

## **Mongolian Cooperative Network – General Knowledge**

### **Some famous cooperative pioneers**

(Source: German Technical Cooperation GTZ project "Promotion of organised self-help in rural areas", Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, eMail [fv.mueller@gtz-mongolia.org](mailto:fv.mueller@gtz-mongolia.org)  
Author: International Cooperative Alliance, 1995, partly revised).

#### **ALLEY, Rewi / 1897-1987 (NZ/China)**

In 1938 one of the leaders in development of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives (CIC). More than 2000 organised to replace factories destroyed by Japanese armies. Referred to in the US as "Indusco", laid the foundation for a new and permanent form of cooperation in China, both before and after the revolution. It gave the nation a new battle cry of "gung ho", which means "work together". Alley was a teacher and headmaster of the Shandan Bailie School; writer of over 60 books. Widely known for his work for New Zealand-China Friendship Society.

#### **ARIZMENDI, Jose Maria / 1915-1976 (Basque)**

A young priest concerned for education and employment in his parish of Mondragon. With strong community support in 1943 opened the Zaragosa School of Engineering. Eleven students graduated with honours in 1952. Five of these, working with Arizmendi, launched first producer co-op, ULGOR, 1956. Since then, many types of co-ops have been organised in Mondragon to serve every need, employing many thousands of people, with assets of millions of dollars, becoming a model worldwide. An indefatigable worker, inspirational and challenging thinker, reflected today in unique character of Mondragon Co-ops. Opposed dictatorship of Franco, for which he was jailed in the late 1930s.

#### **BERGENGREN, Roy F. / 1879-1955 (US)**

This "Credit Union Crusader" was indefatigable, with unlimited vision, the ideal partner chosen by Edward A. Filene to develop, nurture, and spread the Credit Union concept across the US. From the Nat'l Extn. Bur. established in Boston in 1921, with his background as a lawyer, he was able to secure passage of laws in state after state, a task to which he devoted himself for the next 13 years. During this period he authored/edited a monthly magazine, "the Bridge", and the first of four textbooks on organization/operation of Cus. By 1934 the CU Nat'l Assn. had come into being, with Bergengren as Managing Dir., the post he held until his retirement in 1945. He undoubtedly did more than any other single person to establish/develop credit unionism in the US, following Desjardins' monumental efforts in Canada earlier in the century. His work among farmers and fishermen in Nova Scotia in 1932 (at Fr. Jimmy Tompkins' invitation), as well as organizing the first CU in Welland, Ontario, repaid in small measure the debt owed to the leadership of Desjardins. Bergengren's story is told in his autobiography, "Crusade". Inducted into Cooperative Hall of Fame in 1979.

#### **BLANC, Louis / 1811-1882 (France)**

Author, in the 1840s. of "The Organization of Labour" in which he advocated the powerful idea of worker-owned productive assns. Denouncing competitive capitalism, his Socialistic doctrines of industrial organisation were directed (through that book) to a much larger audience than merely his French fellow citizens. All over Europe he encouraged people to organize producer co-ops as a means by which they could raise their living standards; "organizing to help themselves".

#### **BUCHEZ, Phillipe (circa 1835) (France)**

From theorizing on the value of mutual aid, advanced the cause of workers' cooperative productive societies, where workers in the same industry would be able to "exercise their calling" under a management chosen by them and responsible to them. A type of organisation that grew sporadically in France and England throughout the 19th century.

### **COADY (Father/Monsignor) Moses Michael / 1882-1959 (Canada)**

Ordained to the priesthood in 1910. Over his lifetime became "The greatest figure in the fields of Canadian education and cooperation". He was creator and first Dir. of Extn. Dept. of St. Frances Xavier Univ. in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. With his cousin Father Jimmy Tompkins and A. B. MacDonald (both already well-known rural educators), they developed what became known as "the Antigonish Movement" that brought together impoverished, under-educated people in "kitchen meetings" to learn to read, think about causes of their poverty, and act together to solve their problems. Out of these study clubs came a variety of socioeconomic endeavors based on co-op philosophy and practice. From this solid underpinning of experience, the Univ. Bd. of Governors in 1959 established the Coady Int'l Inst. as a full department of the Univ. The goal was to provide a training centre where representatives from Third World Countries could come to study ways and means for bringing social and economic change to their nations. Coady was author of many books and pamphlets, among them, "Masters of Their Own Destiny" and "The Man from Margaree – with commentary by Alex Laidlaw".

### **DAVIES, (Margaret) Llewellyn / 1862-1944 (England)**

In 1889 became Gen. Secy. of English Women's Co-op Guild, infusing new vigor into its work in the posst which she held until 1931. That year she helped organize Int'l Women's Guild in Switzerland. In 1902, with full support of Co-op Union and the Loan Society, she and other women became personally responsible for the management of a co-op store in Sutherland. Conducted as a People's Store, its display of wholesome food in more readily usable quantities at easily affordable prices, made this half retail shop/half social culb a welcome and enlightening experiment for the area women. In 1922 she was first woman ever to preside over an ICA Congress, held in Brighton that year. In 1945, Co-op Union of England established in her honor a Foundation for the Co-op College, Holyoake House in England.

