Potentials and Risks for Creating a Global Sustainable Information Society

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Contents

1 The Great Bifurcation

1.1 Challenge in complexity

global challenges
= challenges that

(1) affect (the survival of) all humanity (objective factor) and

(2) can successfully be treated only by humanity as a whole (subjective factor)

1.1 Challenge in complexity

global challenges are complex challenges:

their complexity exceeds the problem-solving capacity of any currently existing social system

that complexity might be reduced by an informationalised, sustainabilised, globalised social system, that is, a system that is

(1) existent on a planetary scale – "global" –

(2) capable of acting upon the dangers of anthropogenic breakdown – "sustainable" – because it is
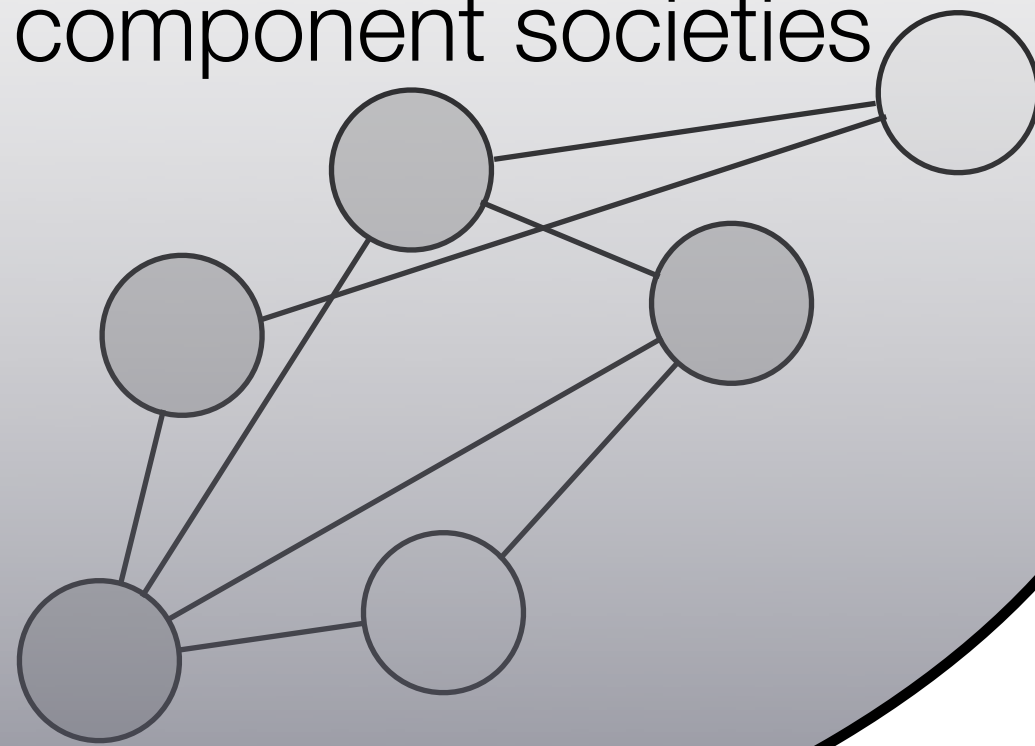
(3) capacitated, by means of ICTs, to create requisite knowledge – "informational"

a metasystem transition to a possible supra-system

component societies   world society in statu nascendi

a metasystem transition to a possible supra-system

mastering the global challenges through co-operation:
Global Sustainable Information Society

