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New Co-operativism as Social Innovation: Progress or Regress?

Rory Ridley-Duff

This paper re-conceptualises a framework by Vieta (2010) describing 'new co-operativism' using social innovation theory. Practice-oriented scholars in the P2P Foundation, Commons Transition Movement and FairShares Association have each formulated a challenge to 'old co-operativism' by proposing a 'new' and more 'open' co-operativism. Conaty and Bollier (2015) distinguish 'old' and 'new' approaches based on the division of benefits between co-operative members and wider society. They argue for a common good orientation in which new co-operativism deploys multi-stakeholder governance, co-production and socio-political co-ordination to prioritise local production. This intersects with commons-based peer production and the digital economy in the Commons Transition Movement, and the FairShares Model that advances multi-stakeholder ownership, governance, and management. By deconstructing texts available through wikis, websites, and publications, the social innovations of new co-operativism are assessed. Progressive elements offer "development towards a new or advanced condition" whilst regressive elements advocate "returning to a former or less developed state" (Oxford Languages, 2021). After repeated reading, 30 texts were coded using NVivo. The macro themes of *commoning* and *multi-stakeholder orientation* were added and other aspects (e.g., worker and citizen action) were separated. The revised theory distinguishes three forms of social innovation operationalised through ten practices.

Introduction

This paper is motivated by a new book project that investigates pathways from 'old co-operativism' to 'new co-operativism' (NC). Vieta (2010) initiated this debate when he outlined a theory of NC for a special issue of the journal *Affinities*. Helpfully, he set out a framework with five dimensions: firstly, that NC is a response by citizens and working people to crises in neo liberalism; secondly, that it is uninhibited by institutions in existing co-operative movements; thirdly, that it advocates more ethical egalitarian distributions of surpluses; fourthly, that it promotes inclusive horizontal labour relations; and lastly, that it prioritises community development through the pursuit of social objects.

Given what we know already about earlier periods of building co-operative movements (Webb, 1891; Whyte & Whyte, 1991; Wilson et al., 2012), the descriptions of NC advanced by Vieta (2010; 2018) could be taken as a call to rediscover lost characteristics and past qualities as well as an invitation to study contemporary innovations. In undertaking this study, therefore, I differentiate 'progress' (advances in thinking) from 'regress' (returning to a former state) (Oxford Languages, 2021). This highlights where the 'new' is found through a rediscovery of theory and practices that have lain dormant in historical accounts of the co-operative movement.

Practice-oriented scholars in the P2P Foundation (P2P), Commons Transition Movement (CTM) and FairShares Association (FSA) have increased the challenge to old (consumer-based and/or single-stakeholder) co-operativism by making further recommendations for a new open co-operativism. Conaty and Bollier (2015) distinguish old and new approaches based on how benefits are divided between co-operative members and wider society, supporting Vieta's (2010; 2018) emphasis on social objects and community development. They argue for a common good orientation in which a new open co-operativism with multi-stakeholder governance results in the co-production of local economies.

This aligns with work by the CTM, particularly around commons-based peer production and digital economics (Pazaitis et al., 2017). The common good orientation, however, was problematised in Ridley-Duff (2007). He found differences in the way 'common good' is constructed by opposing political interests. Whilst Vieta's (2010) NC is receptive to increased

worker-ownership and multi-stakeholder (solidarity) principles for co-operative governance, there may be differences in the conceptualisation of what is (or should be) 'new' in NC. The 'common good' is different (theoretically) from 'commons resources', even if production of the latter helps the former. This raises two linked research questions:

RQ1: What social innovations are advocated by practitioners of new co-operativism?

RQ2: Are the social innovations of new co-operativism progressive or regressive?

The paper is divided into five sections. Firstly, I set out recent debates on social innovation (SI) to pinpoint a consensus that SI is focused on changing social relations to increase democratic control over resources and outcomes. Secondly, I use SI literature to argue that Vieta's (2010; 2018) conception of NC is operationalised through three forms of SI within the co-operative movement with features that distinguish it from old (consumer-based) co-operativism. Thirdly, I set out the methodology of the study and justify the research methods. Fourth, Vieta's (2010) NC framework is updated based on the application of Tracey and Stott's (2017) theory of SI to 30 texts available from P2P, CTM and the FSA. In the conclusions, I answer research questions, identify limitations, and consider the implications for practice.

Connecting Social Innovation to Co-operative Entrepreneurship

Social innovation (SI) has a history that pre-dates its application in the social economy (Logue, 2020; Nicholls & Murdoch, 2012). While Logue (2020) traces it back to the entrepreneurship studies of Peter Drucker and Ross Kanter in the hope of advancing cross-sector collaborations rooted in moral commitments to do good and be good, Nicholls and Murdoch (2012) focus initially on past debates about the 'social' aspects of technical innovation. Nicholls and Murdoch call for a new direction that investigates SI as a process of change in social relationships, institutional logics, cultural norms and traditions, particularly those that challenge social power to secure more inclusive design processes for goods and services that meet social needs.

These differences are reflected in Ayob et al's (2016) investigation of SI theory from 1999 onwards. They used Google Scholar to identify highly cited works from well-established scholars and found a weak trend that examines social by-products of technical innovations, and a strong trend that examines power changes in social relationships, institutions and organisations. They conclude there is a high level of consensus after 2008 that SI occurs when social benefits arise out of "new forms of collaboration" amongst individuals or organisations and that these innovations are typically operationalised through "less hierarchical relationships" (p. 648). However, Tracey and Stott (2017) caution against a normative definition of SI by pointing out the variety of action orientations that address social challenges (Table 1).

Social *entre*preneurship occurs where efforts to create organisations produce "new forms of social relations" (Ayob et al., 2016, p. 637). This process is different from social *intra*preneurship where new forms of *power* relations develop in *existing* organisations. Lastly, social *extra*preneurship occurs where there is concerted inter-organisational collaboration involving new and existing organisations to address a social challenge (Tracey & Stott, 2017). These action orientations are fleshed out further in *transformative social innovation* theory (TSI). In the 2017 TRANSIT manifesto, the 13 characteristics of transformative social innovation are identified (TRANsformative Social Innovation Theory [TRANSIT], 2017). These variously focus on decentralised, grass-roots initiatives to stimulate new ventures (social entrepreneurship), inclusive and democratic organising principles to mainstream new macro-propositions (social intrapreneurship) and the building of connections between SI networks (social extrapreneurship). TSI theory focuses on "macro-trends" that "change the rules of the game" (Avelino et al., 2017, p. 40) rather than local responses limited to "addressing social challenges" (Tracey & Stott, 2017, p. 53; see Table 1 below).

