

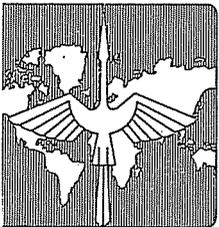
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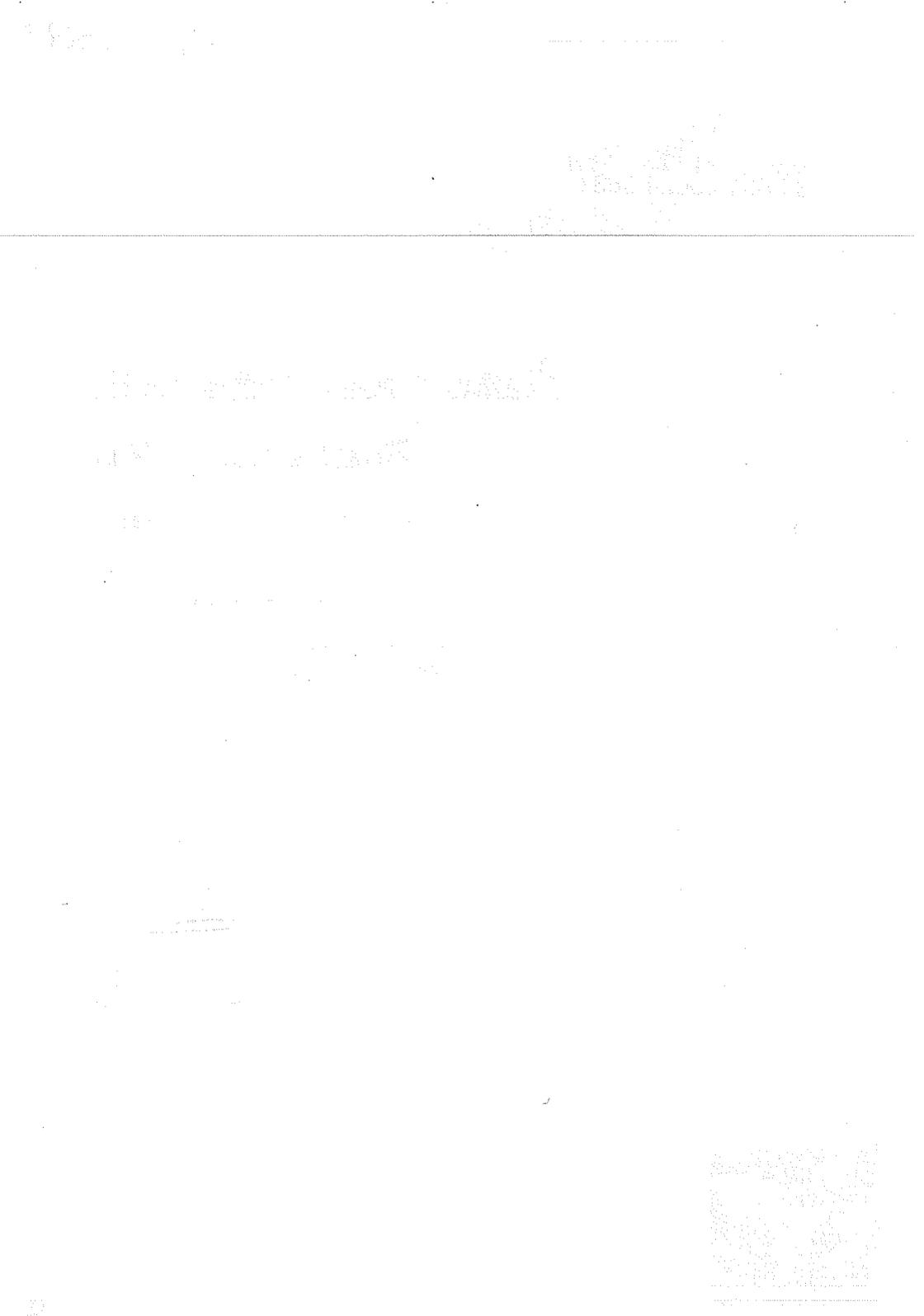


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# **Public Policy Evaluation, Meta-Evaluation, and Essentialism: The Case of Rural Cooperatives**

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This paper looks at some of the structural aspects of the making of evaluations of policies in order to help explain some common features of evaluative discussion of public policy. What from one standpoint may seem to be a lack of an evaluative stance, a non-evaluation, may from another appear to be the very model of an evaluation. The results of an evaluation carried out according to one method may conflict hopelessly with those carried out by another. The results of evaluations by two different methods may be the same and yet unrecognized as such by any of the parties concerned; and so on.<sup>1</sup>

The main source of illustrations we have chosen is (part of) the debate in the last decade on the evaluation at a general level of rural cooperative policies in developing countries. We are inclined to say that discussion and evaluation of rural service cooperatives has been particularly subject to failure even to hear, let alone to understand, by some of those making contributions from different perspectives and premises. Our treatment of this cooperatives literature cannot be exhaustive. In any event its major purpose is to help present and develop some ideas of general interest and application, which do not stand or fall only insofar as applicable to cooperative studies. Debates about other policies and institutions, isms other than cooperativism, where they have already attracted complex evaluative (and non-evaluative) exchanges, are similarly subject to review according to the procedures of this paper. This is illustrated in a later section (Section 7) by a brief notice and analysis of an important debate on capitalism and imperialism.

The theoretical ideas in this paper are themselves far from being a survey of, or a programme for, evaluation theory, or even for the comparative analysis of evaluation arguments. But by looking at some ways in which the different parts within alternative or conflicting approaches may be related or contrasted, both within approaches and between them, our aim is to contribute to establishing a realm of discourse in which comparisons between rural (and other) organizations and policies can be made that do not, whether wittingly or otherwise, just talk past each other.

## 2. SOME COMPLEXITIES IN MAKING EVALUATIONS: META-EVALUATION

Although evaluation theory is a burgeoning area of change and development in public policy studies it has not until recently informed the practice of development studies to any great extent, with perhaps the exception of some relatively narrow-focus social cost-benefit work of, very largely, the last fifteen years. Over this period operational methodologies for evaluation, or which incorporate evaluation as an integral stage in planning and administration (such as PPBS, PIM and as in the manuals and guidelines now widely adopted and applied by various agencies) have made an impact. Yet, theoretical and philosophical aspects are still only rarely singled out for reflection in evaluation as compared with, say, diagnosis or prescription. While philosophical problems of values may be discussed in some contexts in relation to development studies, as indeed in social science in general, they are only seldom raised at the level of policy and programme analysis.

It is at these levels, in the no-man's land between project evaluation and philosophies of development, that there is much confrontatory and fruitless debate because of lack of understanding or agreement even on the nature and sources of the differences between the various positions taken.

To approach our area of interest, some theoretical stage-setting is necessary. *Evaluation seen as a process* consists of a whole set of steps, in each of which may be encountered serious difficulties and persuasive, but opposed, alternatives. Choices must then be made, whether consciously or not, and whether coherently or not.

A simple presentation of the steps involved is as follows:

- (i) formulation of the problem: what is being asked, with what frame of reference, and what is to be considered relevant to the evaluation; including definitions of the central categories of the study;
- (ii) specification to the degree of precision required of the 'objective function' with which to judge actions or outcomes and/or to prescribe future actions;
- (iii) collection of relevant environmental, performance, etc., data;
- (iv) analysis of data, sorting out the various causes and effects in order to identify those concerning the variables of interest;
- (v) combination of objectives, data and analysis to support evaluations or prescriptions.

This picture could be greatly elaborated, for example with particular reference to prediction and prescription as distinct modes of endeavour in policy studies. But for present purposes it is enough to show simply that there are several stages, and to highlight the stages of problem formulation and of specification of values and objectives. Observation, measurement and analysis are the staple fare of social science. Formulation and value specification tend to receive less attention, but, commonly, they are particularly problematic in evaluation studies.<sup>2</sup> In many previous approaches (Archibald 1971), problem formulation was seen as either being straightforward - the 'client' not merely felt a problem but knew exactly what his problem was - or not being part of the analyst's job. In the newer approaches that have emerged in response to past inadequacies, concern with helping in drawing out and defining problems is seen as a vital part of the job. Thus 'most of your time has to be spent in figuring out what the problem is' (Ibid, 79).<sup>3</sup>

The specification of values has also come to be recognized in evaluation research as constituting a particular area of difficulty, covering two sorts of problem. There is the matter of choice of value-standpoint, i.e., of a certain approach for selecting values.<sup>4</sup> There is also the difficulty in getting a sufficiently clear, consistent and precise specification of goals and values even when the standpoint has been settled. So in the current literature there are laments about, for example, 'the goals formulation game' (Patton, Ch. 6) and the 'goals trap' (Deutscher).

Problems in any one stage of evaluation are very likely to spill over and affect any other stages. For example, both the values and the theories held will probably influence the choices and selections that have to be made in problem formulation, a key step which then affects all the others. The general question which then arises is what criteria are used to make these many choices.

Looking at the use of criteria in evaluation is, then, a wider issue than just the valuations in the objective function, though these latter may often deserve our special attention. Looking at the criteria used in various approaches, and comparing and assessing them, is the subject of what has been called *meta-evaluation* (e.g. by Scriven); the analysis and evaluation of evaluations. In this paper we review and develop a few ideas in meta-evaluation. We make special reference to cases where the degrees of awareness and clarity and consensus about the choices and criteria are, or may be, low. It is here particularly that the result is that

people are likely just to talk past each other and to fail even to understand their differences.

### 3. TWO PAIRS OF APPROACHES: IMMANENT-TRANSCENDENT, AND ESSENTIALIST-INSTRUMENTALIST

The criteria which together define an evaluative approach can be looked at in very many ways. Initially, we focus on two, with subsidiary reference to one or two others. The four types we will thus introduce are not mutually exclusive; nor would they - as we will describe them - always be consensually applied in particular cases; nor are they a comprehensive catalogue of approaches in evaluation. They are, nevertheless, of wide relevance and in particular can be seen as *the leading elements* in some *overall* approaches found in evaluative discussion of cooperatives and other organizations. In Section 6 we look further at their relation to other stances.

#### (a) *Immanent-transcendent*

One focus is on whether the criteria in an approach are 'internal' or 'external' to what is being evaluated. An 'internal' approach takes as its criteria those used within the policy/institution itself. Thus it will use the same categories, make reference to the same goals, and so on, as stated for and within the policy itself, or as could be inferred *ex post* from the practice of the policy. An 'external' approach takes its criteria independently of the policy evaluated, without any necessary or overriding reference to the policy's self-conception or implied criteria. The criteria may be taken instead even, for instance, from a general theory of history which may have been unknown altogether to the policy makers concerned, or from an ideology which would be foreign or hostile or both to those making and implementing the policy under review, and so on.

