/ corrupt

Monopoly
Big corporations
Industry coordination

UBER

amazon.com

Google

amazon web services

Nationalism

More/less
devolution/
subsidiarity

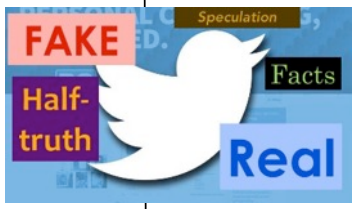
Market =
Property
Wage
Commodity
Exchange

Non-market
Social relations

Google AdWords

DoubleClick
Bid Manager

Clickbait



Decentralized
Competition – Coordination – Cooperation


CHICAGO.
THE
WORLDS FAIR
AND THE
WEST. NORTH-WEST.
AND SOUTH.
REACHED QUICKLY, COMFORTABLY & CHEAPLY.
BY THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY
3
SOLID VESTIBULED TRAINS
BY THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY
3
SOLID VESTIBULED TRAINS
BY THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY
IF YOU ARE GOING TO THE
WORLDS FAIR
SEE THAT YOUR TICKET READS
BY THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY
CHICAGO FLYER LEAVES TORONTO.
DAISY EXPRESS LEAVES TORONTO. DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAY.
COLUMBIA EXPRESS LEAVES TORONTO DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAY.
7.20 A.M DAILY
2.50 P.M
7.20 P.M
TORONTO TICKET OFFICE 1 KING ST. EAST.


CHICAGO.
THE WORLDS FAIR AND THE WEST, NORTH WEST AND SOUTH.
IF YOU ARE GOING TO THE WORLDS FAIR SEE THAT YOUR TICKET READS BY THE
3 SOLID VESTIBULED TRAINS
3 SOLID VESTIBULED TRAINS
CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY
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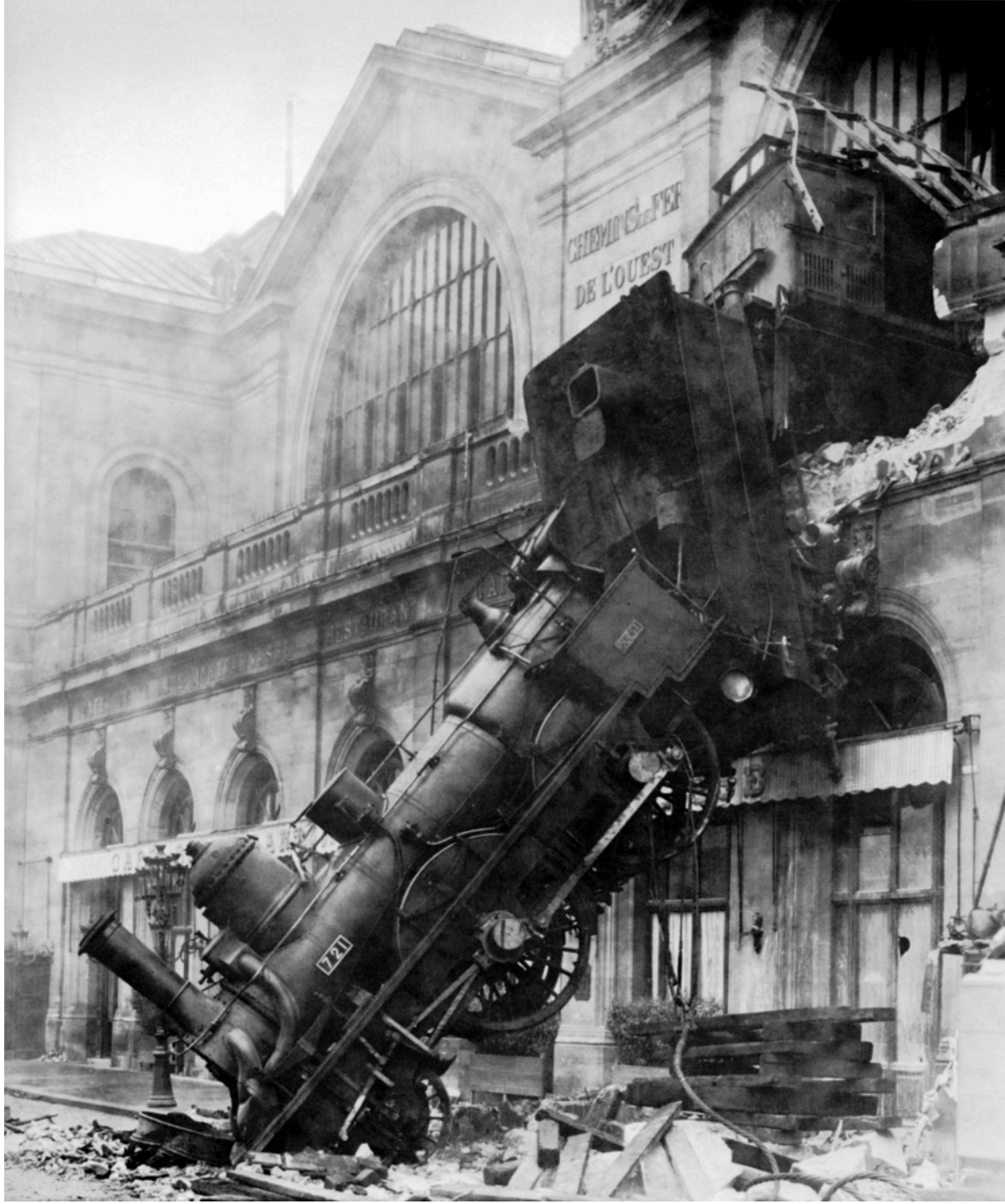
CHEMIN DE FER
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721