now

social systems falling apart: exterminism, barbarism
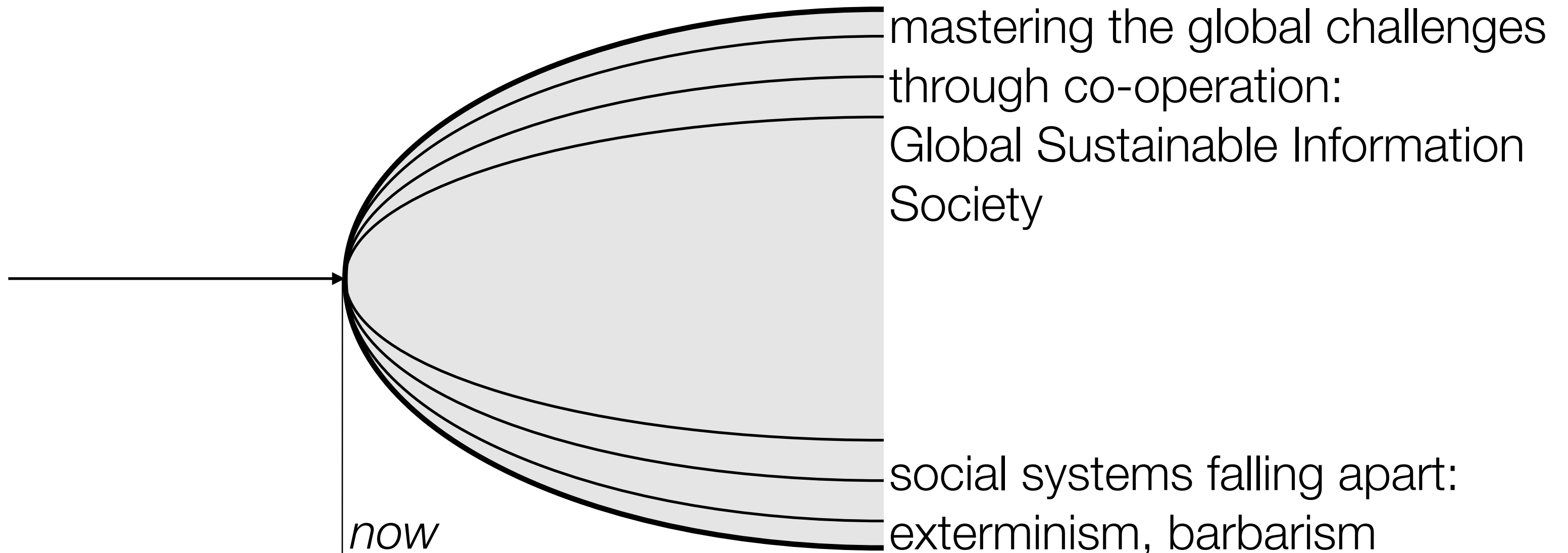
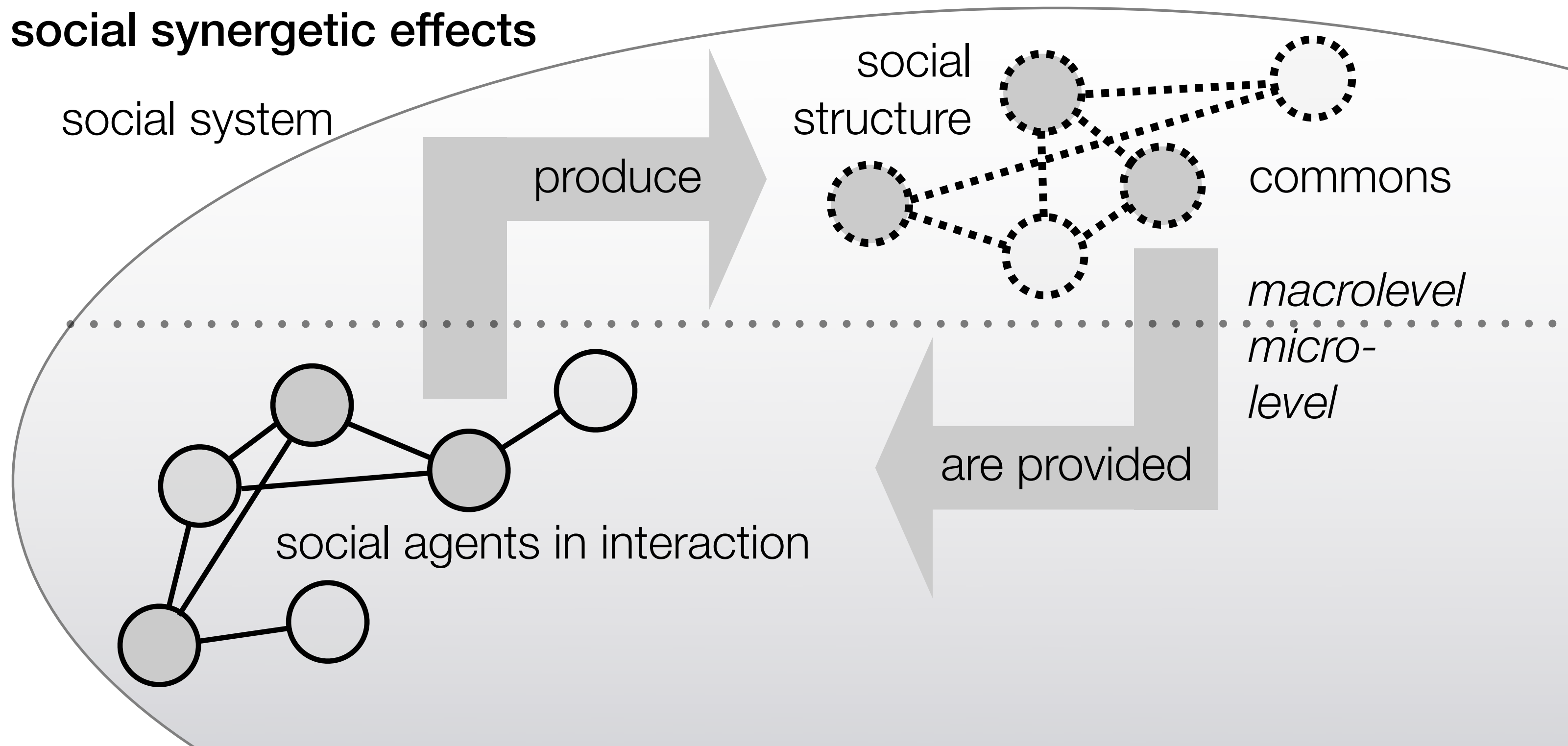## 1.2 The nascent Global Sustainable Information Society

- the evolution of social systems has reached a critical point:

- the evolutionary process paves the way for an organisation of higher order of social systems such that they are enabled to catch up with the complexity that ensues from their own development;

