Food and Culture

FOOD MOVEMENTS

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What is the Difference Between Food Sovereignty and Food Security?

Food Security vs Food Sovereignty

We need to think beyond sustainability and food security to address root causes of food problems – we need to build food sovereign localities.

Food Security – Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO):

- Food security, at the individual level, household, national, regional and global level [is achieved] when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious foods to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (1996)

Via Campesina (1996)

- Long-term food security depends on those who produce food and care for the natural environment. As stewards of food producing resources we hold the following principles as the necessary condition for achieving food security…Food is a basic human right. This can only be realized in a system where food sovereignty is guaranteed. ***Food sovereignty*** is the right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity. We have the right to produce our own food in our own territory. Food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security

What is Food Sovereignty?

Food sovereignty is a multidimensional concept that refers to a process and an outcome.

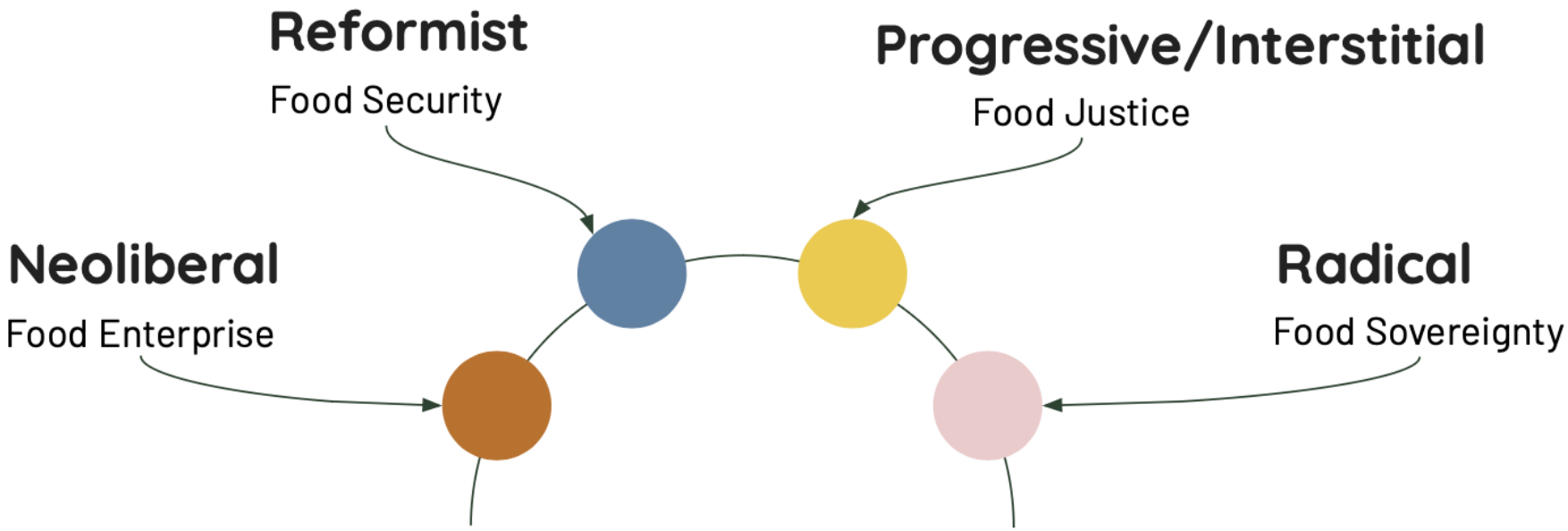
- **Process** – it describes a movement, a struggle, a democratic process perpetually in negotiation and always in motion.
- **Framework –** to compare food regimes.
- **Outcomes** – agreed upon declarations of rights, codes of ethics and guiding principles. These declarations are debated at conferences, meetings, and public forums and carried out by the parties (who agree with the declarations) in local communities.
  - Nyéléni Declaration 2007

Food sovereignty refers to:

- the rights of nations and people to control their own food economy – to decide how food is produced, consumed, processed, and distributed.
- a paradigm, trend, framework, discourse, regime and model. It is the most radical food movement discourse and rivals the corporate neoliberal food system.
- a right to food that is of quality, healthy, and culturally appropriate
- recognition and respect of women's role in food production
- social justice
- environmental sustainability
- recognition and respect for traditional knowledge and Indigenous Peoples
- agrarian reform including collective land rights and protection of Indigenous Peoples' Lands
- 're-commoning' land and right to defend land from transnational corporations
- against trade liberation

Food System Change

CORPORATE FOOD REGIME **FOOD MOVEMENTS**



Holt-Gimenez, E. (2017) A Foodie's Guide to Capitalism: Understanding the Political Economy of What We Eat, Monthly Review Press, New York.

