The Rise of the Platform Economy: Utopia or Dystopia?

Lecture by John Zysman

Monday, November 16, 2015, 4 p.m., Room B 002/003

Buzz words like industry 4.0 or digital capitalism have become popular to allude to new technologies and challenges to prevailing production systems. While the internet is central to the digital revolution, the links between the internet and changes in the organization of production and service economies are still not very clear. This talk will focus on the rise of platform models in a range of industries and services to raise a number of important questions: Will the platform economy – and the reorganization of markets, enterprises, and social organization it portends – catalyze economic growth and a surge in productivity driven by a new generation of entrepreneurs? Or will the reorganization concentrate gains in the hands of those who generate the platforms, and possibly stifle future entrepreneurs? Will it spark a wave of entrepreneurial possibilities, or an avalanche of dispossessed workers trying to make their way with gigs and temporary contracts? Will platform economies substantially change the existing varieties of capitalism, or will they be subject to modifications and alternative evolutions? Ultimately, what do we need to know and understand to shape this future?


Comment by Prof. Anke Hassel, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin.

The lecture is part of the event series Great Crisis of Capitalism - A Second Great Transformation?

To register, please reply by November 10, 2015 to buero.usp@wzb.eu

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