We can also call these different approaches *immanent evaluation* and *transcendent evaluation* respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Self-evaluation by an institution will, of course, in general provide an example of immanent criticism. The work of the 'service researcher' will be so by definition (Hamilton & Parlett, note 43). Likewise, the work of R.K. Merton's 'technician' will be immanent with respect to the stated criteria of his client if the client represents the institution or policy being examined - for the 'technician' is an applied scientist who 'will accept any alternative proposals for policy criteria for evaluation as a basis for research provided only

that these alternatives be technically amenable to research'. In contrast the 'socially oriented scientist, will explore only those policy alternatives which do not violate his own values' (W.G. Bennis et. al. eds, 63-64). But, also, immanent evaluation may be adopted by outside evaluators who are not necessarily required to do so in the way the service researcher is.

In the absence of some definite and attractive alternative approach there may be a presumption in favour of proceeding along the lines already being used by the policy. Those involved with the policy might be presumed to have valuable insight and experience; or it may be considered democratic to respect their opinions. Also, paying close attention to their ideas might often be a necessary condition for having the findings of evaluation studies acted upon (cf. e.g. Patton: 'Utilization-Focussed Evaluation'). Similarly, immanent criticism may be the best way to attempt persuasion, by drawing out the actual implications of the ideas and values which somebody says they hold (cf. Gunnar Myrdal: e.g. *An American Dilemma* especially Appendices 1 and 2 and *Asian Drama* - Prologue and Part One).

Immanent evaluation is liable to the failings of an unduly restricted focus and of self-idealization or defensiveness by those affected by the policy. Transcendent evaluation will try to avoid these, while not falling into failings of its own.

A current variant of transcendent evaluation is Michael Scriven's 'goal-free evaluation'. In his view the evaluator's immersion in the policy setting, its ideas and intentions, its personnel and its ethos, is likely to be prejudicial. He 'can't both evaluate their achievements with reasonable objectivity and also go through a lengthy indoctrination session with them' (Hamilton et. al. eds, 104). Apart from any 'personal induction' effect, he is likely subsequently to look where the policy personnel have themselves looked and think he ought to look, to overlook what they have overlooked or prefer him not to look at, and so on. Instead, he can be guided by (i) a good general knowledge of the research in the area concerned, and (ii) by a 'lethal checklist' of things that must be looked at, such as costs and alternatives, and in particular, the needs of the target population especially when it is with respect to these needs that the policy goals must ultimately be justified in any case. Making reference to these needs from the outset can then by-pass the whole problem-ridden stage of trying to identify the detailed objectives developed and held by the particular programme and then, only later, and if remembered, relating performance back to needs by evaluating those objectives.

Evaluators may, on the other hand, prefer rather to 'join the club'. Certainly policy personnel generally prefer to be judged simply by reference to what they say they are trying to do.

Much further discussion would be necessary to draw out the pros and cons of immanent and transcendent approaches, how the balance between these may vary according to occasions and purposes and their possible complementarity.

The second pair of terms we will introduce - instrumentalism and essentialism - is closely related to the first, though the complexity of the interconnections may only gradually become apparent.

(b) *Essentialist-instrumentalist*

An *instrumentalist* approach treats particular activities and measures simply as means toward some more general ends; ends without reference to features of particular means.

For example, in considering the promotion of a particular type of programme or institution, an instrumentalist approach would, roughly speaking, first consider 'whether' rather than 'how'. It would ask in a broad way what goals the programme could and should pursue and what would be the conditions and constraints pertinent to these. Only then would it go on to ask whether the particular programme or institution had any part to play in furthering these goals, in the specific circumstances obtaining and under the ascertained constraints.

This detachment from particular means leads to a willingness to entertain considerations about, and to be open to, the adoption of a variety of means, and different means in different cases, according to circumstances. That is, it tends very much to a situationalism in assessment and prescription. In contrast, as we shall see, an essentialist approach would tend to insist on, for example, there being one proper type of relationship between, say, the state and the cooperative (or the educational or whatever system in question) to be sought or upheld above other considerations.

Instrumentalism here is likely to recognize a plurality of potentially valid relationships depending upon circumstances (and a plurality of conditionally valid relations depending upon the general ends adopted). It is perhaps not necessarily inconsistent with attaching special value to features of particular means but only if such features can be justified in terms of almost invariable superiority in contributing towards the higher ends adopted. Examples of instrumentalism are provided later, jointly with essentialism, and in the discussion of cooperatives.

In the same way that instrumentalism can sometimes be seen as an extreme form of the detachment of transcendent criticism, so an *essentialist* approach can sometimes be seen as an extreme form of an immanent approach. There is a particular commitment concerning the matter being evaluated (which could be called the evaluandum). Its essential and true form must be distinguished, free from distortions which disguise its potential, its true nature. It should be assessed only in the light of its own avowed, true and distinctive objectives.

Usually the commitment is a positive one; the true nature posited is good. So, in what follows we will often use 'essentialism' rather than 'positive essentialism'. However, there can also be negative commitments and negative posited essences. Whether 'essentialism' is used inclusively or implicitly positively should be clear from the context.

Most characteristically, an essentialist approach will tend to treat unsuccessful examples of the policy it advocates as not being 'true' examples. Thus (Ekanayake 1978, 127)

For example, education is generally assumed to be conducive to social, political and economic harmony and advancement of a people, but it can also cause unrest and decline in these spheres. The essentialist analyst would then argue that the reason for the latter situation is because the type of education imparted and received is not 'real' or 'true' education. The [instrumentalist]<sup>6</sup> or non-essentialist analyst will argue that education cannot solve all the problems in a society or that some types of education can serve only some kinds of purpose.

So, an essentialist approach tends to expect that the policy will have a great, that is a problem-resolving, impact on desired ends. A non-essentialist (instrumentalist in a wide sense) approach tends to expect policy to have only a limited impact, and/or that different forms of the policy will have different appropriateness in different situations. In face of a limited or negative policy impact on the desired ends, the essentialist tends to infer that the policy under evaluation was not a true example of the championed form. The non-essentialist may not be surprised and will therefore not rule the experience out of court but try to consider it situationally.

Essentialism thus has a restrictive approach to the definition and recognition of the policy or institution being evaluated, with a tendency to insist that it is *the* correct delimitation, that it identifies the real meaning, the objective essence corresponding to the term

(a matter to which we return in Section 6(a)). This could be called an instance of *properism* in definition which contrasts with the form of situationalism (or the 'Popperism') of the instrumentalist approach (see Popper 1945, Vol. II, Ch. 14, esp. p. 97, and 1957, Sections 31 and 32 on 'situational logic').

This vindicatory, affirmatory, essentialist stance in defence of a policy or institution (with the evaluandum 'properly' conceived and 'properly' assessed) is indeed often explicit as when authors describe and defend their statements as personal affirmations of faith or belief which are not made by disinterested observers or neutral researchers but are, for example, '...vindicatory statements of what cooperatives are or ought to be...'. .

Essentialism will give special stress to the distinctive internal ideals and valuations and interests of its recommended policy or institution. With instrumentalism it is the goals rather than the means to attain them which tend to be seen as not requiring much defence or even close examination. With essentialism, the commitment to the valued essential and proper form of the policy or institution is likely to result in the means being so treated, the means and the ends being one and the same thing in the true form of the policy or institution. A further likely result of this is that, with the policy means at this one level being taken more or less as vindicated or endorsed, the overwhelming part of attention will be given simply to how to implement it, how to remove distorting factors and thus how to let it realize its potential. Typically, insufficient attention may be given to alternatives to providing the conditions for its hoped-for flowering, or to considerations of relative costs and likelihoods. (For some further examples and tendencies, see Hambrick; Suchman esp. Ch. 8, 143-4; and Borgatta..)

Viewing the four approaches now defined and introduced along a single dimension, they can be placed like this: Essentialist - Immanent - Transcendent - Instrumentalist. Moving from left to right there is, roughly speaking, less and less concern with the particular features, values, concepts and interests of the evaluandum. At the left hand extreme there is the danger of a question-begging and involuted defensiveness - cum - affirmation. At the right hand extreme there is the danger of a value insensitivity in which everything becomes the means toward some remote unquestioned ends.

The approaches need, however, to be seen in more than one dimension. In Section 6, after the examination in the next two sections of a particular case, we will return to matters of their comparisons and contrasts in theory.

#### 4. SOME COOPERATIVES DEBATES: OVERALL POSITIONS

We move now to some instances of debate about the performance of, and policy for, rural cooperatives in developing countries. Some reasons for this choice of case were given in the Introduction.

Anything short of an extremely lengthy presentation of an evaluative debate faces a number of dilemmas. On the one hand discussion must be kept to a manageable length, and must pursue overall aspects of an argument and not just a 'few follies' (Stretton, 126), or every detail of a particular position. This is particularly difficult when it emerges that a particular source - and even more a school of thought developing over time - may contain a variety of analytical and philosophical positions (and indeed a systematic use of inconsistencies and ambiguities towards a common purpose is an important issue but requires the most painstaking exposition). On the other hand, it is desirable to show that not merely straw-men have been destroyed and to demonstrate that standards of accurate interpretation and representation of entire positions and individual propositions have fallen, through the detailed quotation of sources. But each example may then call forth a mass of buttressing quotation.

In the absence of such an extremely lengthy presentation we therefore stress that what is present in this and the following sections does not purport to be a set of exhaustive representations of particular sources, or of the development - possibly progressive development - of particular writers' positions over time. Even less can it be a full picture of the entire subject of assessing rural cooperatives' performance and potentialities. What is presented is a critique of various sets of published propositions, which represent what are, at the very minimum, strong tendencies in their corresponding sources, drawn on in sufficient depth to indicate some of the complexities in evaluative argument.

##### (a) *The 1966-1970 UNRISD Studies*<sup>7</sup>

(i) What were the UNRISD studies? The UNRISD studies of rural cooperatives and planned change were carried out in 1967-71, and published through the early 1970s. They attempted a full review of the available literature, and were oriented not only to the principles and philosophy of cooperatives but also to assessments of their performance in practice. They supplemented this with a large number of new studies. They did not ignore successes and concentrate on failures, as has been alleged,<sup>8</sup> but aimed to convey an overall and representative picture of performance up to the end of the 1960s in Africa,

Latin America and Asia. In attempting such a comprehensive world view, they were and, despite their faults, remain, ten years later, unique in the literature.

The UNRISD studies were definitely not carried out, as has been alleged, by 'academics in ivory towers' who were 'taking pot shots at cooperatives from a safe distance'. They were subject from the outset to an advisory board in which prominent cooperativist agencies<sup>10</sup> were fully represented.