Six Ways to Reimagine Economies

1. Rethink what the economy is for.
Move beyond perpetual growth and recognize ecological limits and human wellbeing.

2. Make businesses pay their true costs.
End the externalization of social and environmental costs.

3. Value more than money.
Recognize social, ecological, cultural, and community wealth.

4. Put people and planet before profits.
Prioritize community wellbeing over corporate interests and shareholder returns.

5. Decolonize and democratize the economy.
Challenge colonial structures of ownership, extraction, and control; build more equitable and locally rooted economic systems.

6. Build alternatives to capitalism.
Recognize that capitalism is not inevitable or the only option. Explore economic models based on cooperation, reciprocity, solidarity, democratic ownership, and shared prosperity.

Building Real Utopias (Erik Olin Wright)

- It fails and a new system is needed
- Ruptural (revolutionary)
- Interstitial (build alternatives)
- Symbiotic (social democratic, reformist)
- Non-reformist reforms

*Global billionaires transcend nation states and develop a world of techno-feudalism/fascism

Envisioning Real Utopias *Olin Wright, E. (2010) Envisioning Real Utopias, Verso*

How to transform the political/social/economy

- Theory of social reproduction

- Theory of gaps, cracks and contradictions within the process of social reproduction

- Theory of underlying dynamics and trajectory of unintended social change

- Theory of collective actors, strategies and struggles

Theories of social change must take into account these three factors:

Desirability
Viability
Achievability

What is an Economy?



Aristotle

Aristotle in 23 Volumes, Vol. 21, translated by H. Rackham. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1944.

Chrematistics – art of acquisition – limitless accumulation unnatural and problematic

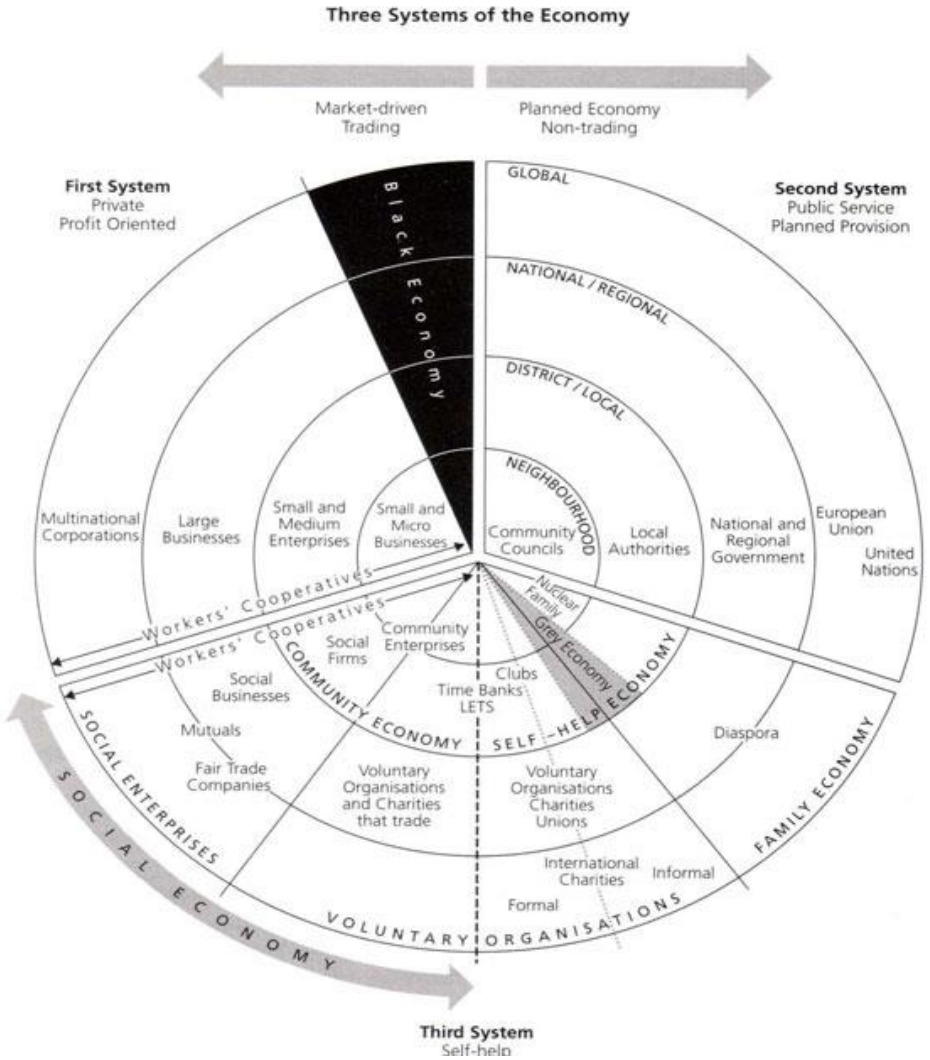
Oikonomia – management of the household – true form of an economy