In summary, SI acts in three ways: through the creation of new projects/ventures, through reorganising structures and practices in existing organisations, and through inter-organisational

partnerships and collaborations. With this in mind, what are the SIs of the co-operative movement and is there a justification for a theory of NC?

Table 1: Tracey and Stott's Typology of Social Innovation (2017, p. 53; adapted)

	Social entrepreneurship	**Social intrapreneurship**	**Social extrapreneurship**
Definition	The process of creating and growing a venture, either for-profit or non-profit, where motives are rooted in a desire to address social challenges.	The process of addressing social challenges from inside established organisations.	The process of inter-organisational action that facilitates alternative combinations of ideas, people, places and resources to address social challenges.
Approach to social change	Create change by founding new organisations.	Create change by leveraging existing resources and capabilities in established organisations.	Create change through platforms that support collective action within and between new and established organisations.
Example	Ayzh http://www.ayzh.com/ Provides rural women with affordable health technologies.	Arup https://www.arup.com/ An engineering firm that set up a specialist not-for-profit venture providing services to vulnerable communities, including disaster response and construction.	Ellen MacArthur Foundation https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org Brokering collaboration between governments, companies and social sector organisations to promote a 'circular economy' for sustainable development.

New Co-operativism as Social innovation

The co-operative movement has its origins in all three types of SI. The co-operative credited with initiating a global movement (Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers) was run by volunteers who gave up two hours each evening to create a shop. This operated without a clear distinction between worker and consumer until the introduction of paid employment (Wilson et al., 2012). Thereafter, a network of co-operative societies countered the wage cuts and deteriorating social conditions brought about by new technologies in the textile industry (Holyoake,1893/1900).

Members of Rochdale Society were engaged in social *entre*preneurship in the formation of their co-operative society, social *intra*preneurship by developing norms for co-operative governance and social *extra*preneurship when networking with other co-operatives to form a wholesale society in 1862. Firstly, co-operative principle 2 (member democracy) was a SI that gave equal rights to men and women at a time when gender equality and class power was unaddressed in civilian politics (Holyoake, 1893/1900). The restructuring of power relations at work and home created mutual associations in which the identities of producers (as citizens, consumers, and workers) came together in a new mode of production (Yeo, 2002). Two other SIs were also introduced: 1) raising capital from members (and not from private banks and professional investors) countered the logics of capitalist production; 2) a system for distributing trading surpluses on the basis of active participation (i.e., the amount of produce contributed or purchased by a member), not financial contributions. Historical records detail how these SIs transformed working-class politics and the quality of life of co-operative members (Balnave & Patmore, 2012; Toms, 2012).

Over time, the creation of more primary and secondary co-operatives became acts of replication rather than innovation. However, at the urging of the Webbs (Webb, 1891; Webb & Webb, 1897) industrial worker co-operatives were marginalised within the movement, resulting in

the dominance of financial, agricultural, and retail co-operatives. By 2016, at a global level, members of producer co-operatives numbered 250m (mostly in agriculture). This compared to only 11m members in industrial and service worker co-operatives (Eum, 2017). Attitudes in the 'old' consumer co-operative movement against aligning co-operatives with organised labour continue to persist (Bibby, 2020).

NC is of interest because it represents a continuation of efforts to evolve co-operative values and principles within and beyond the 'old' consumer co-operative movement (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; Ridley-Duff & Bull, 2019b). As Vieta (2010, p. 2) states:

> … over the past four decades, co-operative practices and values that both challenge the status quo and create alternatives to it have returned with dynamism […]. We might call these experiments the new co-operativism […] But today's new co-operatives do not always necessarily manifest as formally constituted co-operatives. Rather, the new co-operativism embraces, more broadly, innumerable forms of collective economic practices ...

Vieta (2010; 2018) draws attention to both a labour and citizen response to the application of neoliberal doctrine at a grassroots level (Dimension 1, Table 2). When working people and citizen groups form new organisations, their NC takes the form of social *entrepreneurship* (Tracey & Stott, 2017). Vieta also claims that this occurs without the support of 'pre-existing' co-operative development bodies (Dimension 2) arising spontaneously out of immediate social, cultural and economic needs. Compared to existing co-operatives, new co-operatives seek more equitable ways of framing and distributing wealth and engage ethically with 'the other' and planet earth (Dimension 3). This is particularly the case where "horizontal labour processes and decision-making structures" emphasise collective ownership that is culture- and gender-sensitive (Dimension 4). Surplus sharing policies are not only more egalitarian than existing (consumer) co-operatives, there is also more engagement in social *extrapreneurship* to create stronger connections to surrounding communities (Dimension 5).

Table 2: Transformative Social Innovation Theory and New Co-operativism

	Vieta (2010) Dimension	**Tracey and Stott (2017)**	**TRANSIT TSI Principles (2017)**
1.	Action by working people and citizen groups.	Social entrepreneurship	Physical and mental space for learning and experimentation (in new incubators) (1)
			Social and technological innovation (to begin new ventures) (5)
2.	Independence from older co-operative movements.		Alternative and diverse narratives (to discover new resources) (11)
3.	Equitable distribution of social wealth and more ethical engagement with 'the other' and planet.	Social intrapreneurship	Reframing the old (to reshape the new) (3)
			Alternative social relations (4)
4.	Horizontal labour processes and decision-making, with egalitarian schemes of surplus allocation.		Belonging, autonomy and competence (9)
			Inclusive decision-making (10)
			Mutual recognition and strategic collaboration (12)
5.	Social objectives and local community development initiatives.	Social extrapreneurship	Alternative and diverse economies (2)
			Hybrid combinations of civil society, state, and market (6)
			Protecting necessary public services (7)
			Translocal networks (8)

The manifesto published by the TRANSIT project (2017) provides more detail on operationalising Tracey and Stott's (2017) action orientations. The relevance of TSI to NC

is established by Nielsen et al. (2019, p. 61) who claim that one of the advocates of NC has published model rules that have a “high potential to generate TSI”. In Table 2, the 13 principles of TSI are mapped against Vieta’s (2010) five NC dimensions and Tracey and Stott’s (2017) SI orientations.