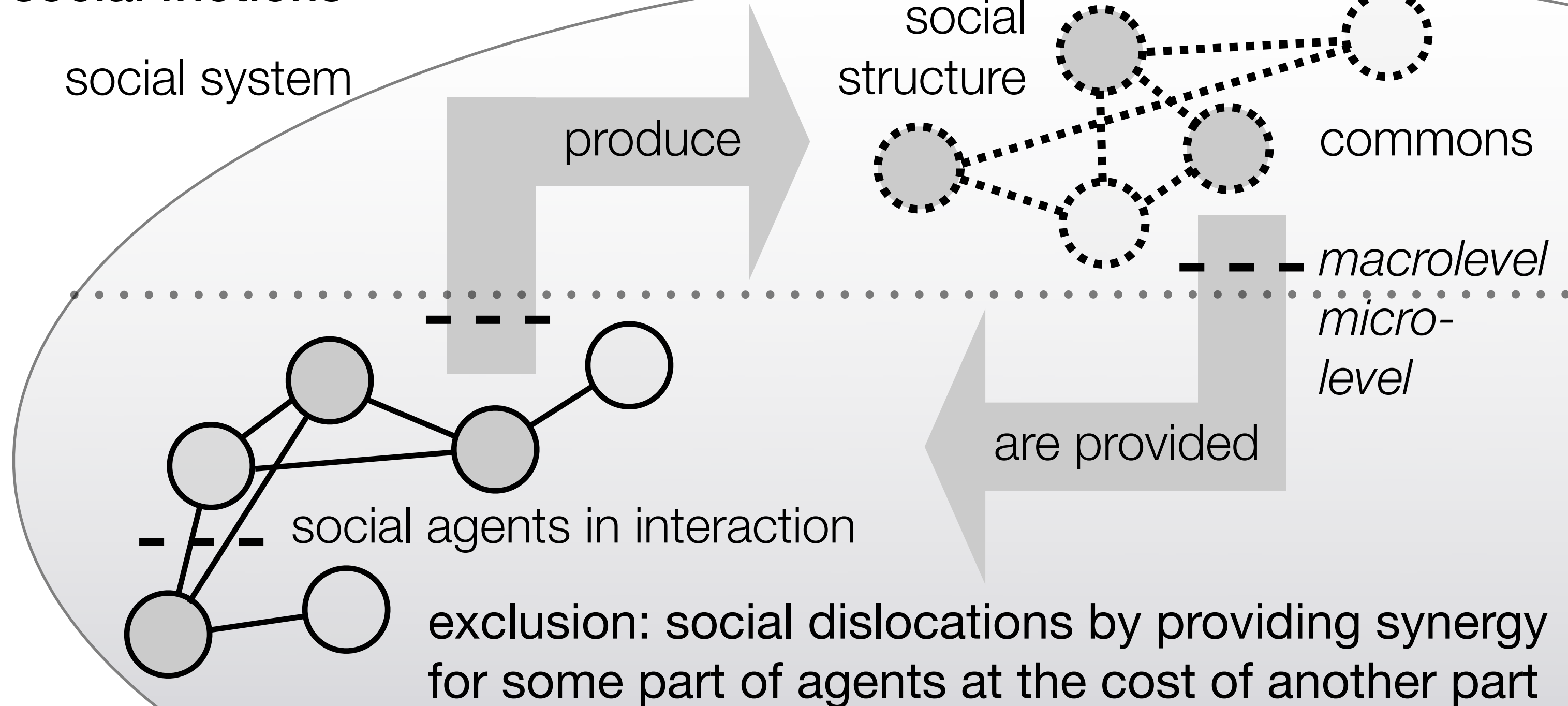- however, the social systems can fail!

2 The commons

social synergetic effects

social system

produce

social structure

commons

macrolevel

micro-level

are provided

social agents in interaction

2.1 The enclosure of the commons

social frictions

social system

produce

social structure

commons

macrolevel

microlevel

are provided

social agents in interaction

exclusion: social dislocations by providing synergy for some part of agents at the cost of another part

2.1 The enclosure of the commons

social systems	sense	*general*
	justice	
	production provision	
eco-social systems	human nature and environment	
	survivability	
	adaptation life support	
techno-eco-systems	science and technology	
	effectivity	
	innovation enhancement/augmentation	*specific*

2.1 The enclosure of the commons

2.2 The current crises

commons	imminent dangers of particularism
social information	fundamentalistic ideology…
agoras	authoritarian rule (right wing)…
resources	financial capital dominance, split-up of labour…
human nature and environment	progressive colonisation…
science and technology	military and industry funded, big science, meaningless technology…

2.2 The current crises

in times of crises systems decouple from each other

but they are in the position to relink on a greater scale

2.2 The current crises

- as long as social systems could externalise effects, their self-organisation was compatible with the enclosure of the commons; now that they are interconnected as they are, the enclosure of the commons is not tenable any more!