Karl Polanyi

Polanyi, K. (2001) The Great Transformation; The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time, Beacon Press

Types of economic practices:

- Markets (exchange)
- Household economy
- Redistribution
- Reciprocity



Three Systems of an Economy
Pearce, J. (2009) Social Economy: Engaging as a Third System, In Amin, A. The Social Economy; International Perspectives on Economic Solidarity, p. 26.

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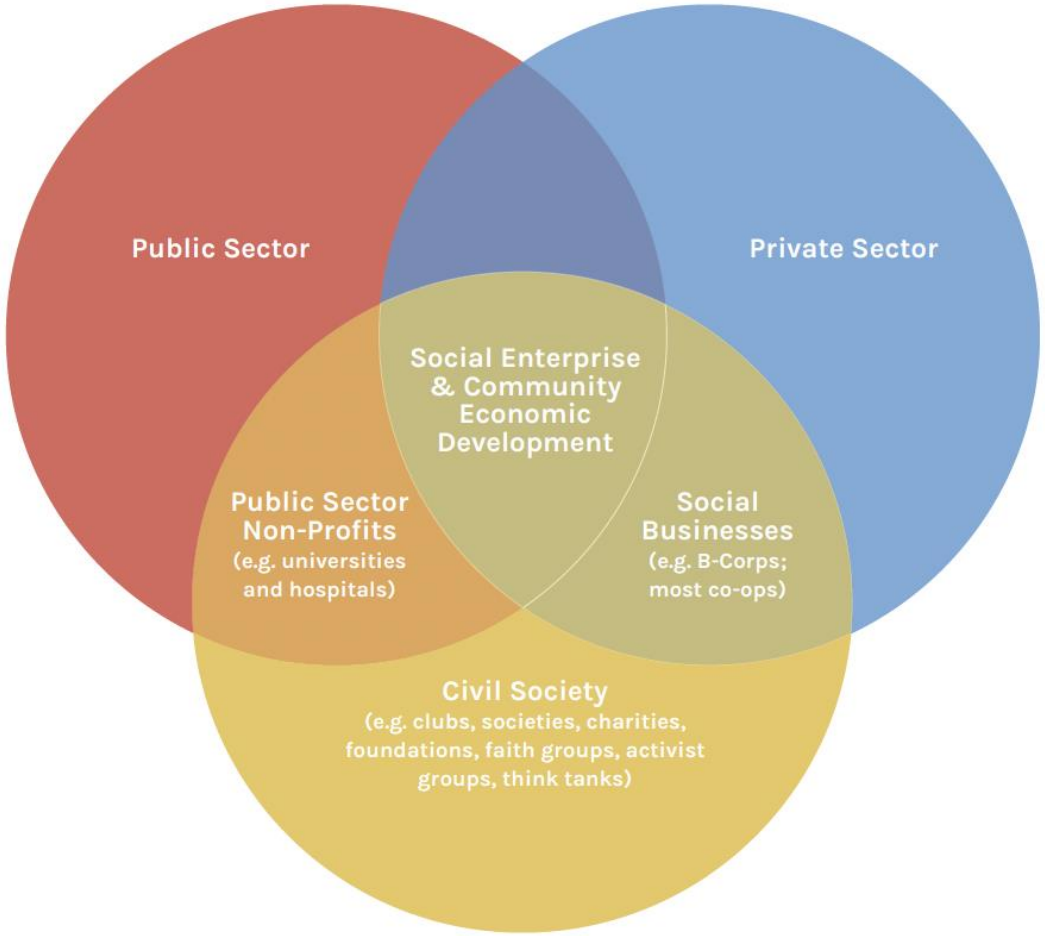