(ii) In their general approach, the studies aimed to make an immanent appraisal. This was so that they would not be either blamed by some or praised by others for taking a transcendent position.<sup>11</sup>

They were similarly oriented in large part to the making of constructive criticisms and recommendations and not only to the evaluation of past and present performances, good and bad. So they considered both present and alternative cooperative policies.

(iii) The criteria used in assessing the performance of cooperatives were thus goals which cooperatives, cooperative movements and cooperatives policies themselves, gave as their main aims, including both economic and social goals. It was established during the preliminary period of the research that not only did these goals tend to be almost universal and common to all cooperatives and cooperative policies, but also that they went beyond cooperatives alone in their reference to, for example, production, equity participation and so on. To this extent, therefore, the general frame of reference which UNRISD adopted also went beyond cooperatives.

The studies tried not to impose one selected definition of cooperatives. It is in any case impossible to produce a single simple definition which could fit all the relevant cases (as is further discussed in Section 5(b)). That some unity could be found in the common stated aims of so many organizations in so many countries and thus that immanence could be adopted in both concepts and criteria in such a widely ranging comparative study, was a discovery made only in the course of the research. It had not been anticipated at the outset.

A weakness of the criteria used in the UNRISD studies is one which is common to many social studies and development policy promulgations alike, namely, their criteria of judgement were often not quantified or easily quantifiable. Probably there is now scope, especially at the project level, for undertaking further case studies using methods drawn from the fields of socio-economic ('social') indicators and social cost-benefit analysis. It is, however, to be noted that some studies on these questions for the FAO (including those by Kuhn

and Stoffregen) conclude that there is no simple and generally valid set of indicators available so that evaluation at present remains in important part a matter of judgement.

(iv) With regard to the formulation of the area of study, another weakness was noted in the course of the UNRISD project itself, namely, a lack of extensive and direct comparison of cooperatives with other institutional approaches to rural development. Such comparison was not precluded in it, however, as it would be in research made from an essentialist approach. UNRISD was not attempting to provide an alternative institutional panacea to cooperatives, nor did it reject cooperatives *per se*.<sup>12</sup>

(v) With regard to the type of analysis followed the studies sought not to identify 'inherent defects' or 'inherent strengths'<sup>13</sup> but rather the conditionalities of events and processes and causes and effects. They sought also to judge the likelihood of fulfillment of the relevant conditions<sup>14</sup> and of costs.<sup>15</sup>

A weakness of analysis and presentation is that while the findings were carefully qualified in many ways, they retained nonetheless - being the results of a cross-sectional study - a 'factor analysis' form in their final presentation in which time-frame and period-frame considerations were not given enough attention. Developmental cycle analysis, for example, was not essayed, and the historical analysis that figured prominently in the case studies received insufficient attention in the main conclusions and recommendations.

In other words the studies needed to take even further steps in the direction of situational, appropriately qualified, non-essentialist analysis, than they did.

(vi) UNRISD's main conclusions were very far from being the sweeping condemnation which some cooperativists<sup>16</sup> have described them to be (and as has been already remarked, this is in some sense a puzzle).<sup>17</sup> Rather they provided evidence for a need for some major re-thinking of cooperativist policies, and for at any rate a cautious and selective promotion. They doubted whether cooperatives would be satisfactory, let alone the best, instruments for the expressed purposes of those promulgating them, in many - perhaps the majority - of cases. Where it was concluded that cooperatives might be satisfactory instruments, UNRISD proposes measures to help fulfill this potential.

So, broadly, what was proposed and to a large extent demonstrated was a more selective approach to cooperative promotion and policy. Subsequent studies<sup>18</sup> by various authors have built on this and other similar work,

and avoided some of its weaknesses, e.g. by having fuller direct comparison with alternative institutions for rural development. The conclusions of all this later work, however, remain broadly similar to, and substantially in line with, those of the UNRISD project.

- (b) *Two 1977 survey studies: 'A Review from within the Co-operative Movement' and 'Cooperatives and the Poor: A Comparative Perspective'*

For an 'Experts' Consultation on 'Cooperatives and the Poor' convened in July 1977 by the ICA two review studies were prepared.<sup>19</sup> (They were published in April 1978 together with an Abstract of Proceedings and an Interim Report entitled 'The Loughborough Statement.'). We now characterize and compare these two studies.

(i) In their formulation of the area for discussion and analysis, both these papers directly address themselves to cooperatives' issues<sup>20</sup> if from different points of view. The 'Review from Within the Cooperative Movement' seems often to assume that cooperatives are necessarily the best strategies to be followed for rural development so it tends, therefore, to seek just the best ways in which they could be introduced and fostered. It is limited in the main, but not entirely, to an essentialist approach. As such it greatly understates the nature of the problem posed, by the UN, for the meeting convened by ICA. It poses (subsections 52 & 53) as 'The Basic Question' what is '...the answer to such questions as what are the conditions of structure, organization, control and management of cooperatives that are likely to lead to greater economic and social benefits for the poor and those that are likely to militate against them.' This leaves aside completely all consideration of the likelihood and cost of fulfillment of the pertinent conditions - compared with alternatives and with qualification according to time and place and sector.

The second paper (subtitled 'A Comparative Perspective') takes a much broader approach. It asks questions first of all about what are the possible rural development policies that could and should be pursued, what goals should they aim at, and what are the relevant conditions and constraints. Only then does it go on to ask whether there is or is not a part for cooperatives to play in achieving these goals and in these circumstances. It supposes that:

...there must be a critical examination as to whether cooperative institutions are necessarily the best suited for removing [constraints in the way of improving living standards of the poor] and to ascertain the ways of ensuring the various internal and external preconditions needed for

the effectiveness of cooperative organizations. Such an examination may frequently suggest that these preconditions cannot materialize and that therefore alternative institutions may be relatively more efficient in reaching the poor (Section IB; 31 of 1978 ICA Report).

This is an open view that is neither *pro* nor *contra* cooperatives in any general sense.

(ii) The papers differ with regard to the background picture of development possibilities against which each was prepared, and which critically influences, and is affected by, the other stages of problem formulation, specification of criteria, assessment of prospects, etc.

The approach of the 'Comparative Perspective' is informed by a clear hypothesis about certain structural features of typical LDC economies and the sobering implications of the limits thus set on the potential of various types of incrementalist change, in particular those intended to help poorer groups. Whether or not the hypothesis<sup>21</sup> is accepted it does treat this critical area in the clear and consistent fashion it demands.

'The Review from within the Cooperatives Movement' is less rigorously informed by an overall and comparative perspective. At one point: 'What is needed is a new and distinct strategy of development for the poorest people, a strategy that aims mainly at self sufficiency in food for the small producers...a rural strategy of parallel systems, one modern, the other traditional, but with special aid and appropriate technology...' (Subsection 27). So the creation of a new system incremental to the existing dominant system is envisaged.

Yet shortly after this it is argued: 'What is apparently needed to bring about fundamental change is a political and social transformation that shifts the power structure governing the economy' (Subsection 29). Presumably it is being proposed that this is not possible, and, therefore, that an incremental system must be established. But no attention is given to possible implications (perhaps positive, but more likely negative) of the existence of a dominant privileged system (by the power it wields as well as by its pre-emption of limited resources and opportunities) for the likelihood of establishment of a special new system for the poor, or for its nature if established;<sup>23</sup> or the relevance of commercial cooperatives (or their prospects) for a primarily self-sufficiency system.

Here we see the limitations of an approach which starts with individual cooperatives and their requirements rather than with posing key overall questions.<sup>24</sup> The preoccupation with cooperative promotion may engender some looseness in macro-thinking, since its main

conclusions have already been derived.

(iii) On the question of values and criteria there is another important contrast between the two papers. The first, 'From within the cooperative movement', speaks in a unitary way of 'the proper relationship that should exist between cooperatives and the government' (Sub-section 88), of an ideal of a completely independent cooperative movement and a state which simply limits itself to full support and encouragement. But prescriptions and relations which may 'fit' particular kinds of society and ideology, time and place, may not 'fit' others. It is, then, unclear in this reduction to one 'proper' relationship precisely who is talking to whom. 25

In this regard also the second paper adopts a more flexible position in accepting the reality that cooperatives have been expected, by those aiding them, to serve a variety of socio-political and economic objectives - '...ranging from self help and grass-roots participation to welfare and distribution, including exploitation of economies of scale and social control over resource allocation and mobilization', and recognizing that these various objectives are to a significant extent in conflict.

The approach in the second paper is not necessarily inconsistent with attaching particular value to the classic cooperativist goals. But it seems generally closer to what we described at the beginning of this paper as a more instrumental approach to cooperatives such as might be taken by government policy makers with no substantial prior leanings either towards, or away from, cooperativism. In the first paper, in contrast, some distinctive (but not definitive) cooperativist values seem to bulk much larger. Being in part an affirmation of personal belief or faith, it is less instrumental than inspirational and commemorative. It is, indeed, described by its author as the statement '...not of a disinterested observer or a neutral researcher but rather a vindicatory statement of what cooperatives are or ought to be.' In this regard it is very similar to the ICA rejoinder to the UNRISD studies (e.g. as by Stettner).

(iv) Inspirational literature presents problems in evaluative development studies which are often clearly related to, if not actually the same as, those we describe as essentialist. But these are not the same problems as those which have been recently much discussed in the value-free/value-loaded debate in social science. They relate more to the polarization between on the one hand the positions of the faithful and the fellow travellers and on the other those of even immanent critics

who are seen here as subversive heretics.

Essentialist development studies incline sometimes to seek to measure the worth of a policy or a policy study by the degree of devotion on the part of its supporters or makers to some revealed 'one true path' or another. Obviously, however, such a degree of valuation can attach to other positions as well.

(c) *The 1977 Loughborough consultation*

A number of professionals in the field of cooperatives and cooperative studies were invited to address themselves to the subject 'Cooperatives and the Poor'. It was for this meeting that the two reports just discussed were contributed as position papers. A conference report-cum-abstract and a text entitled 'The Loughborough Statement' have been subsequently published, together with the two background studies.

(i) On the question of definitions, the Statement essayed a consensual definition of cooperatives, which we will consider later. There is also some treatment of defining 'the poor', but this, e.g. in its talk of the 'weak', is inadequate, if 'the poor' then become defined as the overwhelming bulk of the population because this may divert attention from the needs of e.g. the bottom 40%<sup>26</sup> even though these have been less discussed in the past. It does not do justice to the alternative formulations that were presented at the Conference.<sup>27</sup> This weakness in definition naturally affects much of what follows in the report.

