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TABLE OF CONTENT

Editorial	3
Huib Wursten	
Innovation, Agility and Culture	5
Huib Wursten, Thomas Imfeld, Martin Karaffa	
What Else Is New? Managing Innovation in Different Cultures	17
Fernando Lanzer	
So We Innovated ... Now What?	27
Sjaak Pappe	
How Cutting-Edge 21st. Century Tech Giants Are “Crushing It” Simultaneously Pulverizing and Diminishing Start-Up and Small Business Innovation	45
Eric Alexander de Groot	
Towards A Learning Culture for Sustainable Knowledge Productivity: The 21st Century Growth Engine for Value Creation	57
Joseph Kessels	
Culture and Science in Romania. Evidence from World Values Survey	67
Liviu Warter, Iulian Warter	
Towards A Culture of Innovation. How Could The Innovative Spirit Be Cultivated in The Romanian University Environment?.....	85
Anton Carpinschi	

EDITORIAL

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The world around is in a perfect storm. The global economic crisis of 2012, the Covid- 19 pandemic in combination with the global warming create an urgency of rethinking some fundamentals of how we organize our societies.

Many discussions are taking place about a “new narrative”. This new narrative should take into account how we newly arrange the global economy and political decision making in a more balanced and fair multi-polar world with new ideas about fighting un-equality, global warming, mass immigration, the erosion of democracy and the role of Governments in this balancing. Because of this importance, the editors of JIME consider a future “special” about the role of culture in this new narrative.

This special about innovation can be seen as a stepping stone for new narrative discussions.

Julian and Liviu Warter write “People are all influenced by the cultures in which they grew up and the societies in which they live. Cultures shape our expectations, values, beliefs, and goals. Scholars and practitioners too, are modeled by their culture and society, which in turn, influence their activity. Innovation is one of these activities

Wursten, Imfeld and Karaffa sort out the cultural elements that play a role in understanding how culture exactly influences innovation. More specifically, they analyze how a contemporary concept like “*agility*” is related to innovation and culture. They discuss the potential barriers by clusters of cultures, and give advice how to overcome barriers. The thesis is that innovation can happen anywhere provided that the barriers are recognized a taken into account.

Lanzer elaborates further on this approach. He writes: After all, no culture is better than another. What actually happens is that innovation must be managed differently in each culture, in ways that are consistent with that culture. The misconceptions about innovation management are briefly described. Subsequently, examples are given depicting how innovation is typically managed in Contest, Social Pyramid, Network, Well-Oiled Machine, Solar System and Family cultures. Innovation management in Japan is described separately, since it has unique characteristics that do not match the other six culture styles.”

Sjaak Pappé explains that because the political, economic, social and technological tracks and markets change so quickly, change is the only constant and therefore constant innovation is key. Responsiveness, so a quick and adequate response, is key to success. Pappé adds:

Culture is the biggest inhibitor of change, but at the same time it is the most important enabler of change into constant innovation.

Biomimicry studies nature as mentor for innovation and makes life much easier, because nature is much older than mankind and has found most solutions for our problems.

However, developing and embedding constant innovation is a complex process and therefore needs focus on one problem at a time, addressing it as a start-up.

Kessels examines the implications of the transition from a traditional economy towards a knowledge society, in which the need for improvement and innovation is a driving force. The main concept is built on knowledge productivity as an ongoing learning process

that enables the search for relevant information, the development of new competencies and capabilities, and their application to urgent matters in the day-to-day work environment. As a consequence the work environment should be perceived as a powerful learning environment. If so, it is argued that there is a need for a well-developed corporate curriculum, *a rich learning culture* in which improvement and innovation can take place. He writes: “An analysis of a series of European and Asian empirical studies sheds new light on the importance of a creative learning culture and the role of leadership. The article concludes with a set of policies and design principles that facilitate a learning culture for sustainable knowledge productivity.

De Groot points at the role of tech giants. He says: Most jobs (60%-75%) are created by the private sector and not by governments, meanwhile the genesis (of their success) must ‘start’ somewhere, hence the importance of the start-up and small businesses. No company has a listing in the Fortune 500 in their first few years of operations. (This was specifically true for Amazon; they were not profitable for their first seventeen quarters and only had minimal net profits for almost a decade.) You must plant the seed, water it, and wait. Bamboo is underground for five or six years until it ‘shoots’ out and grows tall, in merely 60 days. Talk about preparation! “” That is exactly why inventions and innovation are so important – for all economies worldwide he says

Two articles are analyzing the innovation barriers of a specific “Pyramid” culture, Romania.

The *Warter brothers* focus on the cultural influence on choice of research subject. They write:

“Scholars avoid some research areas due to ethical principles or choose others based on their values or political adherence. Ideological principles span a wide range of concerns, including socioeconomic structures, race relations, gender issues, social philosophies and customs, religions, morality, equality, freedom, and justice.” Their article is based on the outcomes of World Values Survey, (waves 5, 6 and 7). The focus of this research is Romania. They write: “It approaches the perceptions on science and technology from a cultural point of view, with a special emphasis on religion. The study detected significant differences between the perception of Romanians during the last decades. It also highlighted the public perception on universities. The results of this study have implications for science educators regarding science-related social controversies, particularly issues related to religion.”

Anton Carpinschi has recommendations for the modernization of the Romanian university environment. He proposes a cognitive reform focused on cultivating creative thinking and innovative spirit. “Consequently”, he says “I propose a cognitive-pragmatic scenario for cultivating the innovative spirit by stimulating dialogical-creative thinking and coagulating innovative cultural models.”