

The background of the slide is a light blue gradient. In the upper right quadrant, there is a faint, stylized world map. To the right of the map, there are several overlapping, concentric, wavy lines that resemble ripples in water or a topographical map. The text is centered and rendered in a bold, blue, serif font with a white outline.

**EMERGING VISIONS,  
CONSTRUCTS &  
CAPACITIES  
BEYOND THE CAPITALIST  
LOGIC**

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# Research objectives

*General: Provide visibility or social recognition of non-capitalist economic identities, of people being actively involved in non-capitalist practices, to motivate the pursuit of similar undertakings*

- provide an overview of recent discourses on possible alternatives to neoliberal globalization and capitalism
- analyze how select case studies have become or provided spaces for the development of (counter) consciousness & capacities for non-capitalist initiatives
- link these cases with recent discourses on alternatives

# Concept of 'alternative'

HARNECKER (2007)	DE SOUSA SANTOS & GARAVITO (2006)	LEBOWITZ (2003)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• reformist = improve the existing order thru reform</li><li>• revolutionary = pushing for reform + fight to modify that order profoundly</li></ul> <p><u>Revolutionary/radical</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• reform + parallel effort to strengthen the popular movement</li><li>• distinct political practice from traditional political parties</li><li>• “making possible tomorrow that which appears impossible today”</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• initiatives within the capitalist system that facilitate the acceptance of &amp; lend greater credibility to alternative forms of economic organisation &amp; labour solidarity</li><li>• embody forms of production &amp; sociability beyond the capitalist values &amp; institutions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• initiatives (also within capitalism) that focus on process of struggle producing new people, of transforming them into people with a new conception of themselves – as subjects capable of altering their world</li></ul>

# 'Alternative' Vision, Principles, Pillars, Concept & Models

## Varieties of Capitalism Outside Anglo-American Model

**Developmental state**

**Global social  
democracy**

## Socialist-oriented vision & models

**Deglobalization  
/Socialist  
globalization**

**Diverse  
economy**

**Market  
socialism**

**Solidarity  
economy**

**Socialist  
project vision**

**Socialist  
economic policy**

**Participatory  
economics**

**21<sup>st</sup> century  
socialism**

# Varieties of capitalism & Socialist-oriented groups

## Convergence

- ❑ Destructive effects of neoliberalism & need for market control & regulation
- ❑ Enhanced regulatory role of the state
- ❑ (full) employment promotion
- ❑ Recognition of markets albeit varying roles/functions

## Divergence

- ❑ Irreversibility of globalization v. re-embedding financial capital & production relations to national/local economy
- ❑ Export orientation v. domestic-oriented production
- ❑ Maintenance of capitalist mode of production v. social ownership of modes of production
- ❑ Production for capital accumulation v. production for social needs & development of human potential

# Socialist-oriented propositions: Gradualist approach v. Radical break

## Convergence

- Focus on cooperation, solidarity, democracy, egalitarianism, mutuality, diversity & respect
- Domestic-oriented & ecologically sustainable production
- Development of human potentials
- Social & collective ownership & control of means of production & commons
- Democratic & inclusive participation in political & economic decision-making
- Redistributive role of the state
- Internationalizing equality thru global interconnectedness

## Divergence

- Market as redistributive mechanism v. total abolition of markets
- Mixed economy or diverse economy v. abolition of private property
- Co-management of enterprises v. worker self-management

## Linking theoretical debates with social experiments & initiatives

- ❑ How do people embark on such alternatives within a system which in many ways has colonized even people's imagination?
- ❑ What are the motivations and transformative processes involved in such initiatives?
- ❑ What insights do these initiatives offer to the significant amount of literature on visioning another world?