(ii) In its analysis, the report proceeds to a number of unfortunate assertions. For example:

1. 'Cooperation could, theoretically and in the long run, resolve most if not all problems of development' (Rapporteur's summary, 7). This is then qualified by saying that cooperatives are not 'a substitute for income transfers and for enlightened national policies'. It seems that where cooperatives can make a contribution, there they 'resolve problems'; and this is a source of merit. But where they cannot make a contribution, this is not a source of de-merit, but the responsibility of the non-fulfilled necessary complementary conditions.

2. Similarly, 'Cooperatives are valuable - indeed, in the view of many, irreplaceable instruments in the promotion of social justice. However, they are not usually equipped nor in general intended to redistribute wealth' (Ibid. 7). No mention is made of the more relevant question of the redistribution of income, which

can of course also contribute in the longer-run to wealth redistribution. Presumably income redistribution is, then, included in cooperativism's range of relevance.

Yet later it is noted that 'On the other hand, cooperatives seldom utilize fully their potential for meaningful assistance to the poorer categories of the community. They frequently fail to enlist them as active members and, when they do, they frequently fail to give them the full benefit of membership, including preferential treatment as allowed under existing or improved by-laws' (Ibid, 7). So the question is to what degree this potential for the promotion of social justice is a real as opposed to a nominal potential, i.e. under what conditions could it be realized, and how plausible are these conditions. But this is not sufficiently discussed in the report.<sup>28</sup> For example, the uncomfortable 'equity-decentralization dilemma' (that State paternalism may be essential in some markedly unequal societies if development resources are to reach poorer groups) that is stressed in the 'Comparative Review' paper is skimmed over in the consultation statement.

3. Without qualification, the rapporteur presents as the consultants' judgement: 'In the field of cooperative development, as in others, the character of the community concerned is the major determinant' (Ibid, 15).

(iii) The report's proposals are on similarly excessively unitary and misleading consensual lines. For example, 'Education at all levels but primarily the education of cadres is the key to a more significant contribution of cooperatives to the advancement of the poor' (Ibid, 7).

The tendency to represent evaluative discussion in a prematurely and simplistically consensual form calls for close attention. Probably with any summary participants can complain about exclusion or oversight. But some summaries aim, among other things, to give some specification of any areas and types of genuine disagreement, uncertainty and doubt (including doubt about the type of simple guidelines a conference may seem to be seeking) that have emerged. Other summaries seek to report and thus to generate a spurious consensus.

##### 5. ISSUES IN THE EVALUATION OF COOPERATIVES: POSITIONS COMPARED

In the preceding account of some positions presented in the discussion of rural development cooperatives we have tried to facilitate an understanding of the structures

of, and differences between, the positions by presenting each by and large in the sequence that was presented in Section 2 as a simple conceptual picture of the process of evaluation. However, not only is our picture of the positions as yet very incomplete but also there is much to be gained by direct comparison of the positions at each of the steps and sub-steps in the process. We have not the space here for a full exposition so we shall look only at four steps or sub-steps.

The first concerns the treatment of alternatives to cooperatives in the step of formulating the problem of evaluating cooperatives. The second concerns the problem of definition and recognition of 'cooperatives', a part of the stage of establishing the concepts for use in pursuing the formulated problem. The third is the central issue of the specification of the criteria for judgement. The fourth concerns the nature and scope of the policy prescriptions drawn from the analysis and evaluation of past performance.

(a) *Problem formulation: the treatment of alternatives to cooperatives*

What stands out about some of the problem formulations we have seen is their lack of explicit reference to alternatives to cooperatives. But reference to alternatives should be a critical part of evaluative and prescriptive analysis. The weakness of the UNRISD studies here has been noted - though they did lend themselves to easy generalization and use by later comparative studies.

The two reports for the Loughborough Consultation (considered in Section 4(c)) provide a sharp contrast in formulation. As we saw, 'the Comparative Perspective' assessed cooperatives within a wider perspective of overall purposes and possibilities, and with comparison as a constant dimension. In the other report, no clearly structured perspective is established and the report then limits itself (as seen in its 'Basic Question') to considering how cooperatives could be better introduced and fostered. This is not invalid in itself. It is invalid if it seeks to provide a basis for overall policy.

The 'Review from Within...' is not alone in this sort of formulation. Dülfer's important study (presented as the major background report to the 1972 ICA/FAO et al. Open World Conference on the Role of Agricultural Cooperatives in Development) makes no mention of alternatives in its analysis of, and prescriptions for, policies towards cooperatives. As he says in his conclusion, his study 'follows a praxeological approach', describing optimal cooperative operation and its requirements. Unfortunately this means that constraints,

alternatives and choice are neglected. Similarly, Stettner's polemical article focuses on the 'pre-requisites' for cooperatives' success and on *how* to fulfil them, to the virtual exclusion of *whether* to fulfil them. The only references to alternatives (204, 217) are of the type: 'What are these supposed alternatives?'

Such neglect of alternatives cannot be justified on any plausible set of valuations, or any plausible assessment of the potential of cooperatives or the range and potential of available alternative uses of policy resources.<sup>29</sup> For example no writer would explicitly avow such an overwhelming predisposition for cooperatives *per se* as on that count to feel no need to look at alternatives; and formerly influential notions of cooperatives as being *the* ideal development tool (through for example their supposed fulfilment of 'social prerequisites' for economic development<sup>30</sup>) have now been substantially discredited.<sup>31</sup>

In the face of listed real alternatives, one response is: But many of these are cooperatives! Aren't they farmers' groupings, involving participation and aiming at an equitable distribution of costs and benefits? And so on.<sup>32</sup> In other words a fairly permissive definition of cooperatives is commonly taken as definitive, ignoring many features of the alternative institutions, and retaining only vague terms like 'participation', 'grouping' and 'equitable'.

A sister of this response is: cooperatives may sometimes fail, but in those circumstances so too would the alternatives.<sup>33</sup> While this usefully points to limits set by the policy environment, it is not a sufficient guide. For example, the issue is not some overall average record of each institutional type in all circumstances, but whether in particular circumstances unsuitability of one type implies that all of the other types will be equally unsuccessful. The answer to this must be no.

We must conclude that a problem formulation which systematically excludes the consideration of alternatives to cooperatives is not a legitimate way of approaching the problem of policy to rural cooperatives.<sup>34</sup>

(b) *Conceptualization: the definition of cooperatives*

This question deserves attention because there has been a disruptive lack of consensus over usage. There is no standard usage arising from legal definition, for this varies greatly between countries and, further, many cooperatives are in any case not legally registered.<sup>35</sup> Differences in usage can then go deep for differences here reflect, and contribute to, other differences; so mere 'translation' from one pattern of usage to another

may not suffice for common understanding and interpretation.

We saw that the UNRISD studies allowed their approach to the definition of cooperatives to emerge as part of their general immanent approach to evaluation. UNRISD was willing to recognize as cooperatives a set of institutions which were not only marked by common proclaimed objectives (which provided a common framework for assessment), but were also called cooperatives, and generally both legally recognized as such and members of organizations affiliated to international cooperative federations.

Exception has been taken to this approach by some cooperativist writers.<sup>36</sup> They argued that UNRISD looked at many non-genuine cooperatives, whose common failure contributed to a quite misleading picture of the record and potential of cooperatives. This argument may or may not contain some truth but the contrast of this exclusive approach to definition with the permissive approach used in another context is an unacceptable inconsistency.

Also unacceptable is the tendency of some cooperativist writers to essentialist definition. Attempts to establish definitive lists of specific 'characteristics of cooperative organizations' (e.g. the Rochdale principles) are no longer so frequent. It is easily shown<sup>37</sup> that none of these specific features is in fact common to all cooperative forms (using the tests of whether people's intuitive judgement is satisfied and whether anybody actually sticks even approximately to such a definition). However, uniquely definitive sets of principles of a more general nature are still in fashion with some. Seeking broadly to identify such principles for an institutional type is certainly useful up to a point. But there will remain an irreducible historical element to any movement, and an irremediable degree of vagueness to its supposed fundamental principles, such that it cannot be encapsulated by a neat definition. That authors who appreciate the limitations of lists of specific defining characteristics themselves may not appreciate those at the more general level too<sup>38</sup> is indicative of how strong essentialist tendencies may be in the ways in which we may all think.

The 'Review from Within the Cooperative Movement' provides such an example. After recognizing the existence of four main ideologies of cooperativism, and stating its own preference for a particular position within the 'Cooperative Sector School', it subsequently implicitly takes that particular ideology as defining what is genuine, or true, cooperativism. We saw this in the treatment of state-cooperatives relations. Similarly, it is led to note that (Subsection 75) 'Cooperatives,

for some inexplicable reason, are the only popular movement that has not strained itself or paid a great price to propagate its message (throughout the world).' This is rather less inexplicable if we remember the variety of forms of cooperativism, avoid treating one form as genuine or definitive, but yet note the predominance of a particular modified-capitalist form in Western countries in this century.

We can look in contrast at the 'Comparative Perspective', which as we saw adopted a more flexible position. This is similar to that of B.F. Youngjohns,<sup>39</sup> also a cooperativist, but one who stresses that there are several types of genuine cooperativism and no one true one. Youngjohns notes the past and continuing confusion arising out of applying judgements appropriate to one conception of cooperatives to cases guided by other conceptions; and, one may add, by applying *only* such judgements.

The Loughborough Statement (paras 6 to 8) presented an attempt at a concise consensual treatment of this question of definition. Para. 7: 'The prevailing view is that it would be vain to seek a universally agreed definition and that what is essential is not the name but the functionality of the association in relation to its declared objectives.' This is close to UNRISD's approach (though it then goes in a different direction on specifics<sup>40</sup>). Thus: 'There were instances in which cooperatives conforming to the usual principles were not serving the poor, or only serving them incidentally, while others clearly imposed by the government were taking practical measures to reduce inequalities.' That the same could be said with respect to any, and all, of the other goals proclaimed by cooperatives, is at best only a partial defence.

### (c) *Evaluative criteria*

We have already described the UNRISD studies' immanent approach to the specification of criteria, noted some of the studies' limitations and contrasted their approach with the respectively more essentialist-cum-inspiration-al and more instrumentalist approaches adopted in two other studies, with particular references to the former's treatment of state-cooperative relations.

In this former study (Subsection 103, para. 1, 81), the UNRISD approach is criticized as follows:

Time and time again, the reader of these studies is left to wonder who should be setting the goals for cooperatives and on what assumptions they are being set by persons outside the movement. The objectives set for a cooperative must, in the first place be those of the members and their elected

leaders, not those of government which is seeking to control them, or of bureaucrats who are remote from them, or researchers who are only academically interested in them (See also the Loughborough Statement, para. 34).

