

Towards Innovativeness Society

One of the most notable features of the EU Hitachi Science & Technology Forum, is its multidisciplinary approach to the complexity of the modern world and its bonds with technology developments and social transformations. Given a growing complexity and speed of the present people's communities, high-tech world and business, a broader contextual outlook including social, political and even philosophical aspects is necessary while thinking of their evolutions and prospects. This sketchy essay starts with an outlook at the relationship between modernisation and innovativeness in the context of the opposition between liberalism and welfarism and then will argue for the transformation of the information/knowledge society towards innovativeness society. The author admits that some of his thoughts have been inspired by the discussions, political struggles and events that have been taking place in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and in particular after their accession to the European Union in the year of 2004 and 2007, and by the evolution of the European Union and its development strategies [8] especially in the context of its competition and cooperation with the Asian developed countries and the U.S.A.

Today, when vivid debates and hot discussions, sometimes leading to serious political conflicts, on the choice whether we need more liberalism and free market or we should strengthen and advance the achievements of the welfare state take place in Europe, it seems that those protagonists are right who argue that this dilemma is misleading [2]. The real game about the present and future patterns, people's betterment and social cohesion, the role and rules of business making, and about maintaining our cultural and political identity is played on a different ground. The point is not to confront liberalism with social solidarity and welfarism. This game is about something different; it is about modernisation. The subject of the game is to understand, accept and absorb the changes caused by faster and faster developments of technology, especially the information and communications technology, mobile technology, new management techniques, and new financial mechanisms, which transform economic and political spheres and change the very fabric of social architecture and social capital. It is also about setting up new schemes, patterns and procedures to replace the existing dysfunctional ones and to discontinue all the features that are obsolete and counter-



Editorial

Thanks to the Forum participants' commitment and feedback, we have been able to improve the Forum on a yearly basis and we will strive to continue down this path in the future. For the 11th EU Hitachi Science and Technology Forum in 2008, there will be three main innovations. Firstly, we have designed an agenda which will produce even more lively discussions and debate.

Secondly, on the Sunday morning, the speakers and moderators will gather together to prepare a summary of the various discussions which can then be discussed and endorsed afterwards in plenary. This summary will form the basis of a position paper and the executive summary of the report. Thirdly, in order to improve the debate, each participant will be asked, at the time of registering for the parallel sessions, to produce a one page paper on the Ageing Society outlining the opinions and discussion points that he/she would like to be covered during the debates. These essays will also be forwarded to the moderators prior to the parallel sessions and we hope that these contributions will lead to even more productive discussions.

On October 1st, Dr Didier Gambier has been appointed as the first Director of the European Joint Undertaking for ITER and the Development of Fusion Energy ('Fusion for Energy') by its governing board. Due to his new assignment, he is no longer able to continue his involvement in the Forum; he has therefore decided

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to step down from the Forum Fellowship. On behalf of all Forum Members, we wish him all the best in his new assignment.

On the other hand, we are pleased to announce that Prof. Muraszkiwicz has kindly accepted to become a Forum Fellow. He was one of the keynote speakers at the Warsaw Forum in 2006. I am quite sure that, through his experience gained from both academic and governmental bodies, he will make a valuable contribution to our Forum. His active participation to the Working Group Meeting was his first contribution as Forum Fellow and you can read his article in this newsletter.

Thanks to the very positive discussions, leading up to and during the Working Group meeting, participants, and particularly the Forum Members and the Forum Fellows, have been able to successfully designed a stimulating agenda for 2008 Forum. You will be able to read a summary of their work in this issue, written by Fabrice Labbres.

The last article of this issue summarizes the presentation made by Koichi Seto during the Working Group meeting as an introduction to the discussion on Ageing Society.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very successful New Year in 2008.

