

quo vadis

WISSENSMANAGEMENT

Prof. Leif Edvinsson / Dr. Astrid Szogs / Günther M. Szogs
(New Club of Paris)

ICM For Future Knowledge Navigation
– SDG 17 And COVID-19: Supreme vs. Subprime Knowledge



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Climate Change. Forest Gone. Quo Vadis? (photo: G. Szogs 2020)

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SDG 17 And COVID-19:

Supreme vs. Subprime Knowledge

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Quo Vadis?

ReGnosis - ICM beyond ignorance.

A plea.

In the past decades many of us were engaged in a great variety of Intellectual Capital Management endeavours (ICM used as broader concept than „Wissensmanagement“): NCP, LearnTec, KnowTec, Knowledge Manager of The Year Award, Future Center Alliance with Noburo Konno pioneering Ecosyxx, MoWiN Innovationlab <https://www.mowin.net/innovation-lab/?L=1> and SCALE UP, MIT-U_Lab and HBdV, Aalto Camp for Societal Innovation, IMO, AWV, BIGA, SI-Drive, the Leonardo European Corporate Learning Award, KulturCampus Frankfurt and many other local and global IC related initiatives. This still small selection of activities with excellent involvement of remarkable personalities of all walks of life symbolise two extremes in learning and knowing if viewed in the light or rather the darkness of the pandemic, the climate crisis, the unbelievable scale of ignorance, the incoherences in mobility-infrastructure, the often stone-age use of digitalisation in schools: Astonishing Excellence and Apocalyptic Catastrophe. Lets question this using UNESCO's famous report on Education for the 21. Century: „Learning : The Treasure Within“ with its 4 pillars of learning to „know, do, living together, be“. Applying them to the SDGs in UN 75th year of existence might be one orientation for future journeys of ICM.

Learning to Know

Why is there this dichotomy of positive and negative results when looking at IC from beyond the KM community? Isn't Knowing and Learning meant to give guidance in judgement to avoid human made or natural disasters? Maybe we did not always learn our lessons about learning. The Corona-Crisis confronted us with an old puzzle: *Did we help organisations and society to apply what we know that we do not know to handle the unknown in knowledgeable manner?*

Learning to Do

„Doing“ obviously should be a consequence of what we know. Three decades of LearnTec and other innovative platforms advocating educational technologies did not stop Germany falling behind in its urgent needed digitisation f.e. in schools. The dimension of incompetence and lack of infrastructure (just 24 % schools have WLAN compared to 100 % in Denmark) is unspeakable and matter of amusement in TV Comedy. For decades no outcry occurred - other than frowning. Of course politicians were praising numerous impressive lighthouse projects - Germany, Land of Ideas. *Did we contribute to better scale them to enlighten the wider society?*

Learning to Live Together

The European Leonardo Award proposed UNESCO's approach, which drew on the expertise of excellent practitioners and academics and the advice of such diverse personalities like Gro Harlem Brundtland, former PM of Norway and Chairwomen of the World Commission of Climate and Development, Daniel Goudevert, former Chairman of VW Management Body and the legend violinist Yehudi Menuhin. Imagine a similar constellation on the issue of knowing and learning today. Unthinkable. But why? In its „Agora“ format Leonardo got together decision makers, experts, politician, NGO's, innovators following the path shown by UNESCO. Important insights were exchanged and impulses given. All were excited - but we suffered the same fate like „land of ideas“ - *did we not form a united voice to transform ideas to political demands and anchor them in the daily social and political life?*