Specifically, this criticism is misdirected because of the simple fact, as stated, that the UNRISD studies adopted the goals proclaimed by the movements themselves as criteria.<sup>41</sup> That an assessment on such lines should be made can hardly be doubted. That assessments from other starting-points should also be essayed and presented is undoubtedly also true. That a plurality of starting-points is legitimate and indeed desirable has the corollary that the criticism is also misdirected at a general level. Whatever the operational and the proclaimed objectives of an institution, and howsoever they have been set, they cannot be overridingly binding as criteria for subsequent *assessments* of the institution's performance. No one starting-point has a privileged status. However (and as we have just seen in section (b)), there is a common tendency, particularly by defenders of 'this movement of ours', to slip into such a presumption.

A third level of weakness of the criticism is, again, the assumption that only one type of cooperative movement is feasible and desirable, one in which operational objectives are set in a certain way regardless of circumstances and values, of time and place and aspiration. But on this matter argument and evidence do not point in only one direction.<sup>42</sup> So Youngjohns, while sharing the preference expressed in the passage just quoted, also evenhandedly notes successful cases of cooperatives in quite different relations to the State, part of quite different conceptions of cooperativism.

It would be possible to consider some further points made in debate on criteria (for example, the asymmetrical application by some writers, to others but not themselves, of standards of criterion precision; or the question of supposedly overlooked classes of benefits (typically 'social' or 'indirect' or 'long-run'), i.e. supposedly overlooked criteria).<sup>43</sup> Here we will only present briefly some responses to evaluation studies expressed with reference to values-specification.

One response is of the form: But cooperatives are *not to blame* for the absence of preconditions for their success. This is in itself reasonable,<sup>44</sup> but one seeks not to assign blame but to identify relevance. But the fear of being blamed arises out of the tendency to think in terms of unconditional attributes; for then the subject criticised has been found 'essentially' blameworthy.

A related response is: 'But cooperatives are *not meant* to help the poorest, those without productive assets. Again it might be reasonable to say that cooperatives are not to blame, given the nature of their environment, for not helping the poorest; but this is also a limitation, an absence of merit, and they are 'meant to help' in the sense that they and others include helping the poorest as a stated objective. The response stands uneasily next to a point used elsewhere: 'Cooperative philosophy and theory are imbued with respect and concern for the poor' (Loughborough Statement, para. 21). Stripped of defensiveness, an insistence on cooperatives' 'true' goals reduces to the argument that the goals given to rural cooperatives in LDCs have been beyond them, and that in many cases new policies and perhaps new organizations are needed.<sup>45</sup>

(d) *Prescription and policy recommendation*

We can distinguish here three types of prescription. The first concerns the internal improvement of policies directly involving cooperatives; the second is about policies in cooperatives' environment; the third is the strategic specification of areas in which cooperatives should be furthered and those in which not, and where some alternative course should be pursued.

As we have seen, cooperativists writing on rural development often very largely concentrate on the first type of prescription, together with giving some but often unsatisfactory attention to the second. And there is rarely any proper treatment of the strategic third type.<sup>46</sup> This past lack of delimitation perhaps reflected genuine optimism, especially with such a seemingly open field in which to spread Co-operation; but also perhaps the essentialist tendency to fear any admission of limited relevance. Prescriptions have instead tended to be on the lines of:

- fulfil the prerequisite for cooperatives' success; and
- lack of success clearly indicates the need for greater commitment of resources, and more patience.<sup>47</sup>

The former prescription carries all the dangers of prerequisite thinking (see footnote 31). To say 'provide *sufficiently* favourable conditions' would be revealingly unsatisfactory, for we are interested in the effective use of *scarce* resources, through reference to alternative uses.

When cooperatives have essayed the third strategic type it has often been in response to criticism, and unfortunately in the 'But cooperatives aren't meant to do...' mould. Another such response was, as we saw earlier, to assert that others' prescriptions are a general dismissal

of cooperatives.<sup>48</sup> We saw that this was a quite inaccurate picture of the UNRISD studies. We have argued that part of the reason for this misrepresentation is that the tendency to think in unconditional essentialist terms results in perceiving criticism as rejection.

Fuller analysis of this puzzle would be possible and desirable if space permitted. In the space that remains we will instead extend the synoptic view (in Section 3(c)) of the relation between different types of approach. This leads on to a fuller general theoretical picture of essentialism and finally (in Section 7) an essentialist example from another field to help indicate how widespread that pattern may be.

Even though we have only been able here to consider just four aspects of these cooperatives debates, and these not fully, it should be clear how the various aspects and stages in evaluative positions are interconnected: for example, how the formation of concepts may affect the (often implicit) specification of evaluative criteria, and hence the formulation of the problem area, and thus in turn influence the range of policy prescriptions considered, and so on. In the following Section we look more generally at how various features may fit together within an overall evaluative approach.

## 6. SOME MORE THEORY

### The Relations of Different Approaches and the Structure of Essentialism

In this section we add some qualifications and refinements concerning the nature of our two pairs of approaches. The distinctions they highlight are not absolute; but this does not mean that they are not useful and generally applicable. Nor are the sets of distinctions exhaustive; for example, another valuable distinction, as will be introduced below, is between higher and lower-level approaches. Although there are many types of relevant distinction their important correlations in their incidences in practice need to be drawn out. These correlations are complicated by the fact that simple 'logical' linkages between elements in a position may be overridden by the workings of a deeper 'socio-logic'. This can be illustrated from essentialism, to which special attention is given, for reasons that will shortly be made clear.

#### (a) *Types of Variation and Correlation*

As was said when introducing our two pairs of approaches (in Section 3) they do not constitute a comprehensive catalogue. There are many dimensions of variation relevant to evaluation approaches. Another important

distinction is between *higher* and *lower* level approaches, and concerns the character and level of the goals and objectives used. 'Lower' level evaluation is in terms of the specifics of the activity concerned, e.g. numbers of schools opened, numbers of pupils enrolled, attendance records, etc. 'Higher' level evaluation is in terms of more general objectives, e.g. literacy, with respect to which the specific goals must ultimately be justified. (This distinction even more than others is clearly a matter of context and degree, e.g. literacy itself may be 'lower' in another context.)

With so many dimensions of variation, the four stances that were introduced in Section 3 are not themselves whole approaches but, strictly speaking, just some individual positions or incomplete combinations of positions in these dimensions. So of course they may be found together: e.g. in an approach which is both immanent and higher level. Fortunately the number of logically coherent and plausible combinations is less than the number that is conceivable, though still large. There are patterns in the coexistence of these various possibilities.

For example, transcendent evaluation, which does not try to apply the concepts and criteria internal to the policy or institution being considered, is very likely to be 'higher level' in focus, i.e. to make no reference to the specific targets in terms of which the policy operates. Immanent evaluation, however, is as likely to be higher as lower; it cannot be assumed to be lower-level. These links (and also the observation that higher-lower distinction is one of degree) are brought out by Ekanayake (1978) as follows:

Whereas James states simply, 'Programme evaluation can be defined as the measurement of success in reaching a stated objective' but Anderson would go further in his definition of goals by examining the value of the goals themselves. [Evaluation] is also concerned with determining whether the goals themselves are valid...When one proceeds to examine the value of goals themselves, one proceeds beyond the stated objectives and therefore beyond immanent criticism. Even if this shift beyond the objectives is for the limited purpose of determining whether the objectives have a relationship to the underlying assumptions, it gets the analyst involved in transcendentalism to some degree, in that the underlying assumptions provide the theoretical basis for objectives...[If] these objectives have no relationship to the assumptions, the analyst will of necessity be required to make an assessment as to what the objectives should have been in view of the assumptions. He then goes beyond the stated objectives to unstated ones, and to the assumptions and theoretical bases of these various stated and unstated objectives, which is what transcendent criticism is about. (pp.6-7).

One can similarly look at the way that, for example, instrumentalism is linked to other categories. In its general detachment from what is being evaluated it is almost certain not to use lower-level criteria, and also to be transcendent, constituting an independent as well as a higher level approach. Scriven's goal-free evaluation, for example, with its references to general needs and so on, combines all these traits. In this particular case there is explicit and strongly theoretical attention to the nature of the abstract ends which are to be served. However, in some other cases of instrumentalism this is missing. The danger is that everything within range becomes merely a means towards some remote and insufficiently examined abstract ends.

When generalized goals have become very common currency then even an immanent evaluation may well appear very similar to an instrumentalist one. This was so for the cooperatives debates treated above. The UNRISD studies, taking as their criteria cooperatives' stated goals such as increased production, equity, participation and the like, are yet close in many ways to an approach such as in the 'Comparative Perspective' study which did not try to evaluate cooperatives in their own terms.

These characteristic connections between different types of feature generate characteristic, if not invariable, types of overall approach. They are another reason for the choice, out of the multitude of conceivable approaches, of the four features highlighted in sections 3, 4 and 5. This applies particularly strongly to essentialism, as is drawn out in the following sub-section.

(b) *The nature of essentialism*

As has been remarked (in Section 3) the term essentialism strictly refers to the treatment of the definition of categories. This is in contrast for example to the terms higher and lower which primarily refer to the choice of goals to be used as criteria. But we have also seen how such properistic definition may be characteristically associated with other choices or elements in a wider pattern of defensive affirmation which is extremely common. So we have often here simply called this wider pattern 'essentialism'. It is because essentialism does so very much tend to form a wider standard pattern that we will have more to say about it than our other concerns. The interconnections and the possible disagreements over particular identifications of the four positions that we have represented above mean, however, that this concentration on essentialism at the same time has a broader relevance.

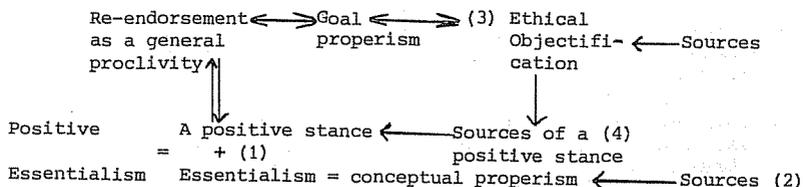
Essentialism in the process of recognition and definition of elements and terms in evaluation is, again as we have seen (in Section 3) properistic definition.<sup>30</sup> We

are especially interested in those cases where *incorporated into the properistic definition of an entity are definite performative and/or value attributes.*<sup>51</sup> In the typical case these attributes are positively valued, indeed strongly or ideally positively valued.

This conceptualization of valued performative *essences* can spread out beyond the conceptualization stage to affect other parts of the process of evaluation. Thus, for instance, with regard to 'goal specification' a means can become an end when a positive value essence is attached to it: this could be termed 're-endorsement' goal specification. The means is no longer valued in an instrumental and qualified way because under given circumstances on the whole it contributes toward the attainment of independently valued ends. It becomes instead independently valued itself. Indeed, all stages in the process can be affected by these highly positive essential valuations. Thus, definitions and recognitions at every stage can tend to exclude the classification of any actual (where this is distinguished or distinguishable from desired) performances as failures.