Public Sector
Private Sector
Social Enterprise & Community Economic Development
Public Sector Non-Profits
(e.g. universities and hospitals)
Social Businesses
(e.g. B-Corps; most co-ops)
Civil Society
(e.g. clubs, societies, charities, foundations, faith groups, activist groups, think tanks)

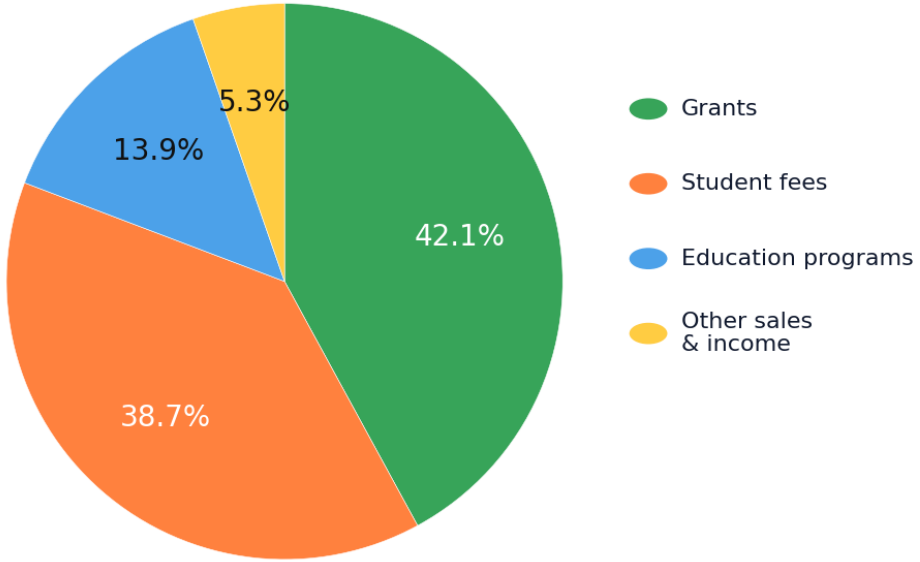
Gibson Graham – Take back the Economy

Gibson-Graham, J.K., Cameron, J., Healy, S. (2013) Take Back the Economy: An Ethical Guide for Transforming Communities, University of Minnesota Press

LABOR	TRANSACTIONS	PROPERTY	ENTERPRISE	FINANCE
Wage	Market	Private	Capitalist	Mainstream Markets
ALTERNATIVE PAID Self-employed Reciprocal labor In-kind Work for welfare	ALTERNATIVE MARKET Fair trade Alternative currencies Underground market Barter	ALTERNATIVE PRIVATE State-managed assets Customary (clan) land Community land trusts Indigenous knowledge (Intellectual Property)	ALTERNATIVE CAPITALIST State owned Environmentally responsible Socially responsible Non-profit	ALTERNATIVE MARKET Cooperative Banks Credit unions Community-based financial institutions Micro-finance
UNPAID Housework Volunteer Self-provisioning Slave labor	NON-MARKET Household sharing Gift giving Hunting, fishing, gathering Theft, piracy, poaching	OPEN ACCESS Atmosphere International Waters Open source IP Outer Space	NON-CAPITALIST Worker cooperatives Sole proprietorships Community enterprise Feudal Slave	NON-MARKET Sweat equity Family lending Donations Interest-free loans

2025 Income Distribution

Total Income: $304,819



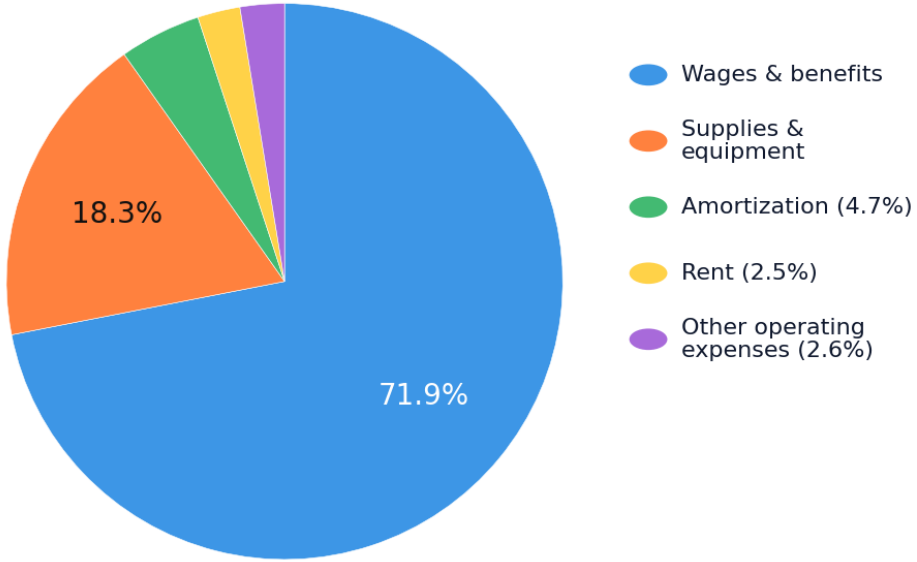
Income Category	Amount (CAD)
Grants	$128,216
Student fees	$117,996
Education programs	$42,335
Other sales & income	$16,272
Total Income	**$304,819**

