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978-1-107-02898-2 - The Cooperative Business Movement, 1950 to the Present

Patrizia Battilani and Harm G. Schröter

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The Cooperative Business Movement, 1950 to the Present

The United Nations declared 2012 the International Year of Cooperatives, emphasizing that there is an alternative to privately owned firms. At a time when greed and mismanagement have caused world financial and economic crises, co-ops offer another type of business for economic activities that is less exposed to aggressive capitalism. This book provides a problem-oriented overview of the development of cooperatives during the last fifty years. This worldwide study addresses the major challenges cooperatives face, such as introducing organizational innovations to acquire necessary risk capital and implementing growth-related strategies, the wave of demutualization in developed nations, and the ability of cooperative enterprise to construct an original consumer politics. The contributors to this volume discuss the successes and failures of cooperatives and ask whether the co-op is an outdated model of enterprise. They document a wave of foundations of new co-ops, new forms of collaboration between them, and a growing trend toward globalization. Generally speaking, these authors show that this special kind of business will doubtless continue to thrive and to maintain an important position in a rapidly changing world economy.

Patrizia Battilani is a professor of economic history at the University of Bologna, Italy. Battilani is coauthor of *Cooperation, Networks, Service: Innovation in Outsourcing* (with G. Bertagnoni, 2010). She has had articles published in the *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, the *Journal of Tourism History*, and *Entreprises et Histoire*.

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Contents

<i>List of Contributors</i>	page ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
Introduction: Principal Problems and General Development of Cooperative Enterprise <i>Patrizia Battilani and Harm G. Schröter</i>	I
SECTION I COOPERATIVE ISSUES IN A GLOBAL OVERVIEW	
1 The International Cooperative Movement: A Quiet Giant <i>Ann Hoyt and Tito Menzani</i>	23
2 A World of Variations: Sectors and Forms <i>Vera Zamagni</i>	63
3 Cooperative Movements in the Republic of Korea <i>Hongjoo Jung and Hans Jürgen Rösner</i>	83
4 “... What Is the End Purpose of It All?”: The Centrality of Values for Cooperative Success in the Marketplace <i>Ian MacPherson</i>	107
5 Why Cooperatives Fail: Case Studies from Europe, Japan, and the United States, 1950–2010 <i>Peter Kramper</i>	126
6 Demutualization and Its Problems <i>Patrizia Battilani and Harm G. Schröter</i>	150
SECTION 2 SELECTED CORE ISSUES OF COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISE IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	
7 Legal Frameworks and Property Rights in U.S. Agricultural Cooperatives: The Hybridization of Cooperative Structures <i>Fabio Chaddad and Michael L. Cook</i>	175
8 The Performance of Workers’ Cooperatives <i>Virginie Pérotin</i>	195
	vii

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Patrizia Battilani and Harm G. Schröter
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

viii		<i>Contents</i>
9	Organization: Top Down or Bottom Up? The Organizational Development of Consumer Cooperatives, 1950–2000 <i>Espen Ekberg</i>	222
10	The Politics of Commercial Dynamics: Cooperative Adaptations to Postwar Consumerism in the United Kingdom and Sweden, 1950–2010 <i>Katarina Friberg, Rachael Vorberg-Rugh, Anthony Webster, and John Wilson</i>	243
	Conclusion: The Decisive Factors of Cooperatives’ Future – Their Nature, Longevity, Role, and Environment <i>Patrizia Battilani and Harm G. Schröter</i>	263
	<i>Appendix I</i> Statement on the Cooperative Identity	277
	<i>Appendix II</i> Figures on the Cooperative Movement Worldwide	279
	<i>Index</i>	281

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[More information](#)

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