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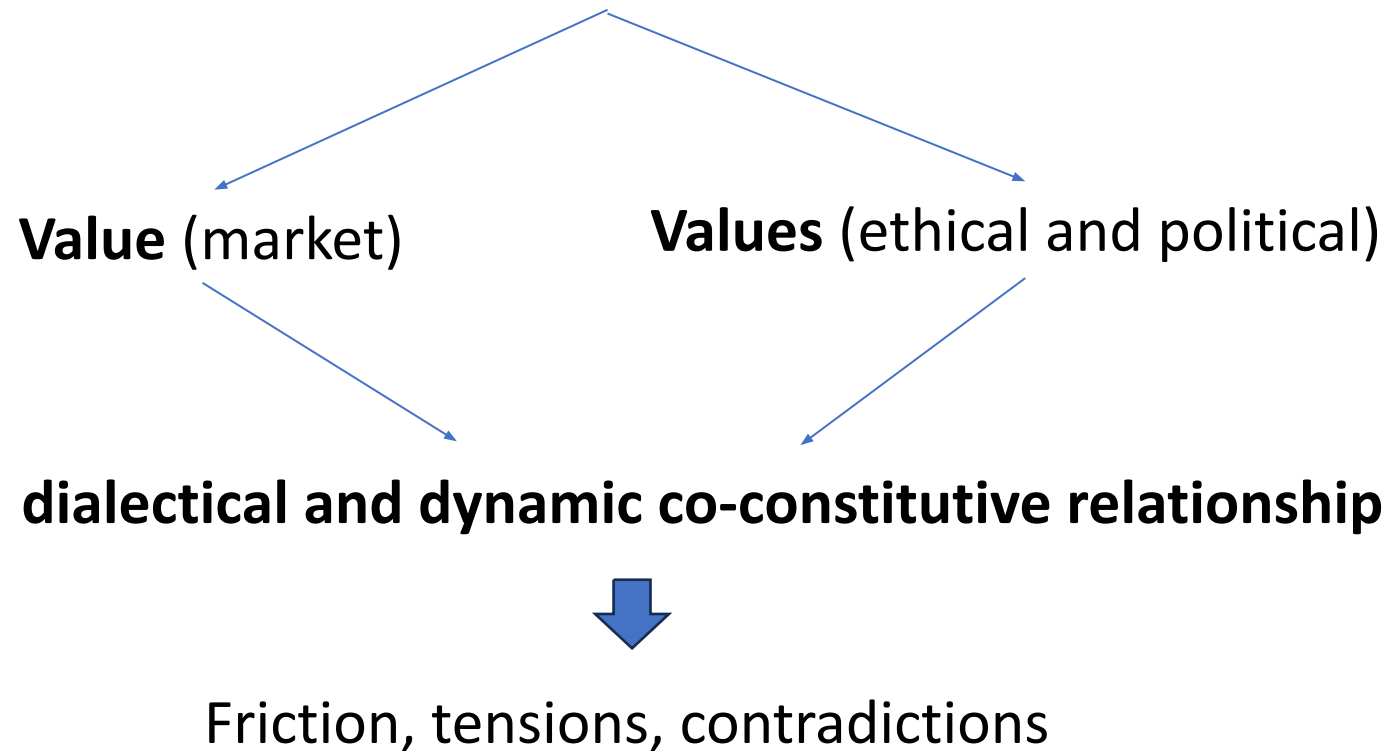
Frontlines of Value in a Portuguese Integral Cooperative

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Multiscalar research: Integral Cooperatives in Portugal (Rizoma coop / Network)

Fieldwork: Rizoma cooperative (Lisbon)