Sources: Draft 2025 reviewed financial statements (p. 4) and Education Budget for 2025.
Education is provisionally allocated within “Sales and other income” ($58,607); confirm with accountant.

Financial Income

2025 Expense Distribution

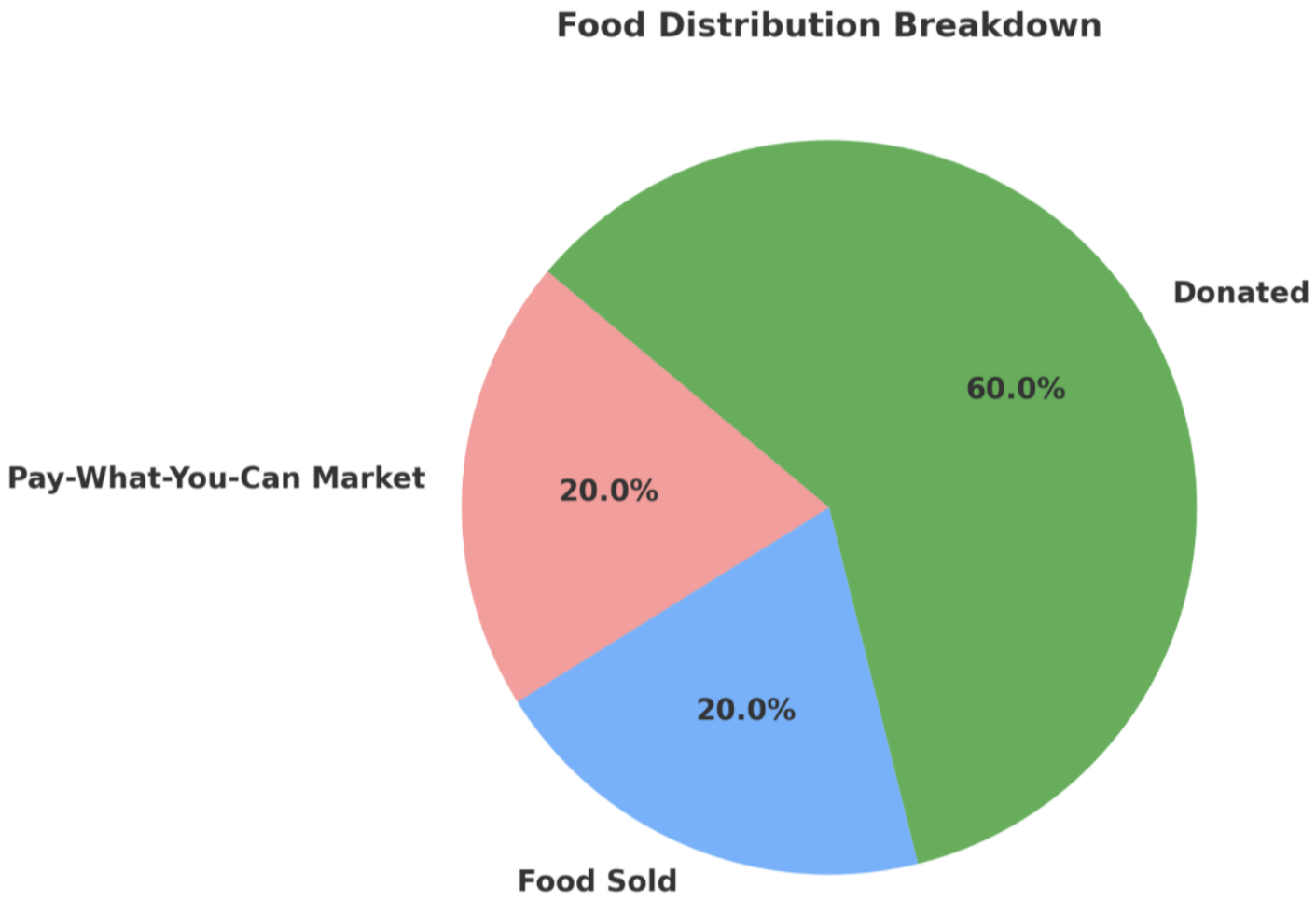
Total Expenses: $232,497



Expense Category	Amount (CAD)
Wages & benefits	$167,227
Supplies & equipment	$42,523
Amortization	$11,019
Rent	$5,751
Other operating expenses	$5,977
Total Expenses	**$232,497**

Source: Draft 2025 reviewed financial statements (p. 4). Operating expenses exclude capital purchases. Other operating expenses combine insurance, professional, office, promotion and bank charges.

Expenses



Food Distribution



Labour

CultivAction Board

- 6 Worker members

- 4 User Members

- 1 Support Member

Others

- Non-member Workers (on summer grants)

- Hundreds of student and non-student volunteers



Non-Market Farm Practices

Volunteer labour

Community involvement

Foraging/gleaning

Connecting community via social events

Soil building (limited)

Incorporating chickens and quails

Sweat equity

Worker managed cooperative



Alternative Market Farm Practices

Worker and community owned enterprise

Hybrid of markets and non markets

Ethical principles (food sovereignty)

Fair treatment of employees

Rooted in community

Market viability and non-market advantages



Positive Impact

Social capital – We connect people to each other and to food.

Financial capital – We are helping young farmers build projects.

Living capital – We create fragments of urban biodiversity.

Intellectual capital – We share knowledge of how to grow food.

Experiential capital – We provide hands-on experience for growing food.

Spiritual capital – We connect people to nature and the Earth.

Cultural capital – We grow lots of varieties of food from many cultures.