3 The dialectic of informatisation
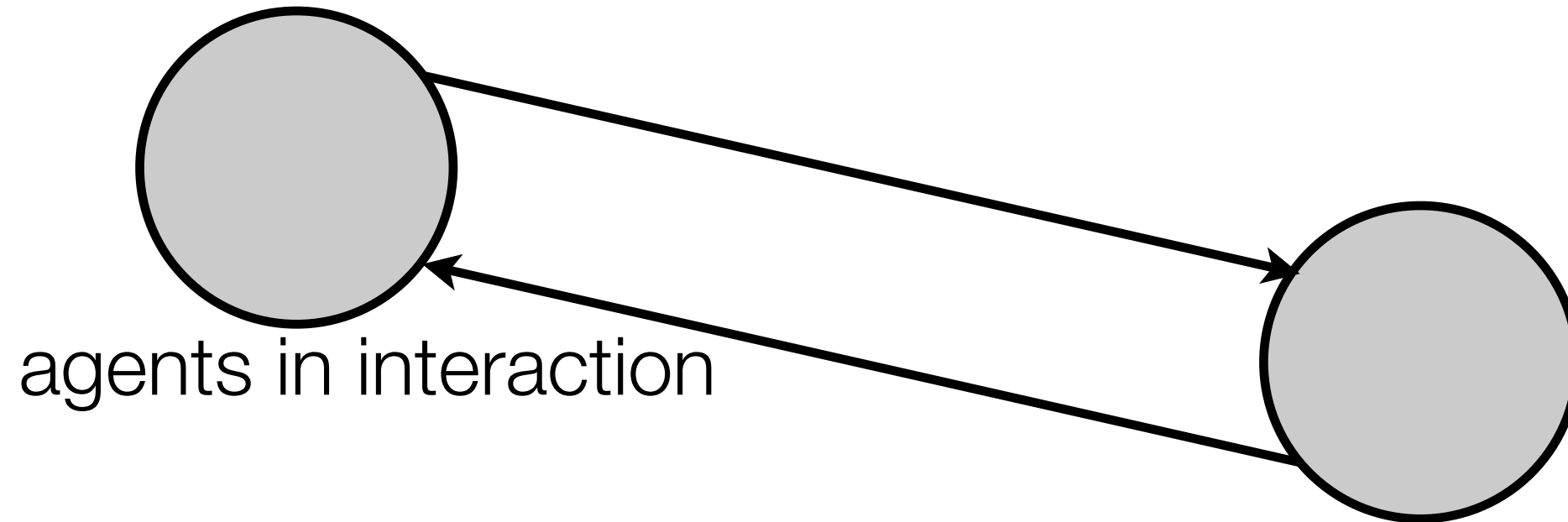
3.1 Informationalisation for the transformation

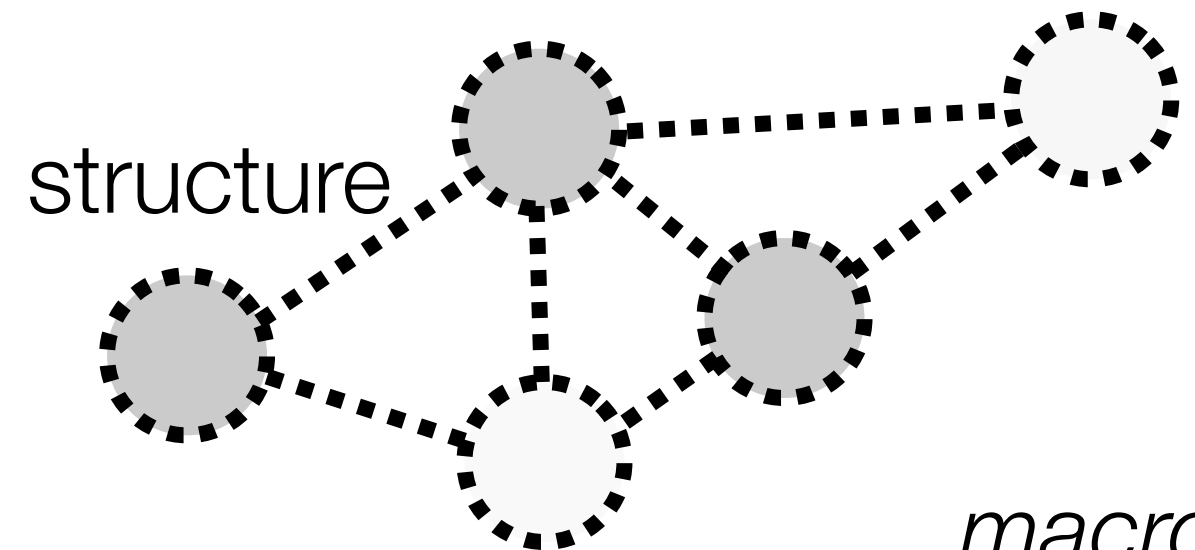information reduces the frictions

**dyadic relations:
immediate relations**

structure

macrolevel

*micro-
level*

agents in interaction

triadic relations:
relations mediated by a "third"

structure

"third"