# Consciousness transformation

- ❑ As common sense, a confused & contradictory concept accepting oppression & inequality but also susceptible to people's practical activity (resistance to oppression) creating a space where ideology is both constructed & contested
- ❑ As people change their circumstances they also transform themselves
- ❑ Not merely an individual action of meditation but a process helped & supported by the practice of acting collectively
- ❑ Complex, non-linear & context specific process carrying along or producing processes of empowerment & discovering & developing new capacities for social change

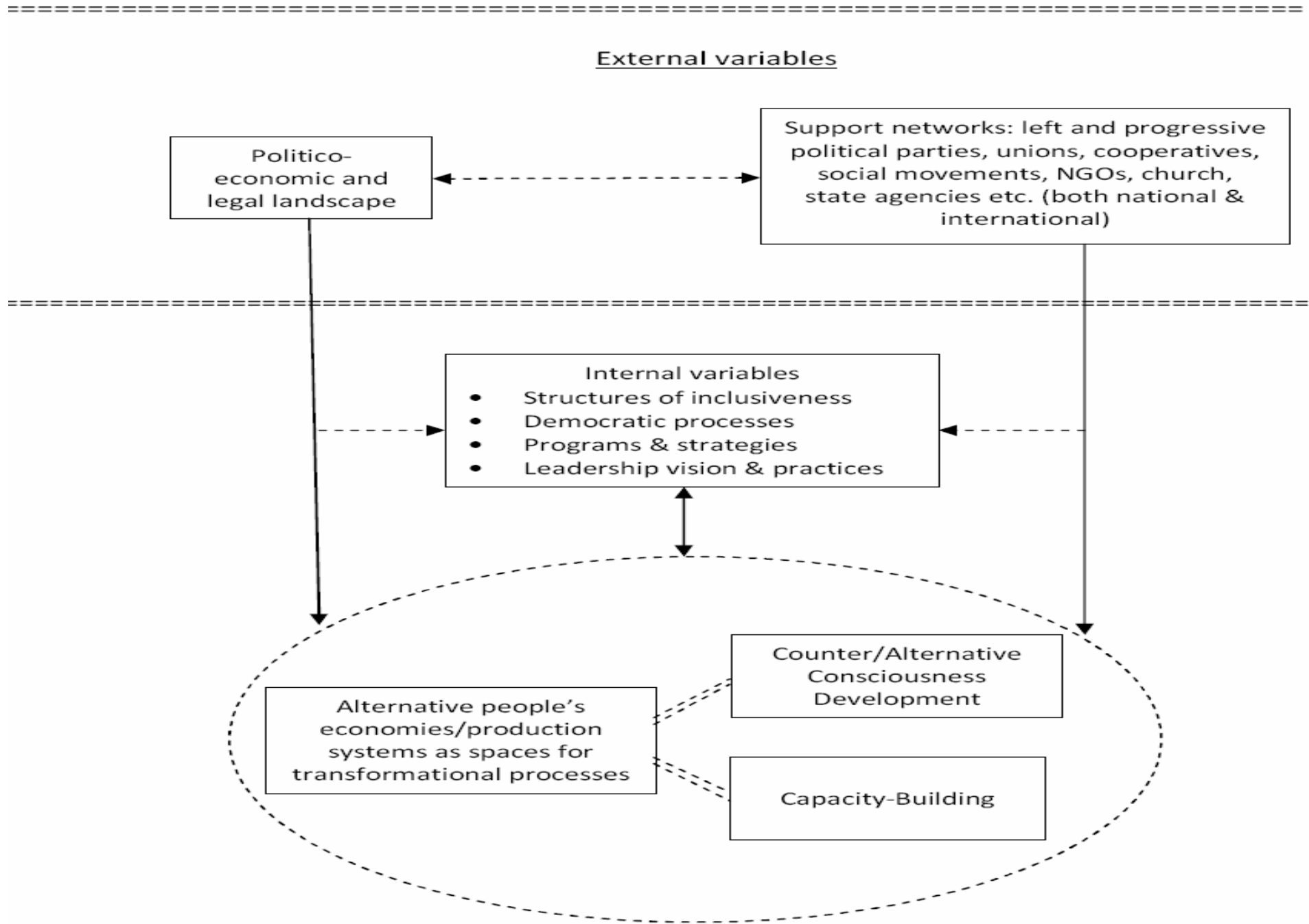


# Case studies

## 13 selected case studies

- ❑ Worker-run & managed factories (3 Venezuela, 2 Argentina & 1 India)
- ❑ Cooperatives
  - General union of agro-pastoral coops (Maputo, Mozambique)
  - SEWA waste pickers coops (Ahmedabad City, Gujarat state, India)
  - Recycling coops (Sao Paolo, Brazil)
  - Informal workers' micro-lending program (Philippines)
- ❑ Community partnering project (La Trobe, Australia)
- ❑ Participatory budgeting (Porto Alegre, Brazil)
- ❑ Social economy project (Quebec, Canada)