In the rest of the paper, I deconstruct texts published by P2P, CTM and FSA to refine Vieta’s (2010) theory. I begin with a section on methodology and follow this with an analysis of 30 texts aided by NVivo.

Methodology

This paper is conceptual. Nevertheless, the process of conceptualisation can be helped by interpreting statements by practitioner communities who articulate views on the role and efficacy of co-operatives in a new economy (Johnson et al. 2006). Such a level of enquiry does not constitute a case study (Yin, 2003). Instead, it is guided by critical discourse analysis (CDA) to focuses on meanings and purposes behind ‘texts’ (van Dijk, 1993).

Erjavec and Erjavec (2015) recommend two CDA research strategies: 1) identification of macro-propositions; 2) identification of micro-textual changes that embrace new concepts. I searched for macro-propositions in NC (particularly in relation to old co-operativism) and micro-textual changes absent from Vieta’s (2010) theory. Three organisations were selected to meet two sampling criteria. Firstly, they must include material on their websites and in their publications that comment on limitations of existing co-operative institutions. Secondly, their critique is motivated by a desire to evolve and transform the co-operative movement by extending the application of International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) values and principles.

The first set of texts were downloaded from P2P (p2pfoundation.net), founded in the Netherlands by Michel Bauwens, James Burke, and Brice Le Blévennec to study the impact of peer-to-peer production (Bauwens & Kostakis, 2014). The second set came from CTM (transitionnetwork.org), initiated in 2005 at Totnes (UK) to develop hubs in South and North America, Oceania, and Europe already creating commons resources for villages, towns, cities, schools, workplaces, colleges, and universities (Troncoso & Utratel, 2015). The third set were published by the FSA (fairshares.coop), established in 2013 by researchers, visiting lecturers and students in Sheffield Business School (Sheffield Hallam University, 2014). By 2019, it had members in five continents contributing IP to an EU project creating FairShares Labs in Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, and the UK (see fairsharesplatform.eu). Their wikis, websites, and publications were searched for “co-opertiv” and “cooperativ” (yielding matches to co-operative, co-operatives, co-operativism, cooperative, cooperatives and cooperativism).

Texts were read to determine if the macro-themes of NC were present and whether micro-textual changes were occurring. Texts were rejected if NC was not the primary focus of the text. This sampling process continued until ten texts from each source had been selected and imported into NVivo. Finally, all 30 texts were coded against Vieta’s NC framework, adding and revising its dimensions to reflect findings in the texts (see Appendices 1, 2, and 3).

Macro-proposals in the Critique of Old Co-operativism

Fourteen of 30 texts articulated a critique of old co-operativism. The most strident was published on the P2P Wiki citing Sam Ginden (Bauwens, 2016). Drawing on Marx, he argues that even when they manage to succeed in taking over factories:

> … co-ops, once an integral part of radical political movements, are now largely integrated into the capitalist order. They may lobby for particular changes, but they no longer mobilize alongside those fighting capitalism.

Key P2P contributors (Pazaitis et al., 2017, p. 180) identify a tendency of co-operatives to "adopt competitive mentalities" and "self-enclose around their local or national memberships". However, this can be countered by digital co-operatives if they contribute to …

> … a more radical reconfiguration of social relations to the technological means of production […]. That is, cooperative structures should be expanded and interconnected so as to aggregate, support and protect […] collective knowledge, tools and infrastructures …

Whilst a key CTM publication also contains scepticism regarding the strength of co-operatives to challenge capitalism, their macro-proposition is unambiguously upbeat:

> Social economy enterprises such as co-operatives are absolutely vital to the economic interests of small producers …, artisans and crafters, community-based financial services …, and increasingly to the emergence of immaterial goods and services provided by digital technology … (Restakis, 2015, p. 100).

Whilst P2P and CTM focus on a lack of extrapreneurial strategies amongst co-operatives, the primary limitation identified by FSA members is an intrapreneurial shortcoming. Citing the example of solidarity co-operatives at Mondragón in support, they argue that single stakeholder co-operatives cannot fully realise co-operative principles 1 (open membership) and 2 (democratic control). Their macro-proposition is to enfranchise primary stakeholders — that is those with a *direct* interest in the success of the enterprise (founding entrepreneurs, providers of labour, users of products and services, and financial supporters) — as members and use participatory democracy to negotiate equitable benefits. Their discursive strategy relies less on a critique of market economics and more on reversing the philanthropic tendency of single-stakeholder co-operatives committed to common ownership:

> The logic goes something like this, "Yes, you can work here so long as you accept that consumers come first" (i.e., that workers must be tacit philanthropists). Alternatively, "Yes, you buy from us so long as you accept that profits go to producers" (i.e., consumers must be tacit philanthropists). More recently, I've encountered the following attitude, "Yes, you can invest in us so long as you do not expect a return any time soon, if ever" (i.e., that community capital is seen as a quasi-donation rather than an investment choice) (Ridley-Duff, 2015, pp. 21-22).

A macro-proposition consistent across all texts is 'commoning' (i.e., creating commons resources for mutual benefit). Advocates of FairShares favour the commoning of knowledge and productive capacity, whilst retaining norms developed at Mondragón for patronage refunds and limited capital gains (Boyd & Reardon, 2020; Ridley-Duff & Bull, 2019a). Model rules open membership to all primary stakeholders and set a benchmark of allocating 70% of trading surpluses and at least 50% of capital gains to labour and user members to counter both the philanthropic discourse of common ownership and capitalist accumulation by entrepreneurs and financiers.