macrolevel

micro-
level
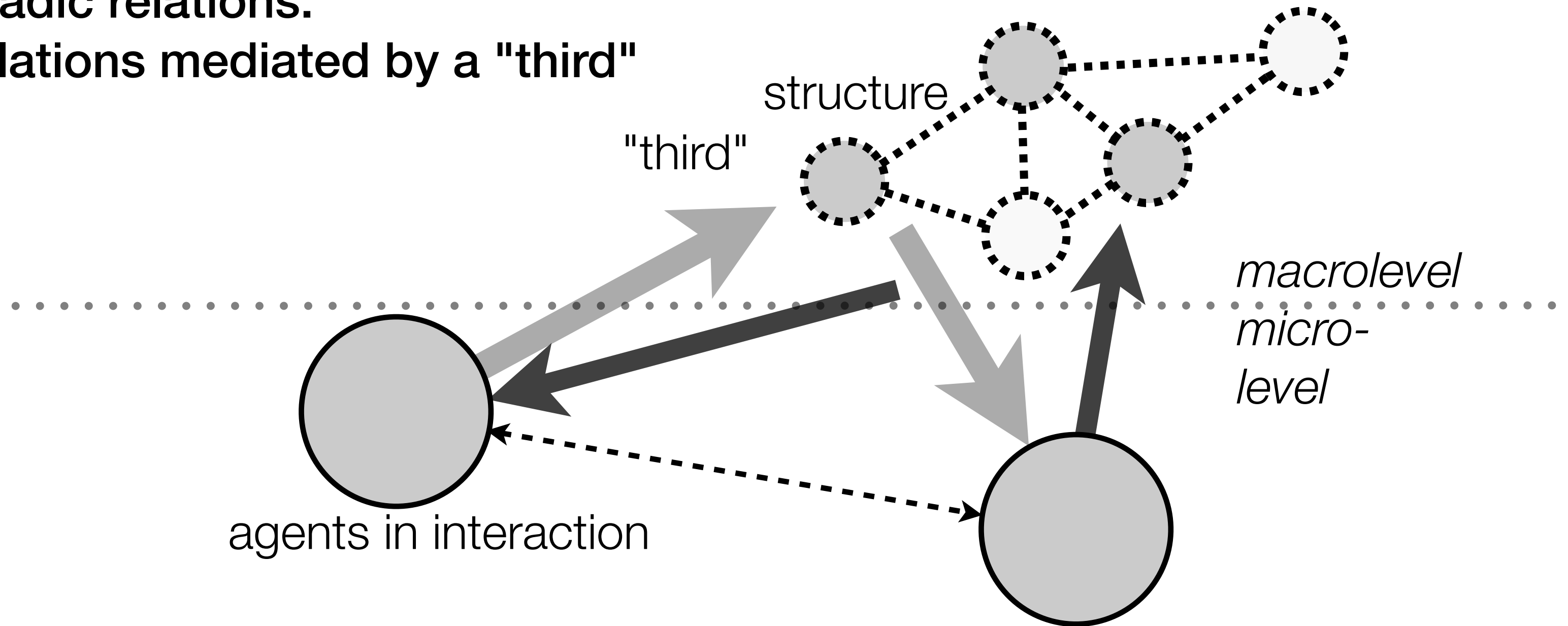
agents in interaction

co-operation: shared intentionality – capability of reaching a consensus on the system's goals

structure

"third"

macrolevel

micro-level
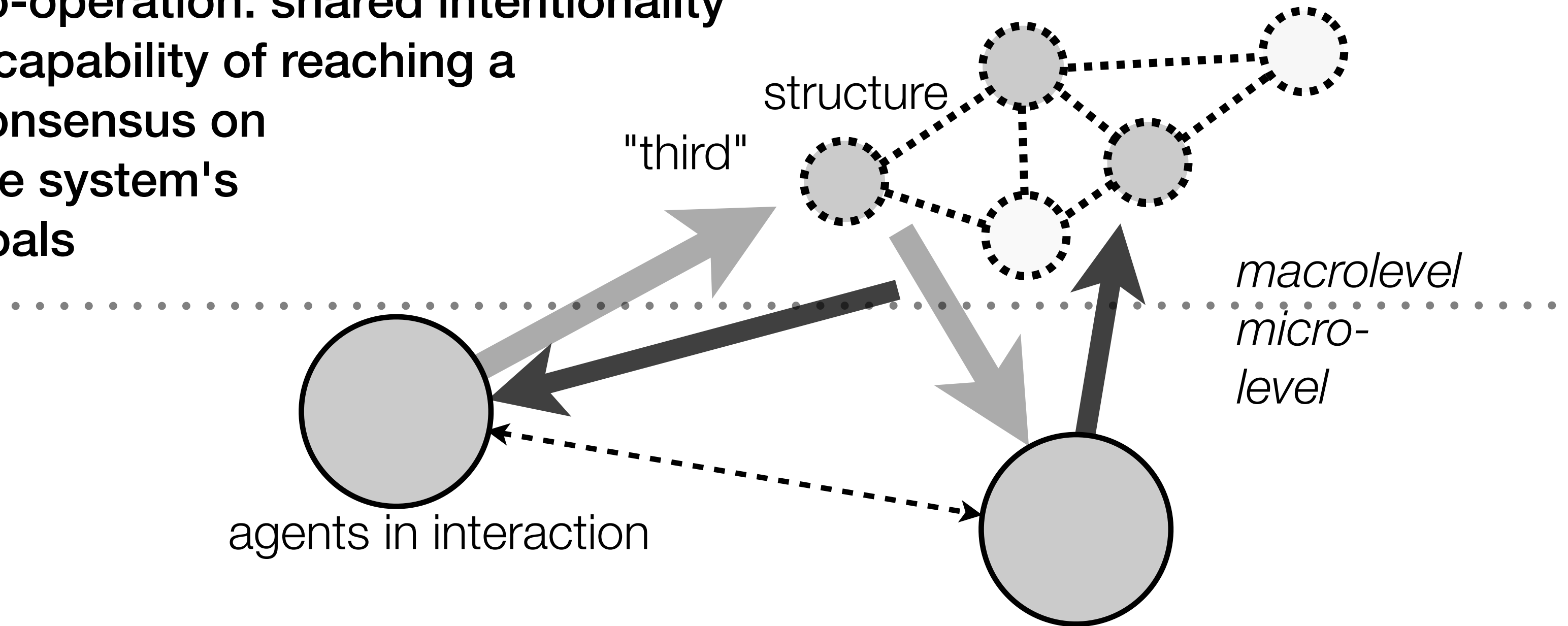
agents in interaction

**communication: perspective taking
– capability of understanding
the other's role
in the system**

structure

"third"