Figure 6. The analytical framework



# Generalized lessons & insights from case studies

## Emancipatory elements that are critical to the development of a transformative consciousness

- ❑ Increase self-organization among workers & the poor
- ❑ Sustain workers' & the poor's political activism
- ❑ Enhance direct participation & decision-making among workers and the poor
- ❑ Reduce alienation among workers
- ❑ Enhance exercise of 'citizenship' at the workplace & in the community
- ❑ Develop a new form of relationship between cooperatives, unions, popular organizations, state apparatuses, & the community based on cooperation, mutuality & democracy

# Generalized lessons & insights from case studies

## Worker-run factories/coops

- ❑ provide organizational means for the development & exercise of workers' capabilities to take over production
- ❑ further spontaneous 'self-education' process towards a system of self-managed firms
- ❑ provide spaces for experimentation in participatory processes in production

# Generalized lessons & insights from case studies

- ❑ Women's 'process of becoming' subjects in a transformation & assuming protagonist role at home, in the workplace & the community is observed in case studies involving women
- ❑ Political consciousness-raising - 'retrieving the consciousness' – can occur in & thru these solidaristic and democratic forms thru collective action & participation
- ❑ Multi-dimensional nature of initiatives: Though initially they have obvious economic objectives, they eventually acquire political as well as social dimensions.
- ❑ The development of a political dimension (transformative consciousness) prevents the tendency of complacency to set in when material gains have been met.

# Generalized lessons & insights from case studies

- ❑ No single model or logic of an alternative, but rather a collection of experiences with different features.
- ❑ A multiplicity of factors either facilitate or constrain emancipatory outcomes in a given place even among similar initiatives.
- ❑ Visibility (social recognition) of perceived 'alternatives' as conceptualized by Graham-Gibson may have a domino effect to the extent that existing initiatives, projects and schemes motivate the pursuit of similar undertakings.

# Generalized lessons & insights from case studies

- ❑ Initiatives are on-going experiments involving patient & trial-and-error methods & actions in creating new social relations in production & in the community.
- ❑ In judging the sustainability and replication of these 'alternatives', recognition should be accorded to the multiplicity of factors affecting the outcomes.
- ❑ Caution should be exercised not to romanticize the more successful initiatives but to critically view how factors and forces that contribute to more successful and sustainable outcomes can be maximized and how constraints and obstacles can be minimized.

# Generalized lessons & insights from case studies

- ❑ Unions play a critical role in the development of spaces that nurture counter consciousness and transformative consciousness & in sustaining the initiatives.
- ❑ The role of the state is critical on the outcomes and sustainability of alternative initiatives & projects.



# Conclusion

- ❑ People develop transformative consciousness through their struggle, Marx's 'self-change'.
- ❑ Through a cumulative process of collective learning & struggle experienced in the case studies, people develop new capacities, capabilities & self-confidence that they can be subjects of transformation.
- ❑ Case studies reflect many of the elements comprising the various contemporary discourses on alternative to capitalism.

*Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please in circumstances they choose for themselves; rather they make it in present circumstances, given the inherited. Tradition from all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they appear to be revolutionizing themselves and their circumstances, in creating something unprecedented, in just such epochs of revolutionary crisis, that is when they nervously summon up the spirits of the past, borrowing from them names, marching orders, uniforms, in order to enact new scenes in the world history, but in this time-honoured guise and with this borrowed language.*

*The social revolution [of the nineteenth century] cannot create its poetry from the past but only from the future.*

*[K. Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte]*

# Research Question

- How do various forms of people's economic & political struggles become spaces or provide opportunities for the development of consciousness & capacities critical to challenge the existing order and pursue projects & initiatives beyond the capitalist canon?
- 3C's: Consciousness, capacities, confidence

# Elements/Structure of Case Study

- Type of initiative
- Sector/organization
- Background (political-economic situation)
- Motivations, goals, objectives
- Actors involved (extent of inclusiveness)
- Structures of democratic participation
- Processes of democratic participation
- Outcomes/current situation
- Factors critical to success
- Constraining factors & obstacles
- Indicators of emerging counter consciousness
- Critical factors in the development of counter consciousness
- Prospects
  - Lessons learned
  - Sustainability issues