In this respect, the FSA aligns with CTM statements about open co-operativism. The latter mentions reconfiguring co-operative relations so that "code, design, documentation, legal protocols and best practices […] infrastructure, deliberation spaces and machinery" become part of a commons alongside co-operative investment activities that experiment with share capital:

> A social economy understanding of the market, and of profit, makes it possible to rethink society legislation so as to allow non-profits to issue shares to raise capital, to accumulate capital in the form of undistributed reserves for the pursuit of social ends, and to invest in other social economy organizations and institutions that have the same purpose (Restakis, 2015, p. 107).

In support of this argument, Restakis cites evidence from Emilia Romagna (p. 139), one of the poorest regions of Italy in the immediate post-WW2 period, that is now in the top ten performing economic regions of Europe. The 'Emilian Model' blends co-operative development with government programmes. Within 50 years, 30% of the regional economy was under the control of co-operatives — the highest in the world outside Kenya (Schneider, 2015).

To summarise, there are three strands in the critique of old co-operativism. Firstly, that it has lost its radical edge and conforms to capitalist and market logics; secondly, that insufficient emphasis is placed on building an eco-system through international collaboration to protect commons resources; thirdly, that the internal logics of single-stakeholder co-operatives favour philanthropy (by 'others') rather than mutuality (with 'others') impeding their ability to share wealth and power equitably. In each case, the critique is tempered by arguments (and examples) of co-operative projects that overcome these limitations by producing commons resources and adopting multi-stakeholder (solidarity) design principles.

New Co-operativism Through Social Entrepreneurship

In CTM publications, there is a vision of intellectual property held in a commons, licensed using non-exclusive copyrights (such as Creative Commons, Copyfair, Copy Left). P2P also describe the process through which co-operatives can access and add to a common knowledge pool. They propose that part of the income from commercial use of Copyfair IP is used to: 1) preserve the right to share knowledge without preconditions; and 2) return a contribution to the commons if commerce is based on it. The goal is:

> … to create 'ethical' entrepreneurial coalitions [of] 'generative' entities such as cooperatives [and] solidarity economy entities […] around a knowledge commons … (P2P Foundation Wiki, 2020, Section 1 – Description).

This differs both from old co-operativism based on securing an exclusive licence or patent for member benefit as well as capitalist platforms such as 'Just Eats' where private enterprises retain exclusive rights to product designs that are marketed, manufactured and delivered through a privately-owned sharing platform (Scholz & Schneider, 2017). Instead, members collectively own and control the back-office platform that supports their frontline services (Nogales, 2018).

A feature of the Catalan Integrated Co-operative highlighted by members of P2P is non-monetary exchange to overcome poverty amongst people 'discarded' by neo-liberal economics. The precedent for this is Local Exchange and Trading Systems (LETS) described by Dauncey (1988). Williams (1996) notes the creation of LETS at Totnes, the initial hub of the CTM, and the way that LETS contribute to a "new governance matrix that maximizes citizen participation in the design and delivery of human services" (Restakis, 2015, p. 127). LETS build on the existing skills and abilities of active citizens to exchange goods and services in times of crisis (Williams, 1996).

LETS are directly linked to the future growth of social and employment co-operatives. Not only can LETS provide a bridge back into employment, they are also effective as "seedbeds for the development of self-employed business ventures and as vehicles for facilitating exchange **beyond employment**" (Williams et al., 2010, p. 119, emphasis added). The social co-operative movement evolved in Italy to become effective at supporting people back into employment (Borzaga & Depedri, 2014). However, elsewhere it prompted multi-activity employment co-operatives where members test business ideas. Grenier (2012, cited by Ridley-Duff & Bull, 2019b, p. 415) describes how employment relations are replaced by "clients [who] reinforce each other's position [with] groups of entrepreneurs […] expanding markets by working together". In short, members become both producers and consumers within a co-operative infrastructure.

Vieta (2010; 2018) also theorises independence from existing co-operative institutions and pre-existing sentiments. All three NC advocates have their own legal identity. More significantly, each hosts its own wiki to develop and disseminate knowledge. Whilst their websites are managed on the basis of privileged (protected) property rights, their wikis have many authors co-constructing open knowledge platforms. Peer-review and co-authorship is integral to Wiki software prompting Spek et al. (2012, p. 1) to regard them as an "extreme form of a self-

managing team". The choice of wikis to develop and disseminate knowledge removes barriers to access and Creative Commons Licences promotes horizontal labour relations through:

> … the re-conception and re-alignment both of traditional commons and co-operative thinking and practice into new institutional forms that prefigure a new political economy of the co-operative commonwealth (Bauwens & Restakis, 2015, p. 10)

The notion of a co-operative commonwealth is not new. As Gourevitch (2015, p. 123) comments, the idea of a "labor republic" gained traction in the nineteenth century, differentiating itself from local co-operative communities (Owen, 1816/2019) by seeking the "wider aim [of] social transformation [by creating] exemplary instances of the possibilities for a nationally integrated co-operative system".

What is 'new' in this discourse is not the desire to create an integrated co-operative economy (which has a long history) but the use of new technologies to make it possible. Pazaitis et al., (2017) link open co-operativism to the rise of digital technologies, particularly Wikipedia which demonstrates how control of knowledge can not only be wrestled from both corporate and state bodies, but also flourish under member-led governance. Firer-Blaess and Fuchs (2014, p. 87) regard this combination of "cooperative labor" and "common ownership of the means of production" as an "undeniable success" — a mode of production capable of resisting both corporate and state influence.

New Co-operativism Through Social Intrapreneurship

All three advocates of NC favour a multi-stakeholder turn in membership. P2P offers the exemplar of the Catalan Integrated Co-operative where Economic Principle 1 is "addressing the needs of people above any other interest, everyone contributing according to their means" (Source: P2P Foundation Wiki). Bauwens and Kostakis (2014, p. 180) clarify how "open co-operatives internalise negative externalities [and] adopt multi-stakeholder governance models". These views clearly influence recommendations published in *Commons Transition* that:

> … the Organic Law for the Popular and Solidarity Economy (LEPS) [in Ecuador] be revised to allow for the creation of both community service co-operatives (social/solidarity co-ops) and multi-stakeholder co-operatives as social instruments for the management of the commons (Restakis, 2015, p. 149).