Exogenous, deterministic

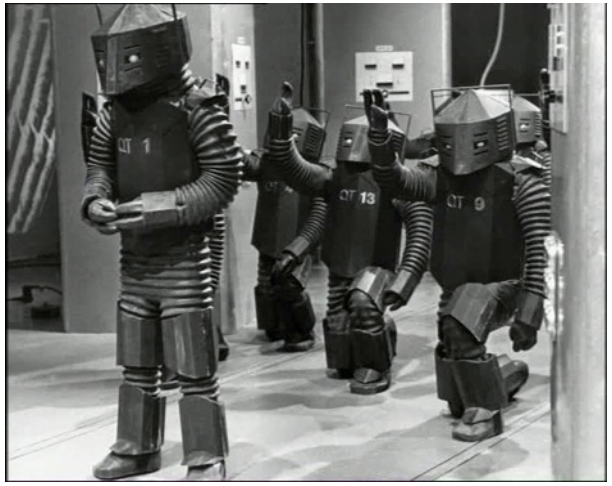
Technology

~Efficient, deterministic

Markets

Adapt or decline

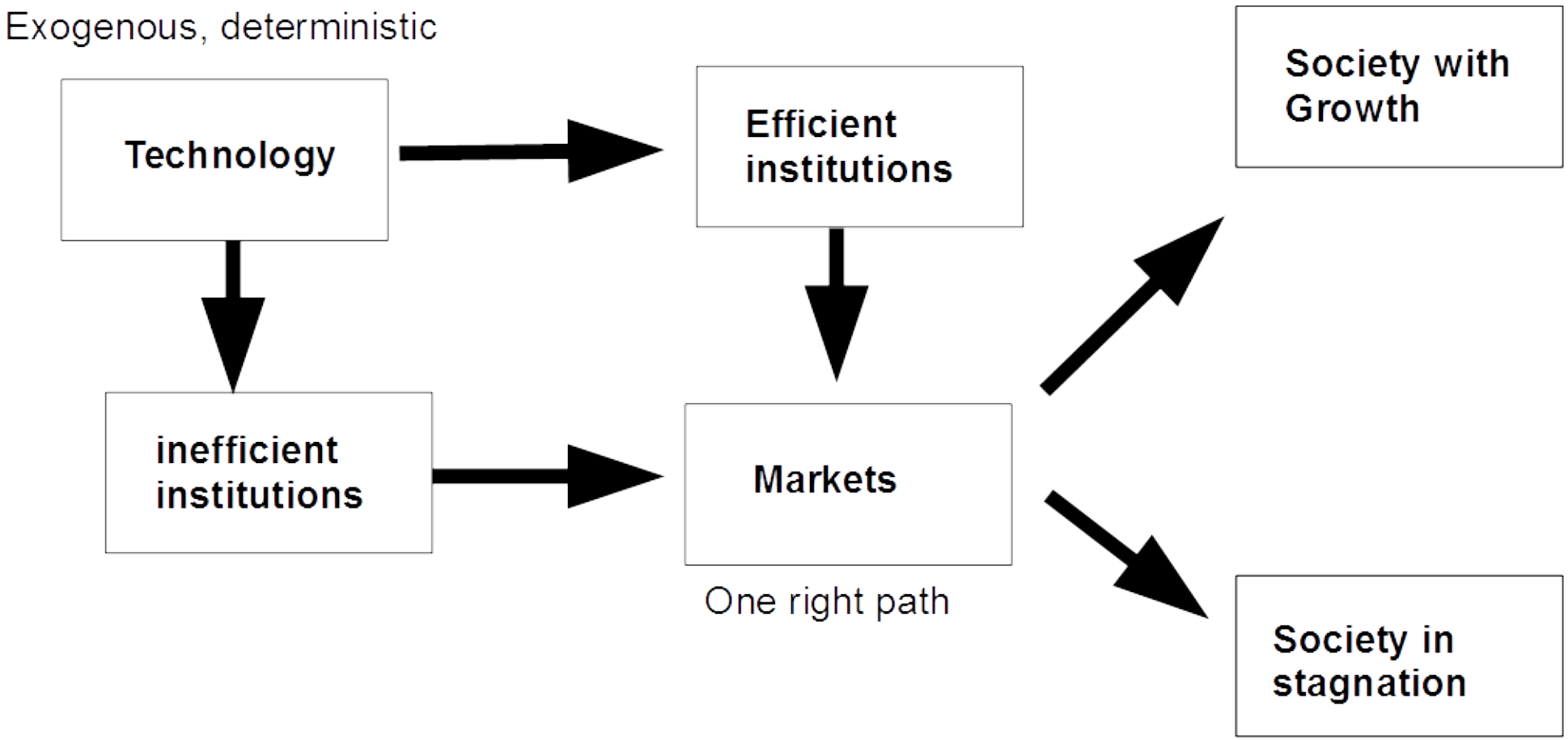
Society



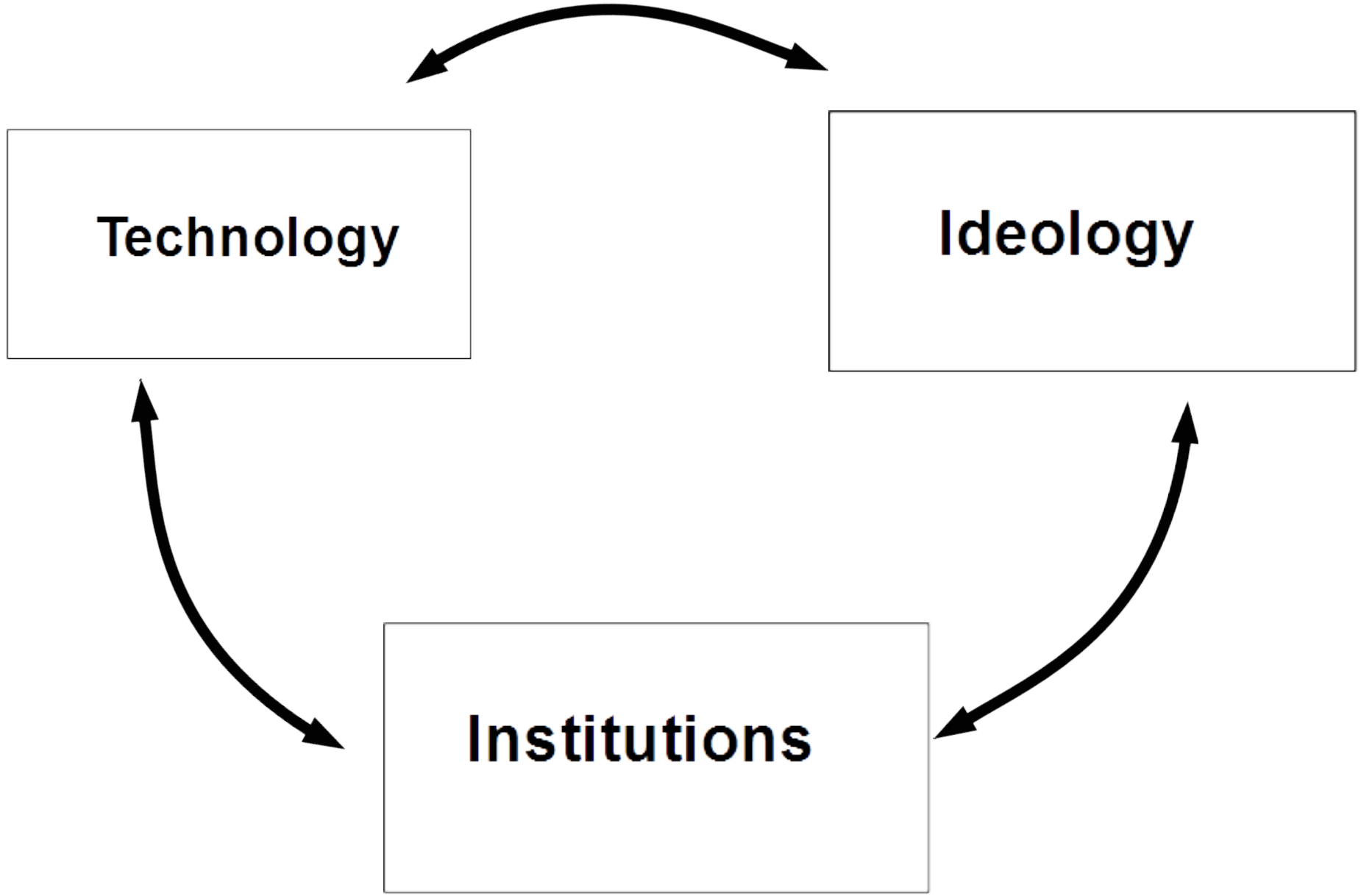
Robots will take the jobs

UBER

Platforms will casualize work



If you, the regulator/legislator, do not get with the program, your society will fall off the train


Technology
Ideology
