
Editorial

Francisco Javier Carrillo

The World Capital Institute and Tecnológico de Monterrey,
Olivos 322, Jurica,
Querétaro 76100, Mexico
Email: fjcarrillo@worldcapitalinstitute.org

Biographical notes: Francisco Javier Carrillo is President of The World Capital Institute. His research interests include capital systems, knowledge for the Anthropocene and city preparedness for the climate emergency.

A year ago, on issue 10(4), we announced the ‘Anthropocene Turn’ in the IJKBD editorial focus by opening up the topics covered by this journal to include aspects related to Knowledge for the Anthropocene on the foundational side, and City Preparedness for the Climate Crisis on the applied one. There was still no indication at the time that the World was about to experience the Covid-19 Pandemic.

There are few events when a major global circumstance is at one time a vivid local one. While the global economy, international commerce and supply chains, travel and tourism, and all forms of mobilisation and production have been disrupted by the pandemic, so has every single community, from alpha cities through rural villages, through individual families. Besides the sectors directly hit by the pandemic, such as health and sanitary services, almost every area of activity has been affected to some extent. The editorial world has been no exception. With work patterns disrupted, job uncertainties, health and family extra burdens and systemic interdependencies amongst all actors in the publication value chain, this journal did not remain fully unscathed. But even if our publication schedule has been somehow affected, we are on track to recover regular output through 2021.

The disruption brought by the pandemic has underscored the fragility of our societies and the vulnerability of urban life. But there is a deeper sense in which the coronavirus crisis bears significance with regard to the existential challenges of the Anthropocene. The current pandemic, with its sudden and unprecedented disruption of everyday life is a wake-up call for the unpreparedness, denial and lack of response before the far more menacing state shift in the Biosphere. However painful and distressing, the pandemic impacts might be largely overcome within a few years. In contrast, the foreseeable impacts of just the better understood planetary boundaries might be enough to compromise the livability of most human settlements as they exist today. Compound effects of all nine existential risks to humanity and their likely tipping points, feedback loops and cascading effects are a challenge that defies foresight and imagination. Any parallel between Anthropocene scenarios and the coronavirus pandemic makes the current crisis pale in comparison. While we should not underestimate the pain and stress billions of people – certainly the most vulnerable, have been enduring, the prospect

for the majority of people is one of eventual recovery. Slow, resilient, costly, but recovery at last. Not so for the Anthropocene, whose potential outcomes have terminal qualifications such as sixth mass-extinction, systemic collapse and potential end of the human civilisation as we know it. Resourcing to Christian mythology of the afterlife, CoViD-19 can be thought of as the Limbo, an intermediate state between Heaven and Hell that eventually will be resolved in the favour of the former. The Anthropocene, instead, would be the inexorable inferno where one chamber of horrors is but the prelude to an even worse one – inexorably forever. Dante, who so overwhelmingly portrayed such horrors, expressed the ultimate warning: “So you understand how our awareness will die completely at the moment when the portal of the future has been shut” (The Divine Comedy: Inferno, 10:106-8).

May the pandemic shake our awareness of the Climate Emergency and stress our commitment to make this journal a platform for advancing research on Knowledge for the Anthropocene and on City Preparedness. We could well acknowledge the CoVid-19 Pandemic as a prophet of the Anthropocene. The prophecy is a mythical form of message that has a philosophical interest of its own. In particular, it raises the issue of contingency: “a future event is contingent if and only if it is both not determined that it will happen and also not determined that it will not happen” (Scott A. Davison 2018: ‘Prophecy’, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). From this perspective, the CoViD-19 Pandemic may be regarded as prophetic not insofar as a future predictor but as the final wake-up call before the Anthropocene.

While submissions on Knowledge for the Anthropocene and on City Preparedness for the Climate Crisis are encouraged, we continue to serve our traditional lines of Knowledge Based Development as well as Knowledge Cities. Introducing now the papers included in this issue, first is ‘Creative placemaking revisited: exploring major drivers for the making practice and co-creation’ by Mengi. This work explores creative placemaking strategies through content analysis at a granular level. Findings suggest four major drivers of co-creative placemaking. A broader perspective of social assets and place-specific values is furthered by integrating placemaking with co-creation, production and community engagement.

The second paper, ‘The dynamics of learning and growth perspective and dynamic capabilities: a study of Indian IT industry’ by Sar, addresses the functional relationship involved in the title. A balanced scorecard of the learning and growth perspective along with qualitative data are integrated through structural equation modelling. Main results indicate that human capital has a significant influence on alliance management, reconfiguration, integration and learning capabilities. Furthermore, information capital significantly influences alliance management, reconfiguration, integration and learning capabilities. Other findings are related to learning dynamics in this context.

Next, the paper by Telles et al. is titled ‘Knowledge and innovation diffusion in retailing clusters: an analysis based on the social perspective’. This study provides a formal network analysis of the diffusion of innovation in commercial clusters with the purpose of describing innovation diffusion processes in business networks using Rogers’ social structure approach. The results contribute to establish a relationship between structural characteristics of network actors and attributes of their innovation diffusion capacity. Specifically, a significant relationship between centrality and innovation of the actors in the analysed cluster was identified.

The fourth paper, by Rho et al., deals with ‘The role of open innovation platforms in facilitating user-driven innovation in innovation ecosystems’. This research aims at describing the role of OIPs in facilitating user-driven innovation. Two comparable cases, one in South Korea and one in Finland, provided the grounds for exploring innovation ecosystems from an evolutionary perspective. Similarities between both locations are reported in terms of OIPs providing a problem-solving cooperative space and facilitating collaboration, diversity and social sustainability. Differences emerged in terms of transferability, where the Korean case consolidated local impact while the Finnish OIP was driven by international expansion.