However, of the three advocates of NC, the FSA provides the most detailed discussion on the inner workings of solidarity co-operatives. They set out a macro-proposition that NC:

> … advance[s] equality and equity between members, stakeholder groups and trading partners [where] wealth created is shared fairly amongst founders, producers, users and investors to promote mutuality and reciprocity (Ridley-Duff et al., 2020, p. 22).

There are two issues here. Firstly, the recognition of multiple stakeholder contributions in the formal structure of the enterprise and secondly, the promotion of mutuality and reciprocity. The explicit rejection of philanthropy in favour of mutuality keeps the focus on co-operativism, rather than charity. However, it is the complex set of micro-textual changes regarding 'wealth' and 'capital' that drives an argument for multi-stakeholder design principles.

Micro-textual changes on 'capital' within the FairShares Model were initiated by McCulloch and Ridley-Duff (2016) following a reading of work by the International Integrated Reporting Council to define six capitals (IIRC, 2013). Their critique became embedded in planning documents for FairShares Labs where the 'capitals' are described as:

> … natural capital (resources provided by nature — e.g., air, water and minerals), manufactured capital (tools, machinery and premises), social capital (networks of people), human capital (workers' energy, skills and abilities), intellectual capital (workers' ideas and designs) and financial capital (contributions of money) (Ridley-Duff et al., 2020, p. 25).

This reframing of 'capital' departs from the micro-textual strategies of old co-operativism. For example, in the *Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade*, Mills and Davies (2013) devote a chapter to describing "loan capital", "working capital", "risk capital" and "co-operative capital" (raised through member shares). Whilst care is taken to distinguish co-operative capital from private sector investment capital, the language always assumes *financial* capital, ignoring other forms (Appendix 2).

The rationale for expanding the number of capitals in the discourse of NC is the increasing recognition given to open membership for people in different stakeholder groups. Labour typically contributes human, social and intellectual capital (founders often add to this with financial capital contributions). Suppliers contribute manufactured capital while 'users' contribute social capital (via product recommendations) and financial capital (by purchasing goods). The implications of this intrapreneurship are made explicit in FSA member statements that:

> FairShares goes beyond theoretically rethinking capitals. It is a practical approach to restructuring organisations so they recognise contributions made to value creation by different sorts of capital providers. It is more radical than simply valuing/accounting for multiple capitals. Returns are paid for every sort of capital contribution — intellectual, human, social and financial [and] it could be further expanded to include returns for stewarding natural capital (McCulloch & Ridley-Duff, 2016, p. 3).

At this point, it is not yet clear how advocates of NC will reshape the discourse of "capital", only that they will expand and redevelop it. Whilst McCulloch and Ridley-Duff (2019) later set out six capitals to argue in favour of a micro-textual change from "capital" to "wealth", Boyd and Reardon (2020, p. 43) still advocate maximising returns across all six types of "capital" (including for stewardship of natural capital) in their book on creating FairShares commons companies.

Another set of micro-textual changes comes from TSI. Neilsen et al. (2019) evaluated the impact of applying the FairShares Model and found that it promotes 11 of 13 TSI principles (Table 3). Their conclusions are based on reading model rules for FairShares enterprises and undertaking interviews with practitioners who have adopted them. Consequently, they caution that their analysis shows potential, not actual, TSI because their analysis is confined to the *model rules*. Any potential could be subverted by amending the model rules before incorporation.

To conclude, the discourse of NC contains arguments for social intrapreneurship that re-orients co-operatives towards multi-stakeholder design principles that recognise and reward different types of capital contributions. This overcomes a paradox in a key report written for the International Co-operative Alliance (Mills & Davies, 2013) that advocates sustainable development whilst failing to engage in a critique of "capital" that would contribute to it. The discursive challenge to old co-operativism is whether the ICA's Values and Principles can be effectively realised in single stakeholder co-operatives. NC's macro-proposition is that multi-stakeholder (solidarity) co-operatives increase the openness of a co-operative's membership (Principle 1) and promote democratic control by recognising all primary stakeholders (Principle 2). This should increase member participation (Principle 3) and promote education through new dialogue and activism (Principle 5). As inter-cooperation is embedded (Principle 6), this promotes a concern for community (Principle 7).

Table 3: Findings on TSI by FSA Members (Neilsen et al., 2019).

	TSI Principle	Findings on the potential of FairShares Model Rules
1.	Physical and mental space for learning and experimentation (in new incubators)	Advanced through the creation of FairShares Labs (supported by the FairShares Institute and FairShares Association).
2.	Alternative and diverse economies	Advanced by Clause 5, which promotes triple bottom line economics, co-operative values and principles, equal opportunities and sustainable development — each of which is an embedded challenge to existing power relations.
3.	Reframing the old (to reshape the new)	Advanced through historical research into the trajectories of old co-operativism to frame NC as the re-integration of different parts of the co-operative movement through multi-stakeholder designs.
4.	Alternative social relations	Advanced both through multi-stakeholder democracy and specific clauses limiting wage differentials (Clause 34), but potentially limited by board powers and founder rights.
5.	Social and technological innovation (in new ventures)	Advanced through learning and development methods (social technologies) and Clause 50 that promotes mediation to resolve disputes.
6.	Hybrid combinations of civil society, state, and market	Advanced through the 'potential' for networks of FairShares enterprises to develop.
7.	Protecting necessary public services	No findings on this principle.
8.	Translocal networks	Advanced through commitments to open membership via multi-stakeholder design principles, but potentially limited by local 'qualifying contributions' for membership.
9.	Belonging, autonomy, and competence	Advanced through Clause 21 (confirmed voice and voting rights in General Meeting) and Clause 54 (confirming members' IP rights).
10.	Inclusive decision-making	Advanced in Clauses 24, 47, 49, and 50, by preserving 1 person, 1 vote, social auditing, and mediation of disputes.
11.	Alternative and diverse narratives	Advanced by an international project and international networking in FairShares Labs.
12.	Mutual recognition and strategic collaboration	Embedded in Clause 5 (commitment to ICA Principles) and network building activities.

