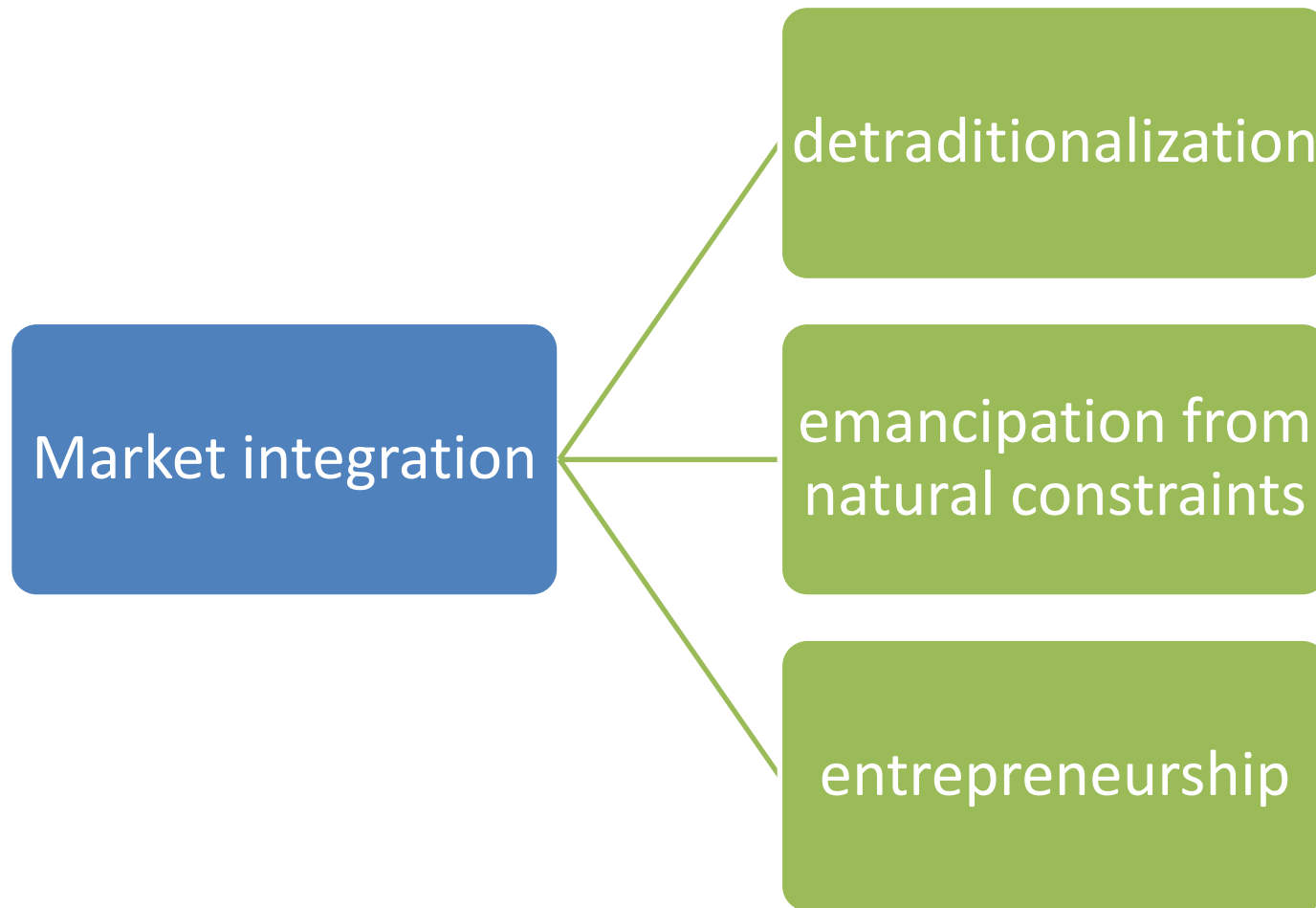


# **Methodological approaches in agricultural economics - discussing the pros and cons of orthodoxy and heterodoxy in teaching, research and practice**

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# Neoclassical theory as the normative basis of the modernization project



# Disciplinary niches out of orthodoxy

- **Agricultural marketing**
  - Consumer behaviour
  - Differentiation
  - Strategy
- **Rural development**
  - Different territories respond differently to market integration
  - Role of the initial conditions
  - Endogenous resources and dynamics
- **Evolutionary theories of innovation**
  - Firm 'routines' as genes
  - Path dependency
  - Role of techno-economic paradigms
- **Transition approaches**
  - Socio-technical systems
  - Role of end users and of a constellation of actors
  - Niche-regime-landscape dynamics

Does an orthodoxy exist today?

# The present research landscape

- Societal goals (SDGs)
- Emphasis on impact
- Performance-based policies
- Stakeholders' involvement
- Focus on vulnerability, resilience, security, complexity

# Substantive aspects

- Bounded rationality
- Nonlinear processes
- Social embeddedness
- Sustainability
- Emergent properties
- Context-dependent solutions

# Deductivism and Inductivism

## Deductivism

- Theory aims at discovering general economic laws
- Greater attention to homogeneity

## Inductivism

- Theory aims at uncovering typologies, patterns, pathways, explanations
- Greater attention to diversity

# Qualitative methods

- Open-ended: allow for adaptation of the research questions to new information and insights
- Understanding systems through people's accounts
- Observation and description of practices
- Developing narratives to identify logical coherence
- Greater importance of the researcher's interpretation skills

Qualitative and quantitative are not alternative to each other!



# Perspectives

- Breaking the disciplinary silos, looking at socio-ecological relations
- Renewed attention to description
- Comparative analysis as a way to generalize and to detect differences
- Analysis of policy processes
- Perspectives related to big data: data analytics, integration between economic, social, biophysical realms
- Emphasis on the future: anticipation, early warning, reflexivity

Thank you!