### **DESJARDINS, Alphonse / 1854-1920 (Canada)**

From 1879-1890, transcribed verbatim and published debates of Quebec Parliament. From 1891 to 1915 held similar position in House of Commons, Ottawa. Learned about co-ops and credit unions from their development in Germany. Immediately came to believe this form of organization, where people could work together to tackle their problems, especially in the field of finance, should be tried out among the low-income families in his province of Quebec. By combining educ. with inspiration, he brought together a group to form La Caisse Populaire de Levis (The Peoples' Bank of levis) in Levis near Quebec City. Organized to operate out of his home, in 1901, it was the first Credit Union on the North American Continent. Under his leadership, other credit unions came into being across Canada. His parliamentary experience gave him procedural knowledge useful in securing passage of legislation that would permit their chartering. He was invited to come to the US and with his help the first US credit union, St. Mary's Co-op Credit Assn., was established at Manchester, NH. At the request of Pierre Jay, Commissioner of Bank in Massachusetts, Desjardins played a key role in enactment of the first general statute for organizing credit unions in that State.

### **DUTTWEILER, Gottlieb / 1888-1962 (Switzerland)**

Inherited his interest in retailing : father was a dir. Of Zurich Consumer Co-op, later to become "Dutti's" bitterest commercial enemy. Apprenticed at 17 to a wholesale grocer, he later had a brief successful fling as coffee planter in Brazil. Returning to Switzerland in 1925, together with his wife Adele, they founded and guided Migros (which in 1941 they turned into a Cooperative) on strong moral principles which included setting aside a percentage of profits for cultural/social purposes; never selling anything harmful to people or environment; ensuring that co-op members enjoyed full democratic participation. They gave preference to suppliers who held similar principles. 'Dutti' was exceptionally imaginative and skillful in circumventing jealous competitors and always, ultimately, found better ways to serve more people through cooperative means.

### **HOLYOAKE, George Jacob / 1817-1906 (England)**

Fighter for freedom of religious opinion and for a free press; a propagandist for Rochdale Cooperation. By 1851, 150 societies were operating throughout England and Scotland. From

1885, as a member of the British Co-op Union, an active representative of his organization and his country in various Nat'l Co-op Congresses, worked constantly toward eventual organization of the Int'l Co-op Alliance (ICA). He was one of the signers when it was finally established in London in 1895. His "History of the Rochdale Pioneers" in 1856 was quoted extensively by cooperators in a number of countries as the authority, and provided the principles by which the ICA was to be guided. In respect for his great contributions, headquarters of the British Co-op Union in Manchester was named Holyoake House.

**HUBER, Victor Aime / 1800-1869 (Germany)**

Frequently referred to as the designer of the forerunner of consumer cooperation and co-op housing societies in Germany. Created an atmosphere of thought which lighted the way for Raiffeisen and Schulze-Delitsch. Author of "What a Loan Union Can Accomplish" and "Credit Unions and Loan Unions."

**KAGAWA, Toyohiko / 1888-1960 (Japan)**

Educator, social reformer, organizer, labor and co-op leader who early left wealthy home and family to live, work and die among the poorest of the poor. Opened an eating co-op (the Heavenly Shop) in slums of Kobe 1912; in 1917 a toothbrush factory in Shinkawa; a co-op food store at Osaka; in 1928 the Nakanogo CU. From 1931 on, active in establishing medical co-ops, though heavily opposed by traditional medical societies. Then a chicken-raising co-op, and four kinds of insurance programs, local and national. In 1946 organized an all-Japan Fed. of Co-ops. As a Christian, considered co-ops the natural expression of brotherhood economics.

**KROPOTKIN, Prince Peter / 1841-1921 (Russia)**

Nobleman who renounced his title and family and devoted his attention to fostering the welfare of the underprivileged. He had come to believe that cooperation, not competition, was the chief factor in the evolution of society and became an advocate for "mutual aid," to be built into all forms of social and economic behavior. Principle set forth in his book, Mutual Aid.

**LASSALLE, Ferdinand / 1825-1864 (Germany)**

Economist/socialist who opposed consumer cooperation on the ground that it would promote individualism/free enterprise and hinder the coming of socialism and state enterprise. Advanced Iron Law of Wages : wages tend to be maintained at "minimal subsistence level." Hence, to lower cost of living by consumer cooperation would lower wages, thus also standards of living...ignoring upward push to wages by labor organizations and improved quality of goods that consumer cooperation makes possible.