macrolevel

*micro-
level*
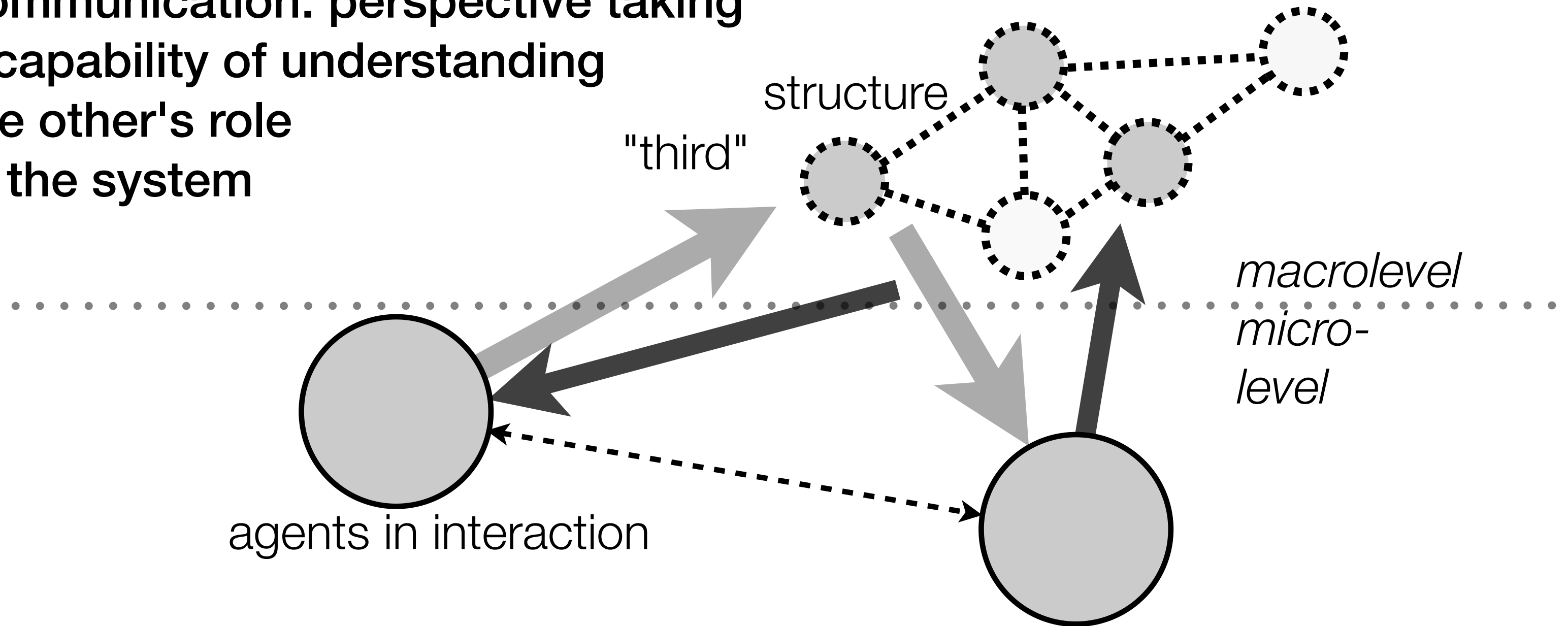
agents in interaction

**cognition: reflexivity
– capability of reflecting
the whole system**
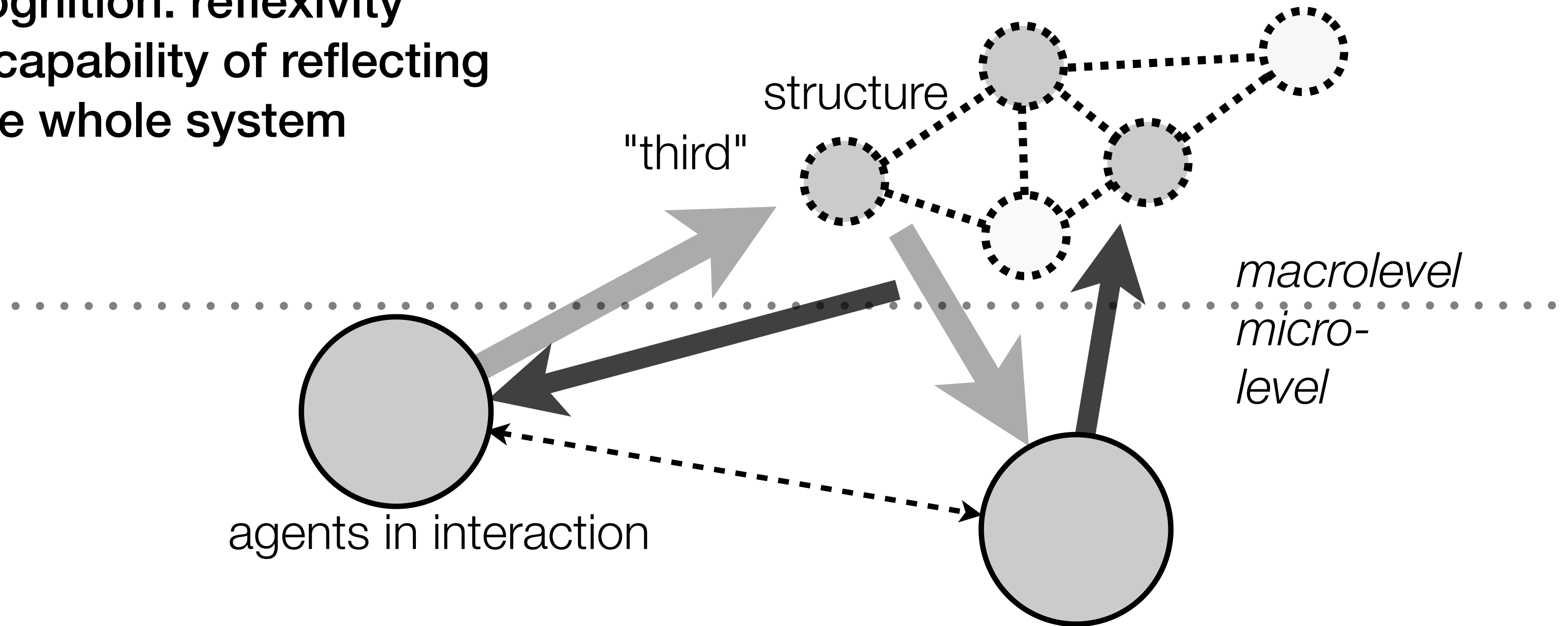
structure