Learning to Be

is key for every individual and any community alike. How do we act and react when essentials of our pure existence are at stake? Is learning and knowing separable of ethics and acting? Interestingly those being accused of being unprofession-

nal and an annoyance like „Fridays for Future“ or Extinction Rebellion are themselves not pointing to some occult insights but to well known results of science paid for by the public. „Science for Future“ was evoked by „Fridays for Future“ cause they rightly were perceived as a form of „researching application“. A great provocation in times, when „professionalism“ demands obedience and opportunism to ruling norms regardless of whether this conformity is conform with the issues at stake. Whilst in current school systems we too often are trained to subordinate the content of school subjects to the selecting criteria of how fast we can reproduce facts and figures compared to others, young people make the experience that going to the bottom of what matters requires knowledge not restricted by an agenda triggered by the clock switching in 45 min from subject to subject: SKOLSTREJK. *Could the community of learning and knowledge professionals add more strongly their strength to bridge this gap between the societal spheres?*

Tripple A for Subprime Knowledge

In a session concept for KnowTech 2008 at the start of the financial crisis („Wissen - Macht - Finanzen: Dialog für die Wissensgesellschaft“) we tried to explain that the economic meltdown was revealing a poor understanding of its systemic origins lacking an holistic analysis of interdependencies. The true scandal besides the subprime loans were the fuelling of those risky papers into the global circulation honouring them with best gradings by top knowledge based consulting companies and their highly knowledgeable experts. That's why we coined (!) their approach „subprime knowledge“. What is mistakenly regarded as simple speculation by bad boys/girls is on the contrary a highly sophisticated modelling activity of an industry. Other than most experts in understaffed governmental institutions they are aware of the interdependencies in regulations and the global loopholes and make them their business case - whatever the cost for society. That's why „after“ the financial crisis is „before“ next systemic scandals like WireCard and CumEx, the

latter causing a loss of 62 Billion \$ and no one being convicted till now. Public debate prefers bashing bankers rather than asking why systematically governing institutions fail to build a coherent body of competence to properly implement and control what has been legally decided. *Is it not a core asset of ICM to make those intertwined forces transparent?*

COVID-19 And Education

This pattern of judgement is common across sectors. Years ago BMW invested billions to pioneer their I2 electric automobile whilst Siemens in parallel stopped producing electric loading stations cause there was no market. No infrastructure was in place and thus financial grants for electric cars were causing no shift towards eMobility. E-bikes on the other hand boom without any support cause everybody easily can load them privately. Many were happy with general negative opinion about the car-industry. *Why are IC-approaches mediating controversial interests in industry and politics and monitoring incoherences for informed decision making in short supply?*

As mentioned COVID-19 made this incoherence dramatic in cases of schools needing to shift to digital education. Even bevor COVID-19 the government agreed a „DIGITAL Pakt“ granting billions to overcome both equipment shortage and digital incompetence of teaching personal. The money has hardly been used. In Baden-Württemberg 0,7% of the money available schools made applications for. One reason: Schools are obliged to detail what they would do with it. Given their assessed limited competence in digital matters, this turned out to be asking a COVID patient to provide diagnosis and treatment concept when going to the doctor. *Has ICM a chance to propagate inter- and intra-processes to connect divergent knowledge sources - maybe via future centers?*

Whom To Trust - Credentials in Knowing

This does not deny exceptional expertise. On the contrary. Corona crisis revealed outstanding potential by renewing or inventing knowledge connections to form high performance teams to create hybrid infrastructure, excellent multifaceted software, research including all medical spheres. But it revitalises old debates about who might be called a knowledge worker, a knowledge manager, an expert or whatever important in the knowledge economy. Corona has highlighted all kinds of people presumably blessed with wisdom gained from dubious sources. The US-President makes his blessing precondition to issues usually decided by analysts. Rightly we caution against self-definition of expertise and promote standards