Institutions

J Ind Compet Trade (2011) 11:309–324
DOI 10.1007/s10842-011-0109-2

Barcode Empires: Politics, Digital Technology, and Comparative Retail Firm Strategies

Bartholomew C. Watson

Shared overall patterns => technology matters

High diversity on the most important
social dimensions => politics, institutions, culture matter

Local regulation, like zoning, played an important role

Walmart

Low-cost, low-service, high turnover
Leveraging data for power over suppliers and
workers to achieve cost-squeezing-based profits

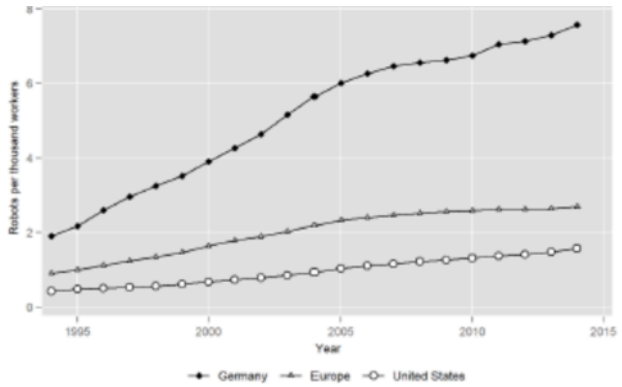
Shopkeepers → Retailers

TESCO

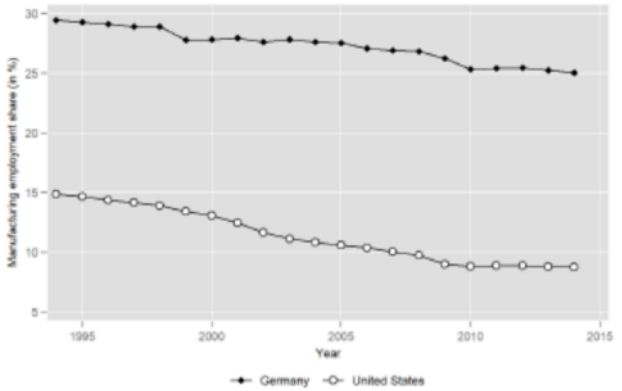
Dansk
Supermarked

Relational contracting with suppliers, long-term
employee relationships, high-unionization, higher
union coverage, training and high-value strategy