New Co-operativism Through Social Extrapreneurship

Whereas entrepreneurship is focused on start-up processes, and intrapreneurship on internal governance and management processes, extrapreneurship focuses on the interaction between organisations to foster ecosystems and networks. In Tracey and Stott's (2017) analysis, *social* extrapreneurship involves creating platforms for inter-relationships between new and existing organisations in support of community development.

A key discursive strategy of NC on extrapreneurship is to 'extend' not replace, ICA values and principles. In the FairShares Wiki (FairShares Association, 2019), the argument is advanced that a multi-stakeholder (solidarity) co-operative model "extends the ICA principles beyond one-member, one-vote to recognise that each type of member (not just each member) is important to sustainability". This theme of extending ICA principles is found at P2P when Michel Bauwens writes that "open co-operatives are statutorily oriented towards the common good […] extending, not replacing, the seventh co-operative principle of concern for community" (Bauwens & Pantazis, 2018, p. 180). Similarly, in the CTM, authors argue that the "kinds of social purpose capital that are now possible in the case of co-operatives should be extended to the whole of the social economy, with the proviso that their use be transparent and democratically accountable to contributors and service users" (Restakis, 2015, p. 108).

In exemplar cases (Appendix 3), P2P offers a further example from the Catalan Integrated Co-op to show how it:

> … functions as a political project seeking to tie together consumer and labor initiatives "and many others, such as education, mechanisms to create a co-operative basic income, eco-stores, collective stores, meetings and events, and a legal structure to help the formation of eco-networks …" (Manrique, 2012, cited by P2P Foundation, 2015).

P2P (2019) also offer the example of Guerilla Media that has a goal to:

> co-develop an attractive, modular legal/technical infrastructure, easily adapted for other commons-oriented collectives, businesses and DisCOs.

DisCOs are described by Guerilla Media as "distributed co-operative organisations" that implement a commons-oriented co-operative governance model. The mindset advocated aligns strongly with Boyd and Reardon's (2020, p. 419) advocacy of FairShares commons companies where each:

> … business is free to act in an optimum way for the benefit of the entire ecosystem that it is in, including having the freedom to choose for itself when it is right to change or even when it has reached the end of its life […] Stakeholders engage in governance of a commons, using a stewardship paradigm.

This commons-orientation is a new feature of the debate. Whilst *Affinities* featured one paper that embraced this perspective (de Peuter & Dyer-Witheford, 2010) and Vieta (2010) draws attention to the importance of worker co-operatives as a form of "labour commons", the notion of commoning does not feature strongly, even in Vieta's (2018) updated theory of NC.

Commoning is consistent with TSI, P2P and CTM principles. TSI's manifesto commitment suggests reorganising to promote inclusive action and democratic decision-making using "technology and platforms that are hackable, open and repairable by everyone" with "access to labs, hubs, land and buildings in which to congregate, innovate and develop projects" (https://tsimanifesto.org/manifesto). TSI is well-represented in resources hosted by the P2P Foundation: one article describes five SI networks (Avelino et al., 2019) and another contains an analysis of TSI narratives at Ashoka, the Global Ecovillage Network, RIPESS and Shareable (Wittemayer et al., 2019).

Progress or Regress?

Progress involves development towards a new or advanced condition whereas regress involves a return to a former state (Oxford Languages, 2021). What is now clear is that many arguments for, and characteristics of, NC are not new. The idea of commons, whilst enjoying a new lease of life after the emergence of technology capable of supporting it, has a long history. The commons — in the form of a co-operative commonwealth — evolved as a response to the narrow ambitions of Owen's (1816/2019) co-operative communities and led to a political movement advocating a society based on developing "labor commons" (Gourevitch, 2015). A federation advocating it in Canada was established in 1932 and it achieved local political power in the post WW2 period.

Similarly, whilst there has been growing receptivity to multi-stakeholder (solidarity) co-operatives since the 1970s, examples can be found amongst early co-operatives in the movement. Yeo (2002) strongly criticised the Webbs for dividing the labour movement into three "wings" (civilian, producer, and consumer), and for reinforcing their separation rather than championing their integration in mutual associations. The sub-title of Yeo's work (*Ideas from a usable past for a modern future*) illustrates the TSI principle of "reframing the old to reshape the new".

Whilst the ideas are not necessarily progressive, all three advocates of NC echo Vieta's focus on labour as the key force for NC, and all three are aligned with the spirit (if not the letter) of ILO Recommendation 193, which advocates co-operatives in which labour (members) voice is

stronger. As Bibby (2020) recently reaffirmed, early worker co-operatives were marginalised in the discursive arguments for old consumer co-operativism, and whilst ILO Recommendation 193 goes some way to increasing worker rights, it does not explicitly advocate worker ownership of co-operatives.

However, the subsequent rise of worker-ownership models in Canada, US, and Italy (Restakis, 2011; Lund, 2012), alongside continued development of the Mondragón Co-operatives (Bird, 2011; Ridley-Duff & Bull, 2019b) informs NC's progressive voice for worker-membership of new and existing co-operatives (Vieta et al., 2016). The desire to break with the dominance of consumer co-operative models makes NC progressive to its advocates. In this context, production for the commons, a multi-stakeholder orientation and inclusive labour relations are all micro-textual strategies towards polycentric governance of commons resources (Oström, 2009; Ridley-Duff, 2007; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019a).

Vieta's (2010) framework conflates action by citizens and workers which are different in content and nature. Furthermore, it does not specifically identify 'commoning' as a practice even though this is implicit in the process of building solidarity. Whilst recognising that NC is built on collaborations between producers and consumers, the multi-stakeholder orientation of solidarity co-operatives could feature more prominently. Appendices 1 to 3 offer empirical justifications for revising Vieta's theory of NC by expanding it and separating out concepts that have been conflated.

The nett effect is a NC that builds the social solidarity economy "beyond the fringe" through:

> … forms of economic activity that prioritise social and often environmental objectives, and involves producers, workers, consumers and citizens acting collectively and in solidarity […] not only [in] traditional 'social economy' and 'third sector' organisations and enterprises such as cooperatives […] but also myriad types of self-help groups […], fair trade networks […], consumers groups involved in collective provisioning, associations of 'informal economy' workers […] solidarity finance, such as complementary currencies and community-based saving schemes […], digital crowdfunding and sharing schemes associated with the 'collaborative economy' (Utting, 2015, p. 1).