like the new ISO 30401 for knowledge-management or ISO 56002 for innovation (<https://www.iso.org/obp/ui#iso:std:iso:56002:ed-1:v1:en>.) On the other hand the mentioned examples of Fridays for Future and the „Digital Natives“ who are sometimes even asked for advice present more complex facets to the issue. Ikujiro Nonaka, Kazuo Ichijo and Georg Krogh were being self-critical on former own publications that might have helped to promote a too narrow conception of knowledge acquisition. They „believe the concept of knowledge management itself is limited“ (Enabling Knowledge Creation, 2000, ch.1). „In fact, the term management implies control of processes that may be inherently uncontrollable“ (...). They challenged the perception of „knowledge worker“ as a special category insisting „knowledge work is a human condition, not a privileged one“. But being „native“ does not mean they are born with digital skill. Obviously they acquired it without the guidance of the teachers who lack the knowledge. Leonardo laureate Sugata Mitra with the „hole in the wall“ project (Oscar awarded film: slum dog millionaire) suggested to combine unschooling with coached and formal learning: „granny in the cloud“ (retired experts teach via internet). In COVID-19-homeschooling-times such approaches gain new relevance (NYT 25-09-20).

SDG 17: Learning To Learn

First class expertise does not guarantee beneficial and ethical results for society - we touched incoherences and incompatibilities in all spheres: finance, health, mobility, schooling system, environment etc.. There is a pattern of what has been deteriorated in the divers endeavours of IC. Whilst specialisation on specific learning and management issues have made progress a combined voice for responsible IC connecting the spheres of the individual, corporates, civil society, regions, nations faded. In pioneering times politicians and decision maker personally took part in IC round tables (5 steps to Finland's Future), the Ministry of Economic Affairs hosted board members of banks and SME's, IC pioneers, academics, practitioners to debate Wissensbilanz in comparison

SDG's at Frankfurt International Book-fair. Central place reserved for IC Enabling Management for Societal Transformation. (photo: G. Szogs 2020)



to Banking Rating Systems. Nia Künzer and Renate Lingor, world champions in Ladies Football, were in dialogue with us on Intellectual Capital Reporting at LearnTec. IC became in some spheres a societal issue and in turn made debates within companies and institutions often passionate, informed and lively. With predominance of solely cost efficiency, specialisation was not accompanied with overlapping competencies to result in high performance teams and instead fragmented the ecosystems with finally effectively outsourcing both responsibility and values.

Nonaka et al. reminded us to move from managing to enabling knowledge. The task for ICM clearly is: Improve the management of Enabling Societal Transformation.

The UN suggests to overcome such dilemma by „Learning to Learn“. If this spirit were predominant like in Learning Literacy Labs (Riel Miller) COVID-19 might have been treated differently at its outburst, as an emerging Knowledge Crises. The next level the UNESCO's pillars of learning are transformed to is UN 2030 agenda and the sustainable development goals. Antonio Guterres reinforced them in face of COVID-19 „to redouble .. efforts to build more inclusive and sustainable economies and societies that are more resilient in the face of pandemics, climate change and other global challenges.“(Guardian,2-4-2020). Learning and knowing usually associates to goal 4 focusing on education and LifeLongLearning. ICM beyond restricting themselves to pure methods and tools should be a passionate advocate and contributor to SDG 17 : „Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development“. Concrete: Do not just promote the 16 SDGs but explain HOW they are intertwined and what has to be observed to succeed. *ICM with methodologies like „Wissensbilanz“ and smart reconnecting with future centers and artful cultural tools may well proof to be able to enable.*

ICM thus might mutate to Enabling Management. SDG 17 being an excellent guideline to answer „Quo Vadis, ICM beyond ignorance?“.

Prof. Leif Edvinsson, Dr. Astrid Szogs and Günther M. Szogs try to bridge academic, economic, political and cultural dimensions in IC. Leif introduced intellectual capital reporting in business and started the future center movement. He was world's first professor for IC in Lund, where Astrid received her PhD for innovation research. As CEO of Regional Management she promotes innovation labs and collaboration of industries in Hesse. Whilst head of ICM in a mayor bank Günther pioneered Wissensbilanz and coinited „Wissensmanager des Jahres“ and „Leonardo European Corporate Learning Award“. (For Learn-Tec and Knowtec he conceptualised multi-discipline sessions on Knowledge Society).