In theory the category is supposed to be recognized by reference to a separate set of non-evaluative and non-performative empirical criteria even if it so happens that in practice these are always found in combination with positively valued performance. Positive essentialism is closely related to an overall strategy in policy evaluation (and 'commemoration') of 're-endorsement' (Gellner, Chs. 2 and 3). Goal specification in the perspective of this essentialist approach becomes mainly a process of rationalization; an overall strategy becomes a matter mainly of vindication. However, an essentialist approach is not a strictly necessary condition for a re-endorsement or vindicatory strategy and this latter proclivity can in turn predispose towards recourse to positive essentialism. Such an approach to initial conceptualization may include various definite performative and/or value attributes - whether positive or negative, ideal or intermediate - and thus be correctly described as being essentialist and therefore related to a pre-judged approach to the making of evaluations, but it is not co-terminous with such pre-judgement.

The structure of positive essentialism as a widespread conceptual syndrome can be said to be 'equal' to goal properism plus conceptual properism, roughly speaking.



(1) In positive essentialism, a re-endorsement strategy, i.e. a prejudged positive stance to what is being taken as the evaluandum, takes the particular form of incorporating desired - indeed ideal - performance into a posited essence of the evaluandum.

(2) Conceptual properism in general may partly involve the 'bewitchment' by language which Wittgenstein described. But other sources must also be mentioned for the special case of positive essentialism.

(3) Goal properism can be understood in two senses. Firstly, the insistence that only one particular set of goals can legitimately be used for evaluation of a given case. An example of this was seen in Section 5(c) from the discussion of cooperatives. This stand can of course act defensively: criteria in assessment are to be restricted to those accepted by the evaluandum. So one possible source of this stand is simply a re-endorsement proclivity (but this is a possible rather than an inevitable expression of that proclivity). A second source is goal properism in its second sense, that of ethical objectification.<sup>52</sup> Values are taken as indubitable facts. In that case there is very probably an insistence that only the true values be used as criteria in assessment. Objectification in its turn has various sources, one of which can be suggested as follows: to think that one's own values are the only true values serves the function of ensuring the degree of belief necessary to act upon them.

(4) Amongst the possible sources of a fundamentally positive conceptualization of some institution or practice three can be mentioned here.

(i) In a way similar to the source of objectification that was noted: institutions and practices are likely to survive only insofar as they can engender secure and positive commitments on the part of those involved with them.

(ii) As a possible by-product of institutions professing goals which have been objectified by their members. Starting from the premise: 'We avow goals which are good, and are constituted to pursue such goals', thought often proceeds, plausibly but illogically, to for example:

So how can we be bad?; 'So don't blame us'; 'We aim to pursue these good goals as well as possible; so what could be better?; and so our very existence is good'; 'To do good we must exist; so we must give priority to ensuring our continued existence and to creating more of us';, etc.

(iii) It must not be forgotten that a prejudged positive stance thus tends to be self-validating. Criteria are applied and evidence and argument selected and interpreted in ways which confirm and reinforce the initial predisposition.

(c) *Complications and Conclusions*

(1) Understanding the distinction between (positive) essentialism, defined in an exact way, and re-endorsement as a more general tendency of which this more narrowly defined essentialism is only one possible expression, helps us to sort out some remaining puzzles. The approach that in Sections 4 and 5 was labelled essentialistic after its leading feature was found in a variety of expressions, going beyond essentialism in any narrow sense and including several inconsistent expressions. For example: at one point cooperatives were defined permissively and at another restrictively; no single tight essentialist definition seems to be consistently applied. Similarly, cooperatives are on occasion extolled as the ideal institution for the poor; the thousands of examples of cooperatives helping the poor are proffered; as is the respect for the poor with which cooperative philosophy and theory are imbued; yet at other points in a position, reasons are sought as to why cooperatives are 'not meant to' help the poor, and poorer groups become marginalized in discussion. Cooperatives are proposed as the ideal development tool; 'yet' elsewhere reasons are sought as to why they are 'not to blame for' these cases where they have disappointed.

These are apparent inconsistencies at a 'logic-al' level, where ideal-type distinctions are drawn and applied. But features which are simply incompatible at this 'logic-al' level may be found together in actual use not necessarily merely as errors, but as part of a more subtle 'socio-logic' of re-endorsement.<sup>53</sup> Definitional exclusiveness (in the case of failures) combined with definitional permissiveness elsewhere (in the case of successes) seems to indicate that properism in definition has broken down. At the 'socio-logic-al' level, however, there may be a consistency of purpose uniting these cases, so that even a felt consistency of properistic practice may be maintained. Consistency in purpose is likely to give a deeper consistency of effect. This deeper consistency behind apparently inconsistent practices thus lies both in the common effect of re-endorsement, and in the common source - the inspiring vision of the positively valued true essence of the evaluandum.

The coining of 'logic-al' distinctions is usually a necessary step in analysis. For initial expository purposes the positions selected for analysis have to be introduced as if they occurred in extreme and unalloyed forms. One reaches complex patterns of actual evaluation only through intermediate steps of conceptualization. Then, through qualifications and combinations of these concepts, one can capture the actual patterns. The 'unrealistic' intermediate step of drawing out the

logical structure and connections of these concepts is a necessary condition for our being able subsequently to modify them appropriately. 'Logical' discussion is thus to be used to understand the 'socio-logic' of the actual, impure, use of concepts.

In this one must understand firstly that positions are typically within a social context of thrust and counter-thrust; nearly all contributions need to be appreciated as in part responses to some other often unspecified (prior, or imputed, or feared) positions. Secondly, that features which are necessarily implied in abstract 'logic-al' discussion are found to be just tendencies in their actual use. While the structure of, say, positive essentialism may seem logically to imply for example a rejection of any delimitations on an institution's appropriateness, and indeed to generally ensure that rejection, yet, on occasion, the two may be found co-existing.

(2) Another type of complication, which makes applying distinctions difficult in some cases, is that none of them is absolute. That the higher-lower distinction is relative to context and interpretation is obvious; it is also true of the distinction between immanence and transcendence.<sup>54</sup>

In reality, and contrary to conceptual essentialism, a practice that is to be evaluated does not have associated with it some perfectly defined, completely consistent and totally sufficient set of categories, criteria and procedures by which it is to be evaluated. (In fact it is precisely because it contains some inevitable vagueness in this way that it contains the capacity for change and development in the face of new experience, including of criticism.) So immanent evaluation cannot avoid some element of transcendence, sometimes insignificant, sometimes not. Sometimes persuasion and not just demonstration may be important and if they are not understood in advance the limitations of the important tool of immanent criticism may be a source of confused disagreements. (See D. Pole.)

This has implications for applying the third type of distinction, between essentialist and instrumentalist stances. Taking essentialism as a logic-al category it is a form of pre-judgement, of bias in evaluation. An invaluable tool in identifying bias, and so in identifying essentialism, is that of immanent criticism: examining the consistency of a position in its own terms. Then if this tool has its limitations, in some cases it may not be possible to clearly identify a position as essentialist. Section 7 provides an example of a difficult case of identification.

One category may thus prove to flow into another, may require us to suspend judgement, proceed to a stage of fuller analysis, and perhaps even subsequently to respect an area of 'greyness'. Just as different positions may involve different philosophical and value premises, and it may be foolish to ignore the range of defensible premises; so, too, in classifying and judging positions these will in some cases remain an (at least presently) irresolvable relativity to premises. The categorizations remain valuable as sensitizing us to significant differences. None of this implies of course that we cannot in many cases make important progress in our judgements; neither does the desirability of fuller analysis of some questions mean that no progress has been made on others. For to learn something it is not necessary to learn everything or to first agree on every premise. In these cooperative debates, on the one hand the excessively defensive character of one school emerges clearly, and on the other hand, the modest conclusions of the UNRISD studies have received corroboration from many other contemporary and subsequent studies.

#### 7. ESSENTIALISM AND A DEBATE ON IMPERIALISM

A further understanding of the application of essentialism in evaluative debate can be gained from a brief excursion into not cooperativism but another realm of interest in development studies, namely, imperialism. To attempt this here, however briefly, will also underline our intention that the approach this paper seeks to outline should be not less useful outside of cooperative studies than within. In the interests of 'exemplary even-handedness' we must at least mention that there is also scope for analyses on these lines of many discussions of socialist strategies of development. For example the treatment of certain deeply controversial and problem-ridden strategies (e.g. the Soviet First Five-Year Plan, or the Chinese Great Leap Forward) as 'basically correct' and, more generally, the classic communist pattern of policy implementation in which the centre's policy is always 'essentially correct' so local cadres become then *either* attacked for 'commandism' or 'tailism' or whatever other deviation it suits the centre to find, *or* allowed only to share the success with the far-seeing centre.

Much of the debate early in this century on the links of capitalism with imperialism, and in particular some aspects of Joseph Schumpeter's treatment of the question<sup>55</sup> (as analyzed for instance by Stretton on

whose work we draw heavily in what follows), can be considered in one dimension as an extended illustration of the essentialist tendency in evaluative argument. Schumpeter joined with the critics of capitalism in deploring the growth of imperialism. His analysis was self-consciously an evaluation of capitalism in this regard.

This whole area of debate has features typical in the sort of discourse we are considering. It is manifestly strongly value-laden (although in general each contributor to it presented his conclusions as stemming purely from objective argument). It is addressed to the study of institutions which have arisen (or which could arise) under a near infinity of necessary (let alone sufficient) conditions. Which of the links in the chains in connection are, or are not, relevant? Which necessary conditions are to be called 'causes?' Those to which, rightly or wrongly, relevance is attached will very much depend on the categorizations used, and there is much room for argument over these. Categorizations and theories may (or may not) stand or fall together. Then what to one person seems merely definitional sleight of hand may, to its progenitor or advocate, seem on the contrary to be a substantive theory or explanation. Either may be right, or neither; but not both.

We will show how these oppositions may arise. When, and why, one position or the other is legitimate or illegitimate is also of course an issue to be pursued.

Much of the clarity and interest of Schumpeter's position comes from his acceptance of the bulk of the standard arguments which try to show how the capitalist system had become involved in imperialism. How, for example, tariffs excluded foreign competition and allowed the development of domestic cartels; how cartels with protected domestic profits but limited internal markets were led to seek external investments and markets in which theatres they came into conflict with similarly placed foreign capitalist forces. But Schumpeter did not for example accept that capitalism itself led to protectionism. In his view what had happened was that capitalism had been 'distorted' by entrenched, pre-capitalist, social groups to serve their own financial interests and atavistic ideologies.<sup>56</sup> In any event he held that the position of these ruling groups was itself not at all to be attributed to the workings of capitalism. It was simply the legacy of previous history.