Roland, E.C., Lanuda, G. (2013) Regenerative Enterprise. Optimizing for Multi-Capital Abundance

Contradictions

Labour vs food price.

Growing time vs productivity.

Food donations vs sales.

Farmers markets vs increased labour.

Volunteers and paid workers.

Free labour vs viability.

Farm space vs labour hours vs productivity.

Indigenous reconciliation/reparations vs land use.

Community involvement vs community interest.

Soil building vs time.

Animals vs care.

Funding sources vs stability.

Community value vs profit.

Internal conflicts vs organizational stability.

Democracy vs efficiency.

Food waste vs sales vs donations.

Administrative assistance vs hinderance.

We cannot feed the entire community but can inspire others to create new projects.

Discussion – Diverse Economy and Food Sovereignty

1. Identifying Diverse Economic Practices

What market, alternative market, and non-market practices exist in your community's food system? How do these practices contribute to building more equitable, sustainable, and food-sovereign communities?

2. Exploring Contradictions and Tensions

What contradictions arise when trying to balance economic viability with social, political, and ecological goals? Consider tensions between fair wages and affordable food, donations and sales, volunteer and paid labour, democratic decision-making and efficiency, or ecological stewardship and productivity.

3. Navigating Contradictions and Building Alternatives

How can communities navigate these contradictions while developing diverse, social and solidarity economies? What compromises might be necessary, what structural changes are needed, and which tensions might be impossible to fully resolve?

What is the Value of Food?

What is Value?



Chrematistics – art of acquisition – limitless accumulation unnatural and problematic