This (re)surfaces an implicit question regarding the blurred boundaries of what is and is not a co-operative enterprise within the wider SSE, echoing Vieta's (2010) comment that NC does not always manifest itself through existing co-operative legal forms. It is the nature of innovation to introduce something beyond current norms and practices, and it is likely that entities aligned to NC may face claims from 'old' co-operators that they are *not* co-operatives. Paradoxically, it will often be the innovations deployed to extend and build co-operative values and principles that are cited as evidence that a 'new' co-operative is not a 'true' co-operative. This work cannot resolve that paradox, but it can highlight the need for robust debate when the ICA seeks to reach international agreement on the next iteration of co-operative values and principles. From an NC perspective, there is a case for recognition and integration of the dimensions of NC (see Table 4).

Conclusions

In answer to RQ1 ("What social innovations are advocated by practitioners of new co-operativism?"), different aspects of NC are linked to different types of SI. Social entrepreneurship is the domain of enterprise creation. In the revised theory of NC (Table 4) enterprise creation is a product of joint action by citizens and the labour movement seeking emancipation and independence from capitalist institutions and the effects of neo-liberal doctrine (Appendix 1). Social intrapreneurship (Appendix 2) is expressed through numerous innovations for more equitable (horizontal/heterarchical) involvement in decision-making. These mechanisms also distribute power and wealth across stakeholder groups, adding a clear multi-stakeholder orientation. Social extrapreneurship (Appendix 3) is articulated through social objectives, particularly those that create commons resources for mutual benefit, or which underpin community development.

Table 4: Updating Vieta's Theory of New Co-operativism

Type of SI	New Co-operativism	Implications for Practice
Social entrepreneurship	Independent institutions	A focus on addressing immediate social, cultural or economic needs rather than co-operativist sentiments.
(Change through founding new organisations)	Social action by working people	Enterprise creation by working people in direct response to the precarious employment practices of neo-liberalism.
	Social action by citizens	Enterprise creation emerging from citizens' direct responses to the loss/degradation of public services under neo-liberalism.
Social intrapreneurship	Egalitarian surplus sharing	The promotion of equitable access to six forms of wealth (natural, human, social, intellectual, manufactured, and financial).
(Change through redesigning existing organisations)	Horizontal labour processes	Horizontal labour processes in production and governance that are culture- and gender-sensitive.
	Ethical engagement	Ethical engagement with 'the other' and planet during everyday interactions.
	Multi-stakeholder orientation	A pluralistic governance approach both within and beyond the formal boundaries of any single co-operative enterprise.
Social extrapreneurship	Social objectives	Setting social objectives that lead to stronger connections within and beyond the community.
(Change through inter organisational collaboration platforms)	Commoning	The production of commons resources for member/public use free from the commodification of market economics.
	Local community development	Community development initiatives that create stronger connections within and beyond the community.

Table 4 shows there is good support for Conaty and Bollier's (2015) distinction between 'old' and 'new' co-operativism based on the balance of benefits to members and wider society through the use of multi-stakeholder structures to grant primary stakeholders increased access to the capitals their co-operatives create. By updating Vieta's (2010) framework, researchers are guided to investigate actions taken by citizens and workers separate to appreciate differences in content, nature and motivation (even when collaborating towards a joint goal). Secondly, in the sphere of social intrapreneurship, the multi-stakeholder orientation of solidarity co-operatives features more strongly to support a commoning strategy.

Future research may wish to focus on whether NC enhances the historic commitment of co-operatives to address democratic deficits in wider society and the workplace (Pestoff, 2017). How does NC attract and influence citizens to the transition, climate change and anti-capitalist movements? What role is played by digital co-operatives? Indeed, what is the demographic profile of 'new' co-operators?

RQ2 sought an answer to the question "Are the social innovations embedded in new co-operativism progressive or regressive?" The key finding here is that there is relativism in framing an answer. From the standpoint of neo-liberalism (e.g., Friedman, 1962), NC would be regressive. For people defensive of old co-operativism, any provision in NC perceived to undermine the common bond or sovereignty of consumer members (in defiance of capital interests) would be seen as regressive. However, in its desire to break with the hegemony of consumer co-operatives, NC can be seen as progressive. It should be noted that parts of NC invite a rediscovery of old concepts (the co-operative commonwealth and solidarity co-operatives) which represent progress towards a communitarian (pluralist) argument for polycentric governance (Oström, 2009; Ridley-Duff, 2007).

What is unambiguously new is the strength and depth of the focus on inclusive labour processes and labour/consumer solidarity. On this there is a clear departure from the hegemony of consumer co-operatives and other forms of single-stakeholder co-operative. Advocates of NC not only take an interest in TSI (particularly in the P2P network) but also laud the potential of NC

as a vehicle for TSI (Nielsen et al., 2019). This theoretical and empirical link between NC and TSI is something that applied researchers can build on.

The study is limited by the size of the dataset drawn from the three networks as well as the choice of networks. Whilst each includes works from a range of supportive organisations and individuals, further research is needed to build the size and diversity of the dataset used to assess macro-propositions and micro-textual changes in NC. This would open the possibility of future CDA research into NC using additional sources that critique and extend co-operative traditions. While the strategy of using searchable wikis, websites, practitioner and academic publications was fruitful for gaining access to the diversity of micro-textual strategies and the macro-themes of NC, this study only begins the process. Table 4 revises the theory of NC to promote more research on the action orientations of SI and its potential for TSI.