Against these views there are strong points to be made, with regard for example to countries of new European settlement where entrenched traditional elites were lacking and which yet were not backward in their use of

tariffs. Even for the central European empires, which were implicitly Schumpeter's prime focus, the changing political purposes of bourgeois groups in the middle nineteenth century could be held to be vital in the re-entrenchment of ruling elites.

Our central purpose in alluding to this debate about imperialism requires us to do no more than merely note these points. It is the basic shape of the argument being used that interests us. For Schumpeter as, for example, for E.M. Winslow (Stretton, 126-130) it is true that capitalism's workings had come to serve imperialism's purposes. But, this was a distorted, not true, capitalism. It was on this consideration that their arguments rested crucially. For the former, distortion was due to the interference of pre-capitalist power elites; for the latter, to the culpable non-intervention of government. In each case we see a defensive delimitation of the concept of 'true' capitalism, the presumed subject of the evaluation. True capitalism was marked by free trade, free competition, etc.<sup>57</sup>

Schumpeter's treatment of other phases of capitalism further illustrates some of these tendencies. His analysis attributed the travail and conflict of early capitalism<sup>58</sup> in key part to the involvement and power of groups derived from pre-capitalist eras. The long-term tendency, he held, of the operation of capitalism, was to reform and rationalize its environment. Similarly in his analysis of imperialism and mature capitalism, capitalism had an inherent trajectory which was to counter and eventually to displace these. Finally, in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*,<sup>59</sup> he predicted capitalism's decline. While he had attributed its rise apparently to its inherent merits, the grounds for its decline he diagnosed not in any inherent defects but, on the contrary, in its past successes. The inheritors of those successes could afford to indulge themselves in the pursuit of some novel and less demanding form of social organization.

If any of these new forms should be considered as being in some way worse than capitalism, Schumpeter would, it seems, have said that that was not capitalism's fault. Of 'inherent tendencies' it appears that in some cases they are not weighed at all. This pattern of shedding guilty associations and clinging only to positive ones was also followed by apologists of the old order who put much of the blame for unwelcome changes on the 'corrupting influence' of capitalism.

The overall structure of the argument adduced then seems to be this:

(i) Capitalism - true, undistorted, capitalism - is defined as neither

- (a) 'social formations' in which capitalist relations of production are predominant, nor
- (b) 'The capitalist mode of production', but rather as
- (c) (1) capitalist relations of production and exchange, plus
  - (2) certain desired features such as free trade, free competition, etc.
- (ii) Capitalism - this same true capitalism - by itself would not produce war, oppression, monopoly, and protectionism.
- (iii) Rather it tends to the good, to liberty, to efficiency, to prosperity.

There appear to be basically two ways of reading the argument. One is as a tautology, the other is as a refutable theory. In the first case capitalism is defined in such a way that (ii) and (iii) automatically follow. In the second case they do not so follow; rather, (ii) and (iii) happen to be true though the opposite is logically conceivable. For Schumpeter, that tariffs were not a part of true capitalism, not a part generated 'from any tendencies of the competitive system', was 'an historical observation; to his critics it seems a childish trick of definition' (Stretton, 119 and 120).

It would probably not be correct to characterize Schumpeter's argument as purely tautologous. The definition of capitalism is thought to be validated by proposition (ii), not to logically imply it; that is, the proposed invariance in (ii) would justify the prior proposed delimitation or categorization in (i), the condition for clearly perceiving the invariance. But we have previously noted some doubts about (ii). And we may also have felt something is wrong when we looked directly at 'that "essence" of capitalism which is such a logical necessity of so much of his argument,...a sort of ghost at the party - never a thing observed, always a possibility imagined but unrealized' (Stretton, 116). Our suspicions may be aroused by various points, for example, the way in which, in every setting, capitalism tends to the good, to an inherent effectivity, while again in each setting the bad stems from the obstruction, the distortion, by non-capitalist forces.

The two ways of reading the argument are not necessarily clearly distinct. Consider for example a case where (i) does not explicitly or by logical implication require (ii) and (iii), but where its specifications are such that for the range of possible or plausible settings (ii) and (iii) would then necessarily follow from this capitalism. The argument is then a tautology for those settings but refutable in principle at a more general level. The question then is: what definitional

specifications are legitimate or, alternatively put, for what range of settings is it legitimate to have conclusions necessarily following from definitions? (See here again note 51.)

We have earlier in this paper already addressed ourselves to some intermediate cases (though very close to tautology); for example where the definition incorporates not merely desired features (which may in certain typical settings ensure desired performance) but itself incorporates an implicit setting in which it so happens that automatically there is good performance, so that good performance becomes an unacknowledged working part of the definition, a connotation carried over even to other settings.

We will not here further pursue any part of the imperialism debate, having gone far enough for the present purposes of illustrating some of the features of essentialism in evaluation while also suggesting some of the problems in identifying a particular evaluation as essentialist. We can conclude simply with two observations. Firstly, there is no assurance that within a position there lies some single definite consistently used set of categorizations or definitions which it remains only for careful examination surely to extract. Secondly, generally associated with evaluations are implicit, unstated, prescriptions and it may be that it is with these that the main point of the argument rests. They must then be identified and assessed. From the above arguments taken in isolation the implicit prescription would be: give true capitalism a chance; give it time and in the long run it will be seen to have been worthwhile.<sup>61</sup> As it stands, of course, this does not at all necessarily follow from what preceded it. Present or new prescriptions must depend on the range and the comparative costs of present or new alternatives, and so on. No prescription should be made until these too are examined.

## 8.

## CONCLUSION

In origin this paper was our response to an invitation to comment on two selected - and specially commissioned - contributions to the debate on cooperativism, (noted on p.12). In preparing it for present publication, in greatly expanded but still a very limited form, we have attempted to address ourselves to a wider audience - in the hope of being heard<sup>62</sup> - and to bring some deeper principles of the evaluation of evaluations a little nearer the surface than is perhaps usual - in the hope of being understood.

In considering what public policy evaluation theory might have to offer to development studies it should be remembered that its relatively rapid growth is not due simply to a triumphant march of 'rationality' and 'science' through the dangerous terrain of policy-making. Its growing range and richness is also a sign of the serious difficulties and multiple complexities encountered: the elusive nature of valuations; the limitations and biases of academic approaches in practical contexts; the severe problems confronting attempts to establish reliable knowledge in many policy areas; and, not least, the peculiarly political nature of evaluation studies: policy is political and there are always interests at stake. The danger is, then, that evaluation studies become such devalued currency that results are simply selected or rejected according to personal or political predilection and convenience, in disregard of those limited but valid findings which *can* be drawn from completed research.

To limit this requires not only the development of evaluation theory and method but also, and correspondingly, searching examination of evaluative argument as it concerns policy. In each case, the most basic concepts and ideas may deserve the closest attention. The methods by which this may be achieved are various.

In the limits for this exercise that we have set for ourselves nothing approaching a full presentation has been possible. For example, one useful approach (see Hambrick 1974, 469-78) turns on the nature of critiques of propositional types that could come from even the same person but acting and evaluating in different roles - such as 'advocate', 'critic', 'architect' and 'analyst'.

It is nonetheless hoped that a sufficiently elaborated presentation has been achieved to introduce a philosophically-oriented method of approach towards practical public policy issues. This requires one to go well beyond semantic - and other - analysis of categories and relations, and to proceed to propositions and the patterns in which they are used in highly value-laden argument about highly value-laden issues.

In concentrating on but one of these patterns in some detail perhaps a step has also been taken towards the analysis required of others.

#### NOTES

1. We first had the occasion to develop some of the points in this article in a brief critique we presented, as invited, at an international consultation

in 1977 on cooperatives and their pertinence or lack of pertinence, for the rural poor. That even the existence of our critique passed without mention in the proceedings of it that were published in the following year is, perhaps, some indication of the sensitivity to criticism that students of public policies can encounter. Our aim in the present paper is, however, more explicitly to try to do two things at once, namely, to develop some general ideas on evaluation as well as, and with their help, to give some of the shape of the cooperatives debate.

2. 'By now we are all beginning to realize that one of the most intractable problems is that of defining problems...and of locating problems...in the complex causal networks...' (Rittel & Webber, 157).
3. 'Probably the most difficult portion of any evaluation study is the initial phrasing of the question to be asked' (A.D. *Evaluation Handbook*, 2nd Edition, 33).
4. Whether to take A's expressed values, or B's; or what one thinks they *should* be; or what one infers they really might be; or what C tells one to take, or what one thinks C really means; or some cross between other standpoints; etc.
5. In this case we must take care to keep separate the distinction between approaches which are *lower* and those which are *higher* in focus, a distinction which concerns the character and level of the goals and objectives used. (This will be discussed in Section 6.)
6. Ekanayake uses the term 'incrementalist'. One may distinguish two types of incrementalism: (i) in terms of ends; i.e. the degree of expected progress towards goal fulfillment. An incrementalist in this sense expects limited progress; an essentialist may expect radical or marked progress, insofar as the working out of the virtuous nature of the institution of policy is not overlaid by 'distortions'. This is the sense discussed in the text. (ii) in terms of means: an incrementalism in terms of the expected rate of progress to desired ends does not necessarily imply an incrementalism in terms of chosen means. Radical or revolutionary means may yet be considered the best alternatives available.
7. The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. Directors of studies concerned were O. Fals Borda, Inayatullah and R. Apthorpe.
8. 'Cooperatives and the Poor' (ICA, 1978); Background Paper: 'A Review from Within the Cooperative Movement', 81. Cf. the findings of other major studies noted at the end of this subsection.