Vertical integration; limited
coalitions with workers; direct
competition with suppliers

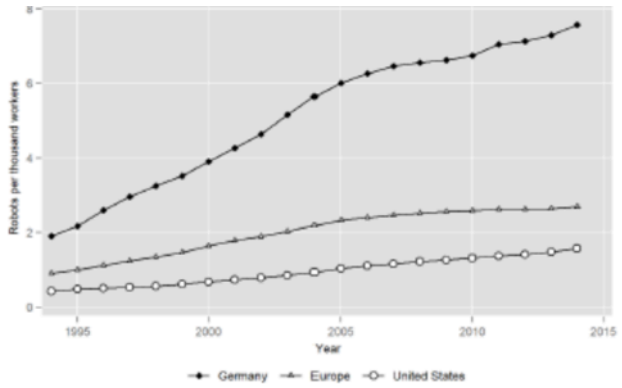


(a) Industrial robots.



Robotics density in manufacturing higher in Germany than US for decades, but manufacturing employment declines more in US

Politics, unions, co-determination all work to contain patterns of adoption



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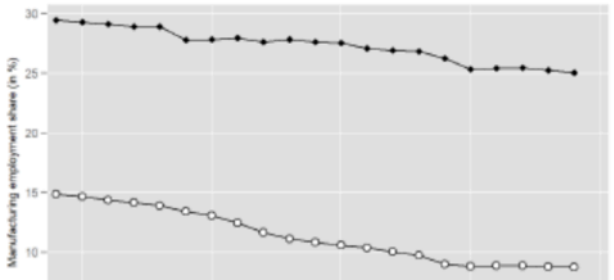
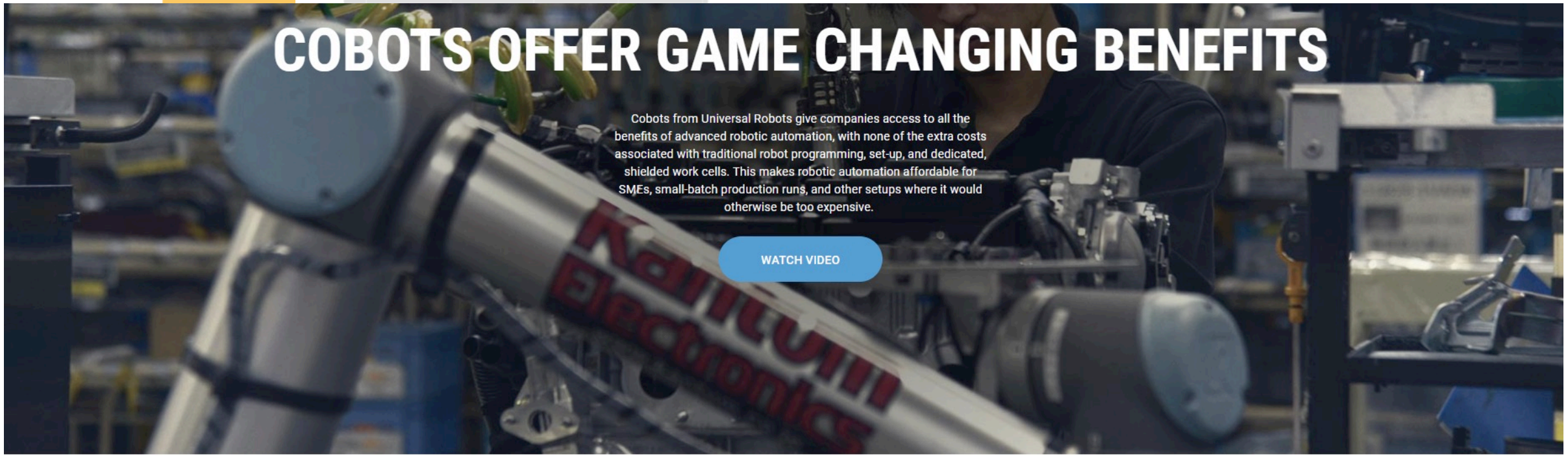
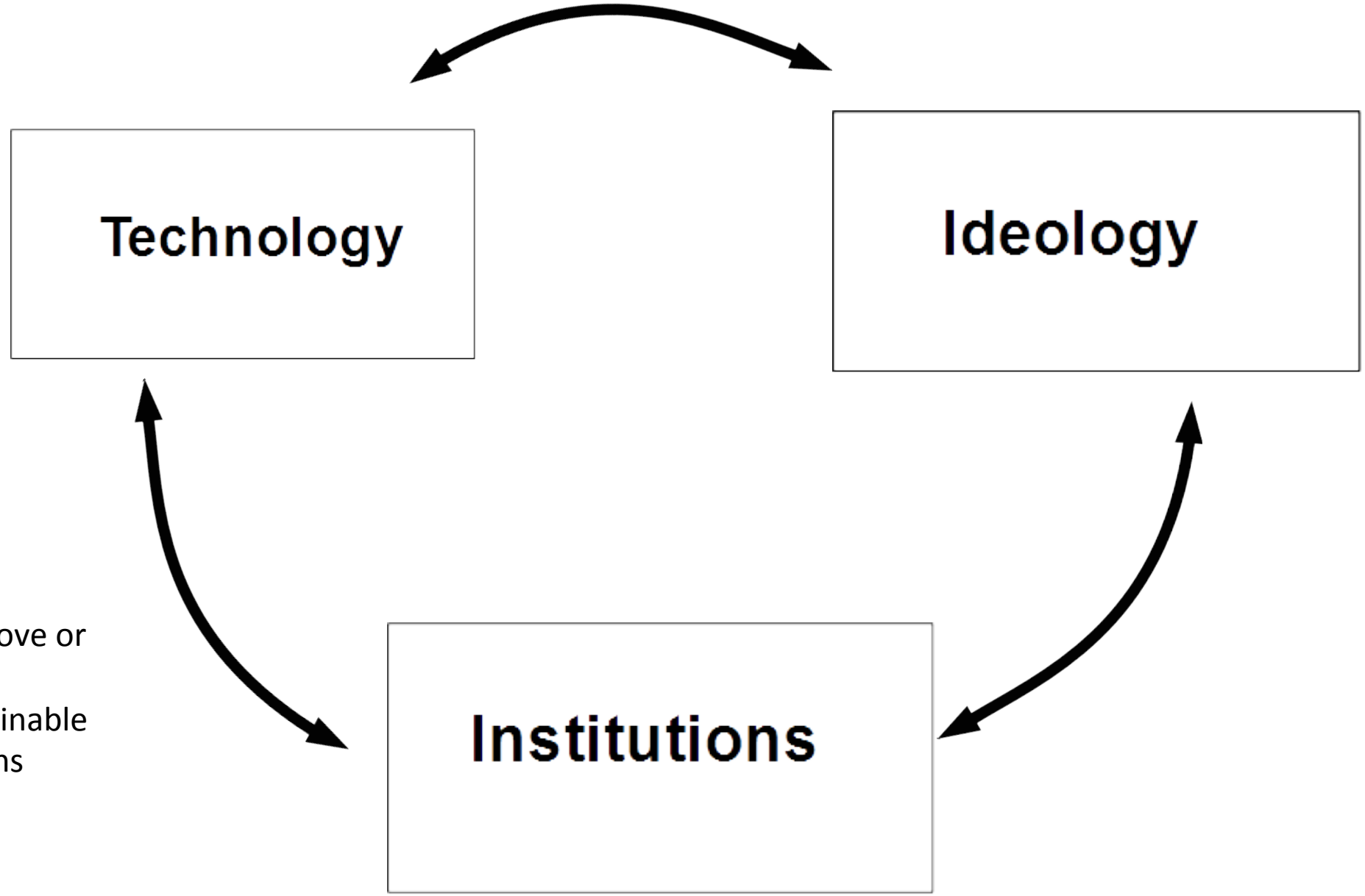