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Appendix 1: New Co-operativism Through Social Entrepreneurship

Type of Social Innovation	Dimension of New Co-operativism	Description	Data Examples
Social entrepreneurship (Change through founding new organisations).	Social action by citizens	Enterprise creation by working people in direct response to the precarious employment practices of neo-liberalism.	"Non-monetary forms of exchange: free economy, direct exchange, communal economy" (P2P Wiki, "Catalan Integrated Co-op", Economy Principle 3). "… progressive democratization … entails a new governance matrix that maximizes citizen participation in the design and delivery of human services at those levels closest to the actual provision of care" (Commons Transition, p. 126).
	Social action by working people	Enterprise creation emerging from citizens' direct responses to the loss/degradation of public services under neo-liberalism.	"Although physical production is kept local and needs-based (following the "Design Global, Manufacture Local" logic), Open Coops share knowledge and resources at the global level with like-minded enterprises to create political and cultural counterpower …" (Commons Transition Wiki, "What is open co-operativism?"). "Labour shareholders set the maximum ratio between the highest and lowest paid co-operative member. This prevents other shareholders […] from reproducing large wage differentials that exploit [labour]" (FairShares Wiki, "Co-operative Values and Principles").
	Independent institutions	A focus on addressing immediate social, cultural or economic needs rather than co-operativist sentiments.	"… the re-conception and re-alignment both of traditional commons and co-operative thinking, and practice, into new institutional forms that prefigure a new political economy of co-operative commonwealth" (Commons Transition, p. 10). "It came too from a frustration with the co-operative movement not being able to give us the models or tools to work with — and so we had turned to creating Companies Ltd by Guarantee and holding companies to increase the democratic nature of our enterprises" (FairShares Association, Co-founder quoted in Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019a).

Appendix 2: New Co-operativism Through Social Intrapreneurship

Type of Social Innovation	Dimension of New Co-operativism	Description	Data Examples
Social intrapreneurship (Change through leveraging resources in existing organisations)	Egalitarian surplus sharing	Egalitarian sharing that facilitates access to six capitals. Intrapreneurship leading to more equitable access and distributions of six forms of wealth.	"A FairShares enterprise structures itself as a company, co-operative, association or partnership that advances equality and equity between members, stakeholder groups and trading partners. Any wealth created is shared fairly amongst founders, producers, users and investors to promote mutuality and reciprocity" (Creating Social Enterprises in FairShares Labs, Principle 1, p. 24). "In Open Coops, production is guided not by profit but by social and environmental priorities. Individual organizations' legal statutes embed these values in all productive and organizational processes" (Commons Transition Primer, "What is Open Co-operativism?"). "Concern for the common good and for one's own good" (P2P Wiki, Catalan Integrated Co-operative, Social Transformation Principle 1)/ "Capital' within a FairShares enterprise is understood to include natural capital (resources provided by nature — e.g. air, water and minerals), manufactured capital (tools, machinery and premises), social capital (networks of people), human capital (workers' energy, skills and abilities), intellectual capital (workers' ideas and designs) and financial capital (contributions of money). The goal of the model is to compensate the providers of each type of capital fairly and equitably" (Creating Social Enterprises in FairShares Labs, p. 25).
	Ethical engagement	Ethical engagement with 'the other' and planet during everyday interactions.	That the "Organic Law for the Popular and Solidarity Economy (LEPS) be revised to allow for the creation of both community service co-operatives (social/solidarity co-ops) and multi-stakeholder co-operatives as social instruments for the management of the commons" (Commons Transition, p. 149). "The managers and members of a FairShares enterprise are encouraged to think carefully about the well-being that their joint enterprise creates (or could create) through designing and offering products and services" (FairShares Wiki, "FairShares Values and Principles").
	Horizontal labour processes	Horizontal labour processes in production and governance that are culture- and gender-sensitive.	"1. Democracy: direct, deliberative, participative; 2. Self-management and decentralization" (P2P Foundation Wiki, "Catalan Integrated Co-operative", Political Organisation Principles 1 and 2). "DisCOs offer new forms of multi-constituent ownership with blockchain enabled Open Value accounting systems. These create levels of ownership in direct relation to members' contributions to three streams: pro-bono work to create commons, livelihood work, and care work (emotional labour, often invisibilized and gendered)" (Commons Transition Wiki, "Distributed Co-operative Organisations").
	Multi-stakeholder orientation	A pluralistic governance approach both within and beyond the formal boundaries of any single co-operative enterprise.	"DisCOs also reimagine governance through care work, trust, heterarchical decision-making and open communication, mediated not by initial investment but through contributions to the social mission" (Commons Transition Wiki, "Distributed Co-operative Organisations"). "The development of the kinds of social purpose capital that are now possible in the case of co-operatives should be extended to the whole of the social economy, with the proviso that their use be transparent and democratically accountable to contributors and service users" (Commons Transition, p. 107).

Appendix 3: New Co-operativism Through Social Extrapreneurship

Type of Social Innovation	Dimension of New Co-operativism	Description	Data Examples
Social extrapreneurship (Change through the inter-organisational efforts of new and existing organisations).	Social objectives	Setting social objectives that lead to stronger connections within and beyond the community.	"To a greater degree than traditional co-operative, open co-operatives are statutorily oriented towards the common good […] extending, not replacing, the seventh co-operative principle of concern for community". (P2P Founders, Bauwens and Pantazis (2018), p.180). "… make distributed ledger technologies (DLTs) accessible to common people, cooperators and economically disadvantaged, breaking the monopoly of a white/male tech elite's involvement and benefit" (P2P Foundation Wiki, "Distributed Co-operative Organisations").
	Local community development	Community development initiatives that create stronger connections within and beyond the community.	"Under the label 'integrated', the Co-operative functions as a political project seeking to tie together consumer and labor initiatives 'and many others, such as education, mechanisms to create a cooperative basic income, eco-stores, collective stores, meetings and events, and a legal structure to help the formation of eco-networks' …" (P2P Foundation Wiki, "Integrated Co-operatives"). "… business is free to act in an optimum way for the benefit of the entire ecosystem that it is in, including having the freedom to choose for itself when it is right to change or even when it has reached the end of its life […] Stakeholders engage in governance of a commons, using a stewardship paradigm" (Boyd and Reardon (2020), p. 419, Pre-publication v0.51).
	Commoning	The production of commons resources for member/public use free from the commodification of market economics.	"… b) co-develop an attractive, modular legal/technical infrastructure, easily adapted for other commons-oriented collectives, businesses and DisCOs" (P2P Foundation Wiki, "Guerrilla Media Collective"). "CopyFair licensing strengthens the commons economy through full sharing economic solidarity within the Commons sphere" (Commons Transition Primer, "What is Open Co-operativism?").