**OWEN, Robert / 1771-1858 (Welsh/England)**

At age 29 was Mgr./Dir. of New Lanark Mills. Rehoused workers reduced hours, abolished company store. Substitute co-op stores, all profits used to build first nursery schools in Great Britain. Owens's success forced Govt. to concede case for factory legislation. From then on Owen became a reformer of note : experimenting in England and US with a number of ideas for the improvement of conditions for working people. Sought to spread his New Lanark ideas in the form of utopian communities such as New Harmony in Indiana, 1825-27. While his organization of co-op stores did not succeed, much was learned through his experimentation. As a result, the Rochdale Pioneers adopted other methods, such as market prices coupled with patronage savings returns instead of cost-plus prices without refunds. Nevertheless, the basic purposes and principles expounded and tested by Owen were crucial in developing an attitude for change and confidence among working people of the day that they could, with cooperative effort, make things better for themselves and their communities.

**PLUNKETT, Horace Curzon, Sir / 1854-1932 (Ireland)**

Leader in Irish Co-op Movement. Founded Irish Agr. Organization Society in 1894 which took leadership in development of processing and marketing co-ops. Founder of Horace Plunkett Fndtn., an educ. agency for co-op development worldwide. From early 1900s was highly influential in bringing the successful Irish methods of cooperation to US farmers, which efforts were requested and fully supported by Pres. Theodore Roosevelt through his Country Life

Commn. Frequent personal visits between these two leaders enriched both nations. Author in 1910 of Rural Life Problems of the US.

#### **RAIFFEISEN, Friedrich Wilhelm / 1818-1888 (Germany)**

Dire economic conditions in Germany beginning 1846, and predatory practices of usurers driving farmers into abysmal poverty, led this young Mayor of Weyerbusch, then Flammersfeld, then of Heddesdorf to develop in the latter town, by 1854, the Beneficent Society, which later became a credit union. By 1868 CUs had accomplished so much good that word had spread abroad and it was impossible for Raiffeisen to keep all the requests for his book written in 1869; "Credit Unions as a Remedy for the Poverty of Rural and Industrial Workers and Artisans". He emphasized small (village) units where people know all members; unlimited liability; responsibility on part of member/borrower; unpaid management and democratic control. Although his critics insisted business and religion should be kept separate (causing some CUs to fall away from their original commitments), Raiffeisen himself held unwaveringly to the Biblical injunction: "Even as ye do it unto one of the least of these..." Through this he was able to accomplish uncounted "miracles" that come when people work together for the common good. In his lifetime credit unions had taken root in Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Belgium, Holland, France and throughout Germany; since his death, in nearly every country of the world.

#### **SAINT SIMON, Count de / 1760-1825 (France)**

Friends and followers called him "The Father of Socialism." His brand of socialism a direct outcome of econ/political revolution which shook all Europe around turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. An expression of enthusiasm re new industrial regime of mechanical invention and scientific discovery, it sought to reflect spirit of man at its best; to interpret generous aspiration of new bourgeois class. Appealing primarily to men of more cultured classes, St. Simon preached collectivism and suppression of inheritance as easiest way to found a new society. All his life was haunted by need he felt to give new century the econ./philosophic doctrine it required. He attempted to furnish mankind with system of positive morality to take the place of religious dogmas. Social distinctions, other than those founded on individual labour and ability, would disappear, he believed, and need for govt. in ordinary sense would not exist.

#### **SCHULZE-DELITZSCH (Franz) Hermann / 1808-1883 (Germany)**

Economist born in Delitzsch, adding the name of his birthplace to his name in order to distinguish himself from other Schulzes. Became interested in condition of laborers and small-scale trades people and promoted co-op societies, under the name of "People's Banks" (a form of CUs) which were in operation by 1857. Founded General Union of Co-op Societies Resting on Self-Help, in 1859. His ideas differed from those of Raiffeisen: interested in the urban worker more than in the peasant, favored large societies as well as small, advocated fair salaries rather than volunteer service, large dividends instead of no dividends. In general his ideas were more economic in import; Raiffeisen's were first of all humanitarian.

#### **WARBASSE, James Peter, M. D. / 1866-1957 (US)**

First a surgeon in Brooklyn, editor of NY State Medical Journal of Medicine and author of three-volume Surgical Treatment that was a standard text in the field. Then became interested in socio-economic problems, especially after travelling in Europe, and was much attracted by Socialism. Finally, believing that democracy must be local and in the hands of the consumer, he turned his attention to co-ops. He joined others in the NY area who had been experimenting with co-op ventures, and after meetings in his home, helped found the Cooperative League of America later the Cooperative League of the USA and now the National Cooperative Business Assn in 1916. From then on until the end of his life, he gave of his time and money to the development of cooperatives in the US. Was Pres. of the League until 1941, Us Representative at the ICA, founder of Rochdale Institute in 1938 that was to become "The Nat'l Training School for Co-ops". Prolific writer, widely quoted author. His Cooperative Democracy was for years considered the standard text and statement regarding consumer cooperation. Cooperative Peace was impressive in outlining how the extension of co-ops would lead to a world with peace and justice.