"Cobots" emerging as fastest growing segment

Too soon to tell if the "these robots complement human labor" is
=> lip service to calm political anxieties about the future of work;
⇒ straight up efficiency-driven improvement
⇒ A shift in the direction of innovation from labor-displacement to labor-complementarity in response to political-institutional dynamics





Choices improve or undermine socially-sustainable social relations

Platforms: Choices

consumers

vendors

Neighbors,
Co-Workers
Peers

Neighbors
Co-Workers
Peers

Lower transactions costs
Regulatory avoidance
Negative externalities

Platforms: Choices

UBER

~8.5M use Daily / Weekly

consumers

vendors

Technological ensemble is identical

Social-economic model different

Meaning is difference

~13.6M in 2016 commute to work

~x2 mass transit
x15 cycled

icarpool

Cost sharing

BlaBlaCar

Neighbors,
Co-Workers
Peers

Neighbors
Co-Workers
Peers

Carpooling

Cities: Choices

City Manager

City as Platform

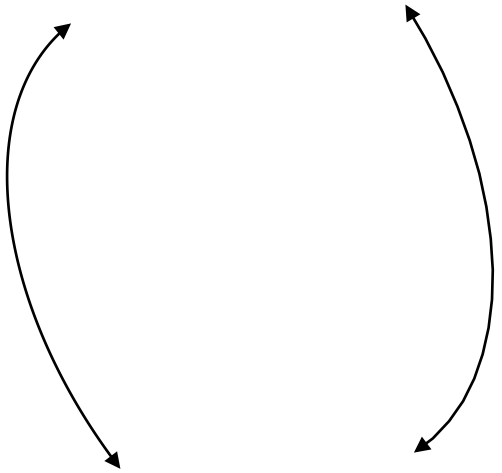
Service provider

Residents as clients

Mayor

City as democratic community

Citizens, Neighbors



Efficiency/Innovation vs. Community?