Analytic framework: anthropological theory of value



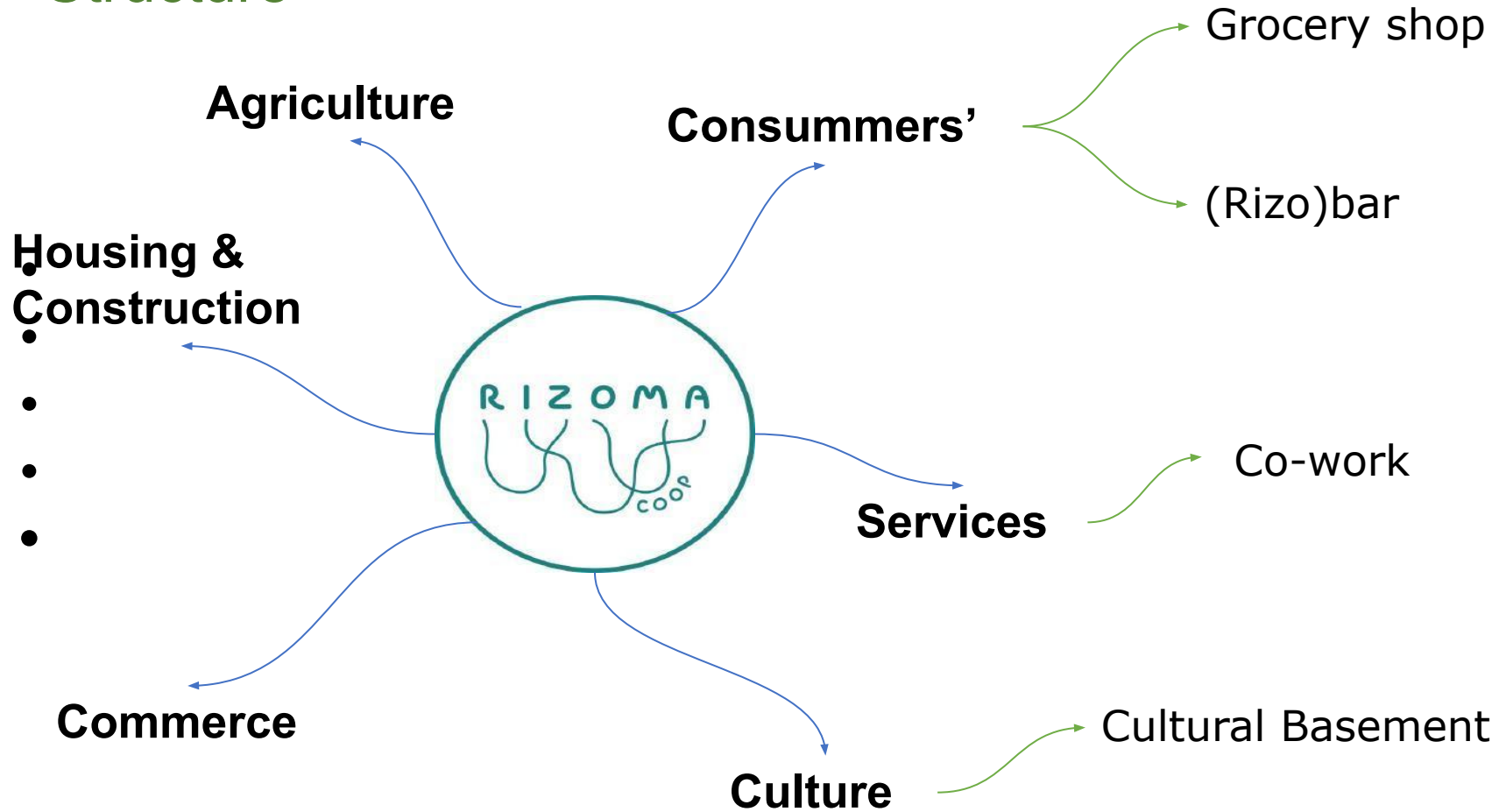
Integral Cooperatives

Definition

- Democratic non-profit organizations with plural economic activities
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- **Aim:** satisfying the needs and aspirations of members (holistically)
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- **Origin:** Catalonia, 2009 – motivated by the Great Recession.
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- **First Integral Co-op in Portugal:** Minga, 2015
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- **Network of Integral Cooperatives:** nine integral co-ops
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Rizoma Integral Cooperative

Structure



Rizoma Integral Cooperative

Saving its “house”

- **Initial monthly rents** (March 2022): ~2900€
- **Currently:** ~4100€ (caused by increments in inflation and Euribor)
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- **New focus:** “financial sustainability” (increasing income)
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- **Proposals:** issuance of investment bonds, loan agreements, crowdfunding, and membership fees

“- Are our values being sacrificed? Are we becoming capitalists?”

- We are using instrument of the capitalist world with an activist objective.”


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Frontlines of value

Defining the concept

- Moments in which value and values confront, intermingle and intersect.
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- Allows to account for struggles within and against interlocking and uneven *value regimes*
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- **Value regime** – a dialectic articulation between value and values, a field of pressures and counter-pressures (material as discursive)

Frontline of value at Rizoma



Coercive value regime
(competition & accumulation)

Collectively created value regime
(cooperation, democracy, ecology)

Rizoma Integral Cooperative

Housing section - in a context of housing crisis

- Increase in **rental prices**: 155%
- Increase in **real estate prices**: 140%
- **Causes:**
 - exponential international investment in real estate;
 - foreigner tenants with greater purchase power;
 - conversion of houses into tourist accommodation.
- **Neoliberal policies applied after 2008 financial crisis:**
 - tax benefits for real estate funds and individual investment;
 - deregulation of rental market and facilitation of evictions;
 - “golden visas” and tax exemption for “non-habitual residents” income;
 - “crypto haven” and digital nomad visas.
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Rizoma Integral Cooperative

Housing section – a frontline of values

- **Aim:** seeking alternatives to real estate market and public housing
- **Collective ownership** protects from speculation and rent increase
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- **Co-Habitar** – network of housing cooperatives in collective-property (association)
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- Struggling to access funds – lack of cooperative banking in Portugal
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- Governmental funding fosters competition among cooperative and other entities
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- Temporary transfer of public property can end in the housing market
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Rizoma Integral Cooperative

Housing section – a frontline of values

Frontline of values

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graph TD; A[Frontline of values] --> B[Collective efforts]; A --> C[Market-state rationale]; B --> D["In alliance with: social movements, political parties, academia, other social agents"]; D --> E["In a plurality of arenas: streets, media, events, governamental institutions"]; E --> F["Achievement: penetrated public discourse and political programs"]; C --> G["How to prevent cooptation?"];
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Collective efforts

Market-state rationale

In **alliance** with: social movements, political parties, academia, other social agents

In a plurality of **arenas**: streets, media, events, governamental institutions

Achievement: penetrated public discourse and political programs

How to prevent cooptation?