"third"

macrolevel

*micro-
level*

agents in interaction
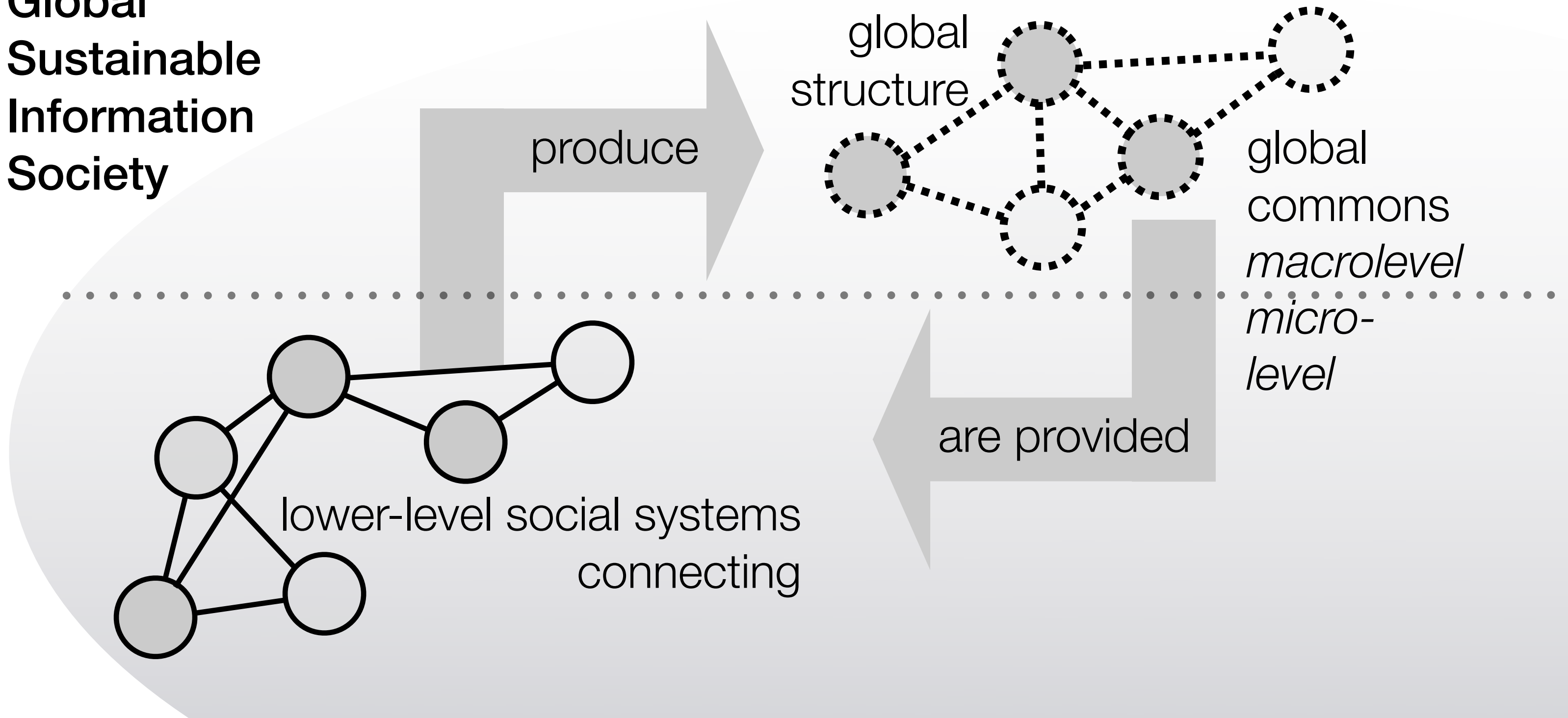
Global Sustainable Information Society