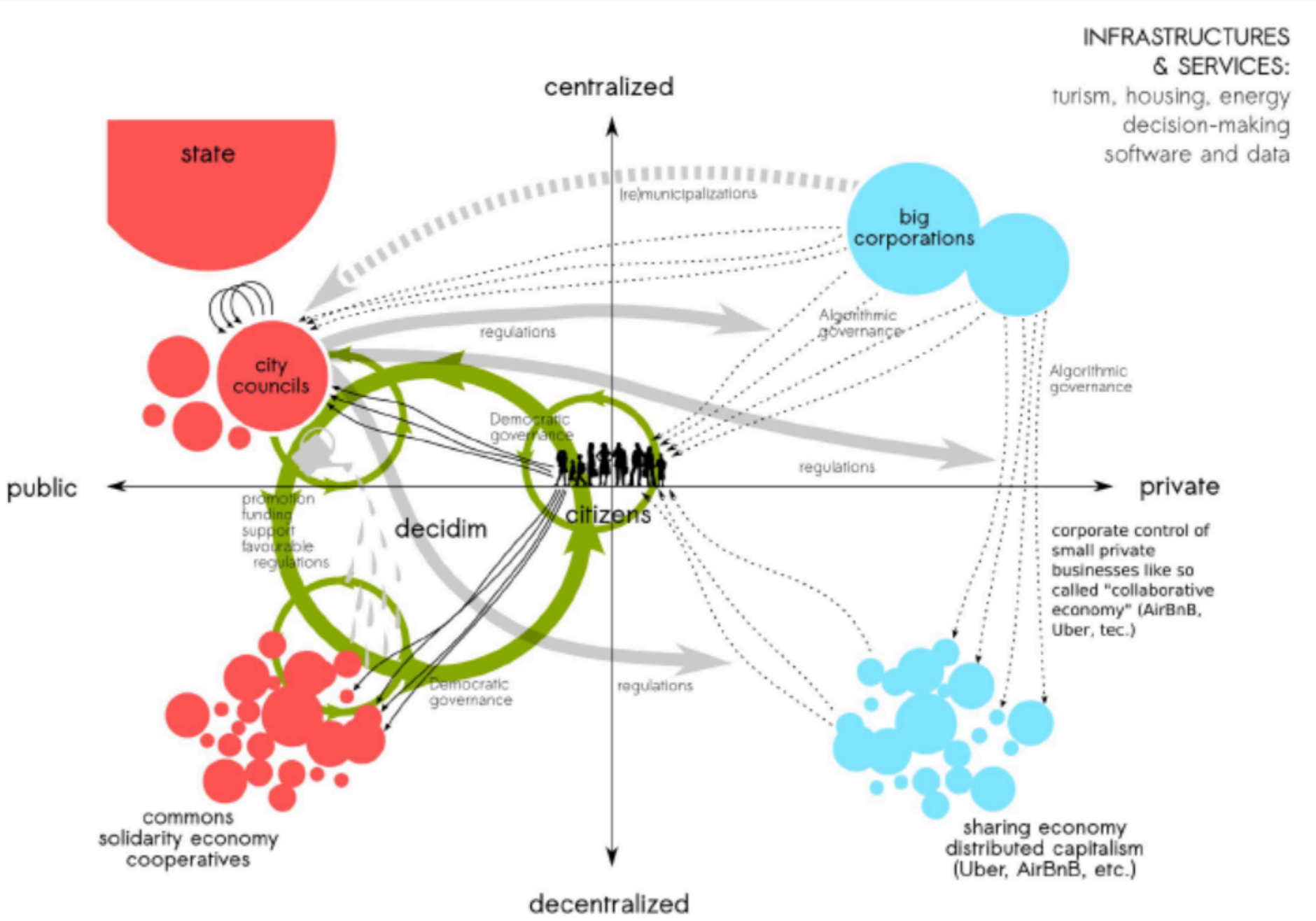
- False choice: profitable for someone ≠ efficient!
- Sidewalks, streets, squares, parks:
  - **Without commons cities would not be cities**
  - **Commerce and community are impossible without robust commons**

Sharing Cities Declaration

Consumer ⇔ Vendor Commodified exchange	→	Peer ⇔ Peer Social production
Precarious labor & Extractive profits	→	Fair economic model & rewards
Form contracts of adhesion	→	Participatory community governance
Proprietary & opaque Tech & Data	→	Open & transparent Tech & Data
Regulatory arbitrage / Responsibility avoidance	→	Responsibility for impact; duty to avoid, mitigate, redress harm

Not just a “sharing cities” issue!

- “5G” => *ubiquitous high capacity wireless connectivity*
- IoT => where is data stored and how is it controlled
- “Blockchain” => what kind of decentralization?
- AI is all about policy choices
- Mobility
- Governance

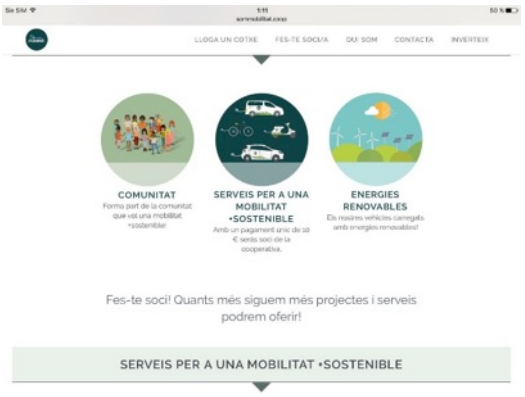


Why care? Why Cities?

- Threat: Rising nationalism and illiberal majoritarianism
  - Driven by diverse mixes of economic insecurity and identity threat
- Cities can make a difference in people's day-to-day experience
  - E.g. cities cooperation around the global climate crisis
- Cities can offer hundreds of millions of people a real, lived experience of socially-embedded production and meaningful participatory democracy
- Cities are where we can experiment with combining technological freedom with participatory public administration

Imagined Community => Community of Practice

Instead of imagined community based on abstract notions of us/them, cities can build the real experience of *community of practice based on making and doing together*



Involved in the debate

Research