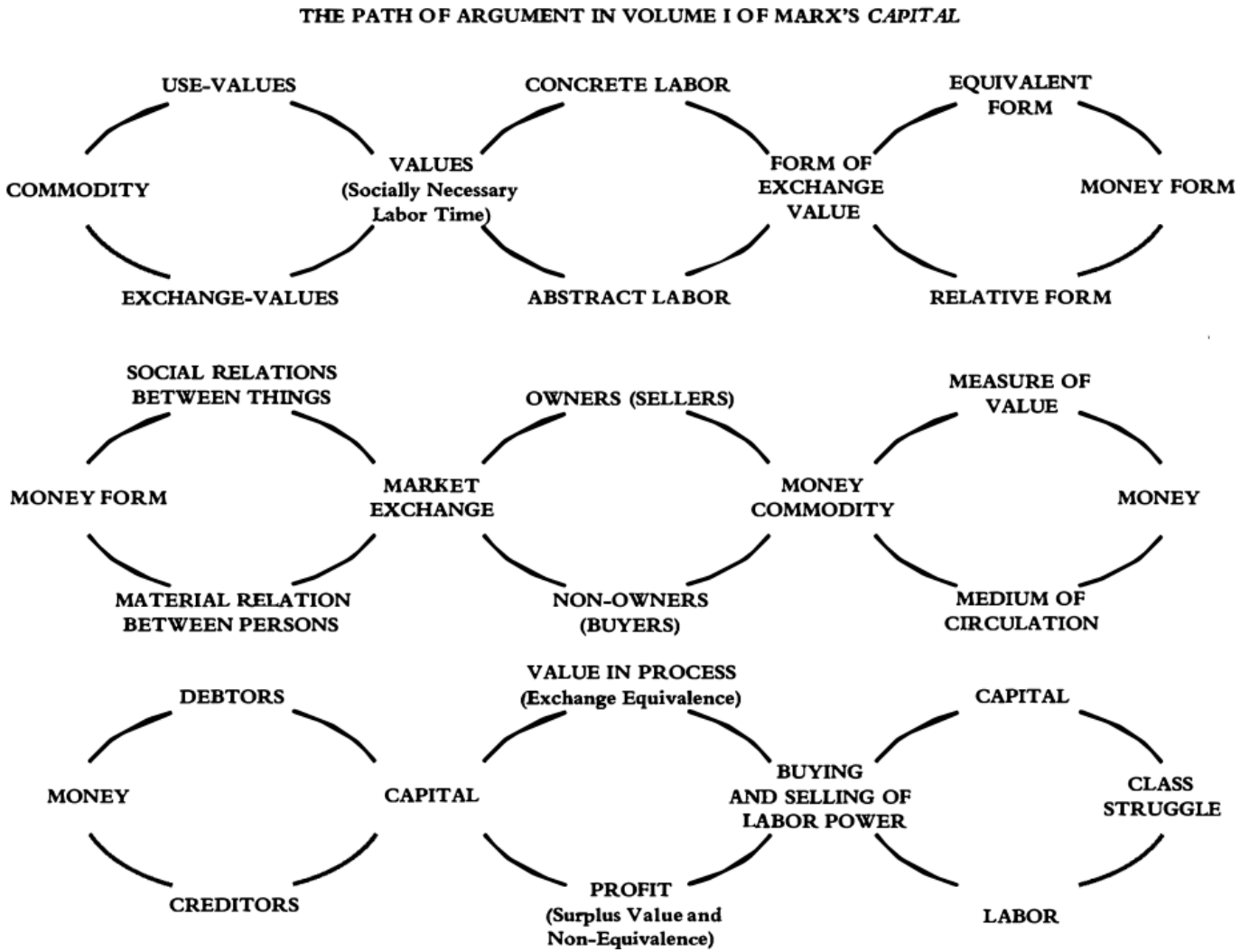
Oikonomia – management of the household – true form of an economy

Problem with Chrematistics:

- Limitless accumulation
- Conversion of nature into commodities

Marx Dialectic From Capital Volume 1





Marx Dialectic From Capital Volume 1

Limitless Accumulation

C-C

C-M-C

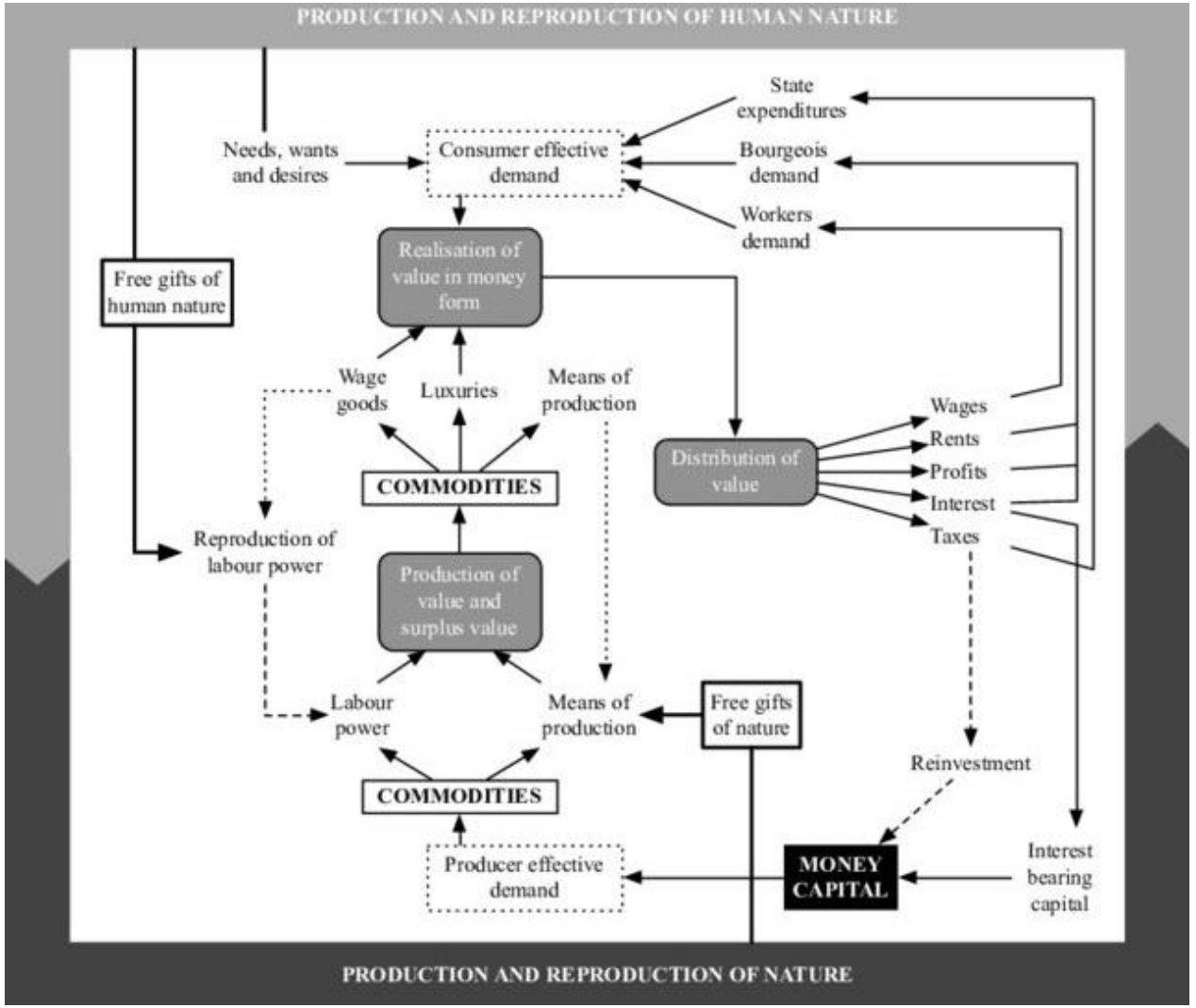
M-C-M’

M(LP-MP-RM)-C-M’

M-M’

Marx Dialectic From Capital Volume 1




PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION OF HUMAN NATURE
State expenditures
Needs, wants and desires
Consumer effective demand
Bourgeois demand
Workers demand
Realisation of value in money form
Free gifts of human nature
Wage goods
Luxuries
Means of production
Wages
Rents
Profits
Interest
Taxes
Distribution of value
COMMODITIES
Reproduction of labour power
Production of value and surplus value
Labour power
Means of production
Free gifts of nature
Reinvestment
COMMODITIES
Producer effective demand
MONEY CAPITAL
Interest bearing capital
PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION OF NATURE



Importance of Labour

Reproduction of the Worker

Relative vs Absolute Surplus Value

Low prices = Low wages

Subsistence Farming

Many Types of Value

Social capital

Financial capital

Living capital

Intellectual capital

Experiential capital

Spiritual capital

Cultural capital

- Roland, E.C., Lanuda, G. (2013) Regenerative Enterprise. Optimizing for Multi-Capital Abundance

Discussion – Creating Value and Reproducing Communities

Creating Value: How can communities create different forms of value beyond financial profit? Consider social, ecological, cultural, intellectual, experiential, and other forms of value.

Social and Community Reproduction: How do these forms of value contribute to sustaining and reproducing communities over time? What roles do food, labour, knowledge, relationships, care, and ecological resources play?

Contradictions and Tensions: What contradictions emerge when creating social, cultural, and ecological value within an economic system that prioritizes financial returns? Who creates this value, who benefits from it, and who bears the costs?

Building Alternatives: How can communities organize food systems and economic activities to create, retain, and circulate different forms of value locally? How might these practices help build more equitable, sustainable, and food-sovereign communities?

Thank You!

Questions, concerns, comments?