9. Ibid., 82, point 9.
10. I.e. agencies which as members or associates of COPAC devoted their energy and resources to the promulgation and promotion of cooperatives.
11. Cf. 'A Review from Within the Cooperative Movement' Subsection 103, point 1; and see Section 5(c).
12. Cf. 'A Review from Within the Cooperative Movement' Subsection 103, point 7.
13. Contrary to Stettner, 204; see Section 5(d) below.
14. Cf. 'A Review from Within the Cooperative Movement' Subsection 103, points 4 and 8 (UNRISD would take it as a compliment to hear:  
 What the UNRISD studies tell us is merely that if you go about the organization of cooperatives in this or that way, the results are likely to be such and so [sic]; while rejecting the 'merely'.) See also Section 4(c).
15. One defect in the previously available and the new information assembled by UNRISD was that it conveyed little about the money and other operative costs of administration of cooperatives.
16. Stettner, 204; 'A Review from Within the Cooperative Movement', Subsection 16 and Subsection 104, point 4; see Section 5(d).
17. Whether after the benefit of reading them or not. Condemnation seems often to have followed reading only such articles as those given in Note 48.
18. E.g. those undertaken by (i) the World Bank on rural development programmes in Sub-Sahara Africa; see Lele 1975; (ii) the University of Reading and the Overseas Development Institute on 'Serving the Small Farmer'; see Hunter, Bottrall & Bunting (eds), 1976; (iii) a USAID survey of the record of Cooperatives in Latin America - see UNRISD, Vol. VIII, Record of the Debate; see also T. Carroll and S. Eckstein in Nash, Dandler & Hopkins (eds), 1976; (iv) the major review of small farmer development policies published in 1976 by the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; (v) see also Widstrand (ed) respectively by A.F. Laidlaw and U. Lele.
19. Respectively by A.F. Laidlaw and U. Lele.
20. The subject to which both papers are primarily addressed is rural development in general, not the poor or the poorest rural groups in particular. They are in the main both concerned with small farms rather than other forms of production. Neither addresses itself to regional and other inter-relationships between rural and urban conditions.
21. The line of argument can be summarized as follows:  
 (a) major structural reforms may be needed to satisfactorily combine growth and equity. Fiscal changes alone can also have an effect but there are

marked limits to this. (b) The prospects of various types of incrementalist change, in the absence of major structural change, are then considered: i) undifferentiated provision of services to all farmers; ii) special provision for small farmers; iii) grass roots organizations of small farmers to reduce the cost of services; iv) to institute production cooperatives in a setting of private and capitalist organization of farming and other activities. The potential costs and limits of each of these are considered with reference both to the particular role for cooperatives, and to the relative priority of trying to establish new institutions as opposed to pursuing other tasks. Cautious and realistic judgements are provided concerning for example, (1) the time and the conditions needed for the successful development of grass roots organizations (cf. for example, the historical record of Raiffeisen cooperatives in LDCs), and (2) the likely prospects of production cooperatives in the setting noted in iv).

23. Consider for instance the separate, 'self-sufficiency', Bantustan system in South Africa.
24. Of course some 'Key...questions' may be closely inter-related with 'individual...requirements'.
25. Cf. (i) Loughborough Statement, para 34, (ii). Duffer, who despite at one stage making a formal statement of the problem of the harmonization of the targets of the state and of cooperatives, eventually reaches by the use of a series of unstated premises the same unitary conclusions as the 'Review from Within the Cooperative Movement'. That despite an initial explicit statement of the problem, conclusions are yet reached through veiled valuations and presumptions of consensuality [e.g. 67 - state farms ...don't seem desirable from the social and political point of view; but one must ask: to whom?] illustrates how powerful such tendencies are in our thinking.
26. Cf. Suchman 143: 'Substitution - an attempt to... disguise failure in an essential part of the program by shifting attention to some...defensible aspect of the program'. Remarks by HMG advisor on this point are simply not reported.
27. As e.g. in the contribution of an Indian delegate on needs and ways of distinguishing rural groups.
28. Despite specific requests made at the consultation by the U.N. representative and others.
29. Some alternatives include: (i) encouraging new private enterprises; (ii) new state or parastatal or joint sector organizations; (iii) the use of policy resources not for establishing new institutions but

for strengthening existing ones; (iv) their use not on new or existing institutions but for other tasks; (v) various forms of farmers' associations; (vi) small informal groups. And with particular respect to poverty objectives, (vii) 'welfare organizations' and 'development agencies' (e.g. Münkner,7); (viii) establishing sub-targets within the operation of existing non-cooperative organizations, e.g. that a certain proportion of operations must be directed to poorer groups; or (ix) state organizations and programmes exclusively for specific poverty groups. It cannot plausibly be argued that these possibilities do not constitute real alternatives to cooperatives in a great number of cases. For example concerning (i) (iii) and (iv), the results of close empirical studies of LDC rural product markets would support no such conclusions (see e.g. Lele (6), Section IV).

30. Dülfer, 189: 'Certainly there is hardly a better organizational means than the cooperative for achieving the dual effect of change in social and economic development' (to be read in conjunction with his earlier stress on the 'social prerequisites for economic development').
31. E.g. see the studies in P. Worsley (ed.); A. Hirschman, A. Gerschenkron, and R. Apthorpe (1969, 1977) on prerequisites notions. If space permitted, a comparison of the approaches to analyzing cooperatives' operation would also be valuable, looking not only at prerequisites notions but also at the connected essentialist ideas of 'inherent defects' and 'inherent strengths'. See also Section 5(c) and 6(a) concerning thinking in terms of unconditional attributes.
32. See e.g. Stettner, 217.
33. Cf. 'A Review from Within the Cooperative Movement', 73; The Loughborough Statement, Subsection 78.
34. Cf. Münkner,7-8: [Under certain circumstances, quasi cooperative forms which Münkner would argue should instead be called governmental or private development agencies or welfare institutions, may be more effective than cooperatives in solving development problems.] 'They may even be the only possibility to bring about planned change among the masses of the real poor in the advanced countries.'
35. Dülfer, Ch. 2.
36. E.g. Münkner,4; Stettner, 207, and the 'Review from Within the Cooperative Movement'.
37. E.g. Carter, Chs 2,3, respectively.
38. E.g. Carter, Ch.2.4 and 2.5; & Münkner, who explicitly essays a 'pragmatic' definition of a cooperative, as an 'organization formed with the primary objective

- to pursue the economic interest of its members by means of a common enterprise' (5), (i) which in fact spills over to cover partnerships and joint stock companies, (ii) illegitimately elevates one type of objective to universal primacy; and (iii) then subsequently infringes the pragmatic criterion of recognition that is being followed by asserting (8-9) that 'genuine cooperatives are marked by open membership and indivisibility of the reserve fund'.
39. Also Louis P.F. Smith, another cooperativist, in his 'The Evolution of Agricultural Cooperation'.
  40. On specifics, para. 8: '...it would be useful to consider these institutions as falling along a 'continuum' where the ideal type may be at one end and the State-directed at the other'. This is an advance over essentialist conceptualizations but still seriously oversimplifies the problem faced, for in reality the continuum is multi-dimensional and there are very few strong simple correlations of the variations in these dimensions.
  41. How it was that these goals came to be proclaimed is of course an important question. See e.g. UNRISD Vol. V, Chs 1 & 2, Vol. VII, Chs 1 & 3 and Morsinck.
  42. E.g. note the 'decentralization-equity dilemma' that may arise in some cases, as mentioned in Section 4(c).
  43. See also Borgatta, 186-87, and Suchman, 143.
  44. Though somewhat inconsistent with responses of the form: there are no real alternatives to cooperatives.
  45. As recognized in e.g. Münkner, 7-8, or Discussion Group Reports A and B at the 1975 Dresden Cooperatives Conference.
  46. E.g. the 'Review from Within the Cooperative Movement', while at one point espousing the position of the 'Cooperative Sector School', doesn't discuss the principle of delimitation of that sector but only reacts against proposed delimitations.
  47. E.g. Borgatta, quoted in Suchman, 143-44; the logic here is faulty, though the conclusion may be sound.
  48. E.g. L.G. Stettner, 204: 'On this completely inadequate basis they [a set of early 1970s studies, notably UNRISD, also Worsley (ed.), Widstrand (ed.) two works, & Hunter], concluded that Co-operation [sic] should be rejected as an approach to development in the Third World.' Also A 'Review from Within the Cooperative Movement', Subsection 7b: '...the blanket criticism and condemnation that now seems to be in fashion', and Münkner (p. 12) on "denouncing the entire concept".
  49. The same could be established for [at least three of] the other studies mentioned in Note 48.

50. It is precisely in this regard (properistic definition) that definition in essentialism is differentiated from extreme nominalism in definition. Otherwise both insist that there exists a complete, a total, specification of the content of a term.
51. We here enter the area of the 'difficult and controversial distinction' between *de re* and *de dicto*. (A.R. Lacey, *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, 133-34). The doctrine of *de re* holds that modal terms (such as 'necessary', 'may') apply to the possession of an attribute by a subject; so for example a thing's properties can be called necessary. The doctrine of *de dicto* holds that modal terms apply only to propositions, and only propositions can be necessary. This point is raised in order to emphasize the genuine problems that may arise in assessment in some cases. At the same time it should not blind us to those instances where some types of conclusion can clearly be drawn, as in parts of the discussion looked at in Sections 4 and 5.
52. This is not coterminous with ethical objectivism, the idea that certain values are rationally binding on all men at a particular time and place. For this includes the case where an ideal of procedural objectivity is recognized even though it does not, at least at present, in practice suffice to uniquely establish particular values as rationally binding though it does significantly reduce the acceptable range.
53. This term, which is variously used in sociological literature, is used here purely for a suggestive contrast to abstracted 'logic'. Our distinctions between (a) value standpoint (b) the level of logical analysis and discussion, and (c) the level of sociology, tendencies and debate, are close to those of Ernest House between 'contexts of valuation', 'justification' and 'persuasion'.
54. In practice there will sometimes be serious problems in applying this distinction: questions of degree, of the plurality within policies and institutions, and so on, will arise. It would be possible but pointless to always establish some demarcation; but this is the 'fallacy of the excluded middle', that it is necessary or useful to always divide things into A and not -A. For those cases further theoretical examination and refinement is instead the proper response. (Relatedly, there is much that could be said about the implications in particular for an immanent approach of vagueness, under specification and inexplicitness of goals.) Nonetheless, such refinements do not prevent the simple distinction from sufficing in many cases, nor do they affect

- our overall argument, so we have only introduced qualifications as and when necessary.
55. J. Schumpeter: *Zur Sociologie der Imperialismen*, 1918-1919, published in English as J. Schumpeter (a).
  56. In places he went further, and by narrowly defining imperialism as 'the objectless disposition on the part of the state to unlimited forcible expansion' (Stretton, 118) he found it simple to break any posited connection between this and capitalism, itself also narrowly defined.
  57. For Winslow, unlike Schumpeter, uncontrolled capitalism might indeed lead to protectionism and monopoly. But, in the same way that he considered uncontrolled banking an evil, the responsibility for controlling which lay with the State, he also held that the responsibility for preserving free competition and free trade lay with the State, and the failure of the State to prevent capitalism from degenerating in certain conditions into something below its 'true' and 'proper' self had to be laid at the door of the State and not of capitalism.
  58. J. Schumpeter (b).
  59. J. Schumpeter (c).
  60. An alternative not adopted by Schumpeter would be to say: it so happens that although capitalism could have caused such things, it didn't, and other things did.
  61. Schumpeter himself did not make this jump. His case for capitalism rested on a comparative analysis, with awareness of and sensitivity to the implications of specific historical heritages.
  62. Cf. footnote 1.

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