produce

global structure

global commons

macrolevel

micro-level
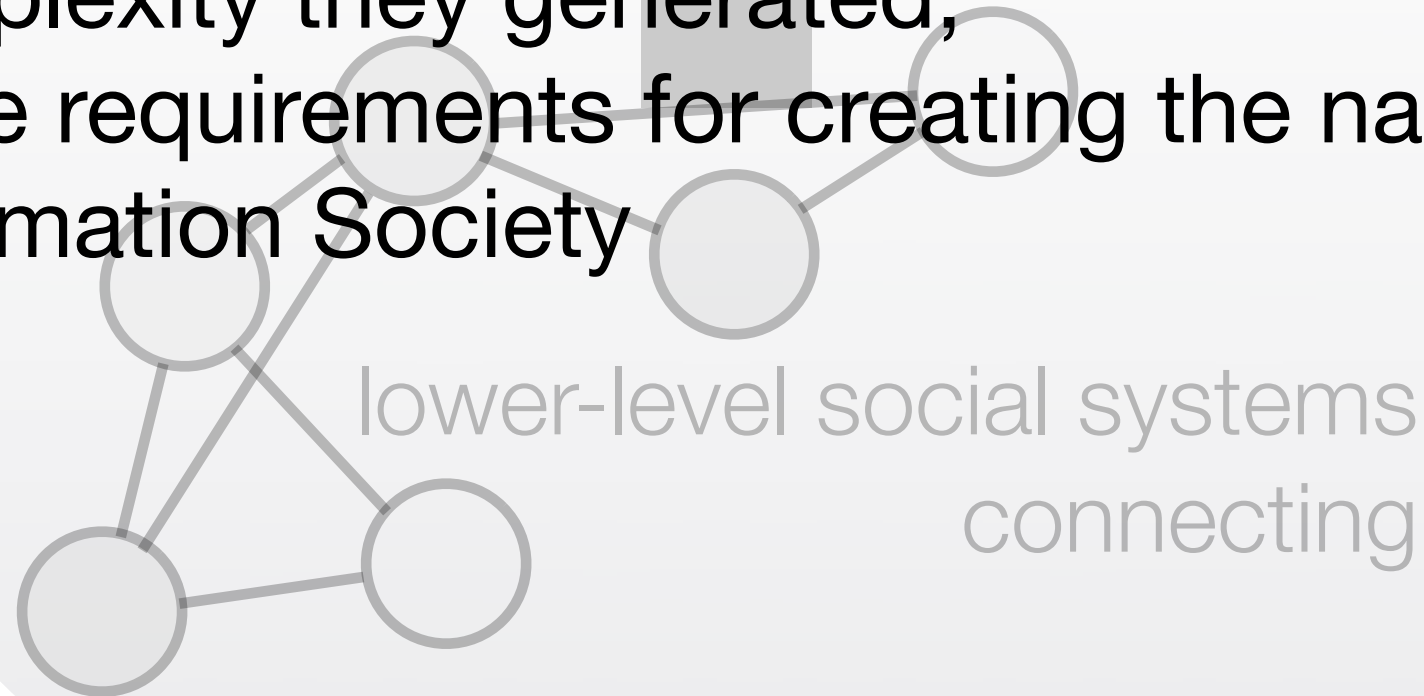
are provided

lower-level social systems connecting

3.1 Informationalisation for the transformation

what is to be
- shared for co-operative goal-setting and -seeking;
- negotiated in communication processes;
- reflected through thorough cognitive deliberation,

by agents and social systems in order to catch up with the *macrolevel* complexity they generated,
is the requirements for creating the nascent Global Sustainable Information Society
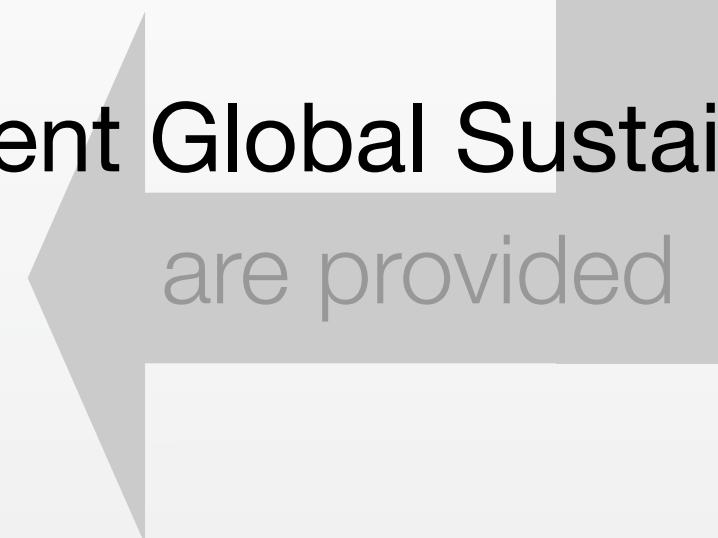
global structure

produce

global commons

micro-level

are provided

lower-level social systems connecting

3.2 Antagonisms of informatisation

informatisation

– reinforces existing dislocations, quantitatively,

– spans new dislocations, qualitatively,

– provides potentials for informationalisation, sustainabilisation, and globalisation, qualitatively

3.2 Antagonisms of informatisation

social systems	antagonisms between…	
cultural systems	wisdom and media disinfotainment	informed world netizenship and digital divide
political cultural systems	empowerment and surveillance/infowar	
economic political systems	unfettered information and intellectual proprietarisation	
eco-social systems	reproductivity and ICT-aided degradation	
techno-eco-systems	productivity and ICT-aided vulnerability	

3.2 Antagonisms of informatisation

- the so-called social media like any ICTs can have ambiguous impacts on the social system they support:

- on the one hand, a potential for reducing frictions in the functioning of social systems inheres in them so as to sustain the continuation of the latter;

- on the other hand, they can be functionalised for purposes detrimental to reclaiming the commons;

- thus they need to be designed deliberately!

thanks!

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