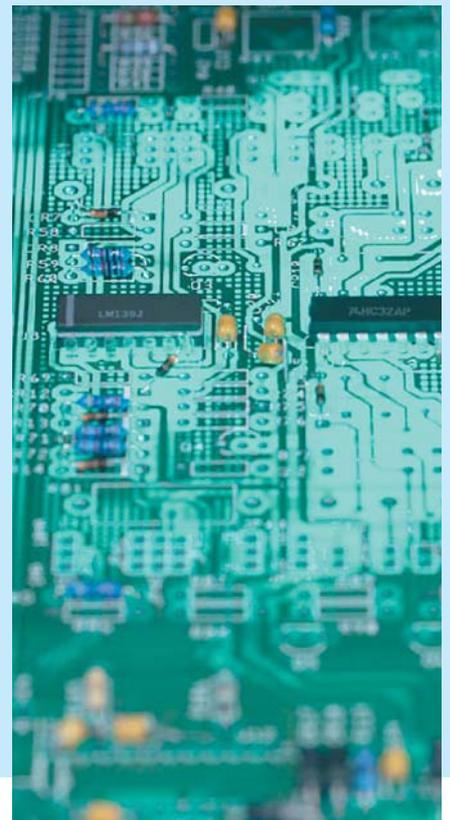
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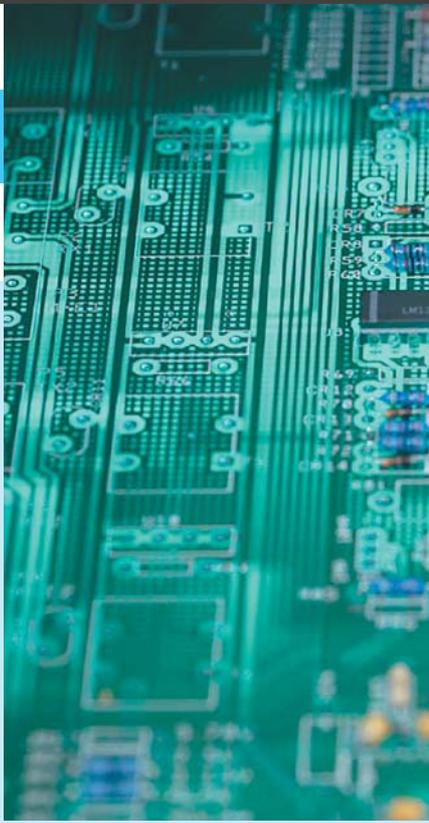
productive. We claim that substantial part of social attention and energy should be drawn and channelled to boosting modernisation, in particular its high technology facets, rather than to be engaged in fruitless disputes on the advantages of liberalism over welfarism, or vice versa. Undoubtedly, should the modernisation endeavour be carried on, this dilemma will turn out irrelevant. At the outset, let us elaborate a bit on the meaning of the term modernisation. Is it a straight continuation of the Enlightenment project initiated by French and British thinkers, philosophers, scientists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which by means of the driving forces of capitalism has led the symbolically understood western countries to economic, military and political power? Or, perhaps, as Friedrich Nietzsche already argued, it is the reason of overwhelming nihilism, labour alienation, human's reification, and as his followers such as Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School added, a reason of modern evil such as fascism, Bolshevik's tyranny and cruel wars of the twentieth century [6]. Undoubtedly, modernisation includes both threads, however, in different proportions over time. It is the force that has two faces, a sword of two edges. After the twentieth century lessons of sheer barbarism, after the ecological catastrophes caused by the abuse and immaturity of technology, for instance in the nuclear power plant of Chernobyl or chemical factory in Indian Bhopal, it seems today that by means of these experiences, political reason, and social awareness we are able to minimise negative consequences of modernisation, and to exploit and enjoy its indubitable potential to improve and enrich the quality of our life. At this point it is worth mentioning that the EU Hitachi Science & Technology Forum has interestingly contributed to this process, especially by showing how Japanese experiences regarding technology, management and social facilities with the emphasis on the human security aspect differ from the European solutions.

Here, we understand modernisation broadly, i.e. from simple technological improvements facilitating day-to-day life, to new technologies and their

various applications systematically integrated with the social and economic fabric of the society, to new financial, organisational, educational, political and social models. Modernisation is thus not limited to the area of economics; it is a process of a much larger reach, encompassing practically all aspects of our life. The main mechanisms of modernisation are various tools to devise, shape and organise social processes and economy based on knowledge and relying on the achievements of science and technology. Such terms as information society or knowledge society used in the context of a modernisation discourse reflect a common conviction that information and knowledge are key factors of modernisation processes.

It is now worthwhile to ask: what is the link that joins information and knowledge with the practice of production and organisational processes occurring in the knowledge society, or in other words, to ask about an operational factor of modernisation? We believe that one of such factors which is particularly important and directly influencing our present and future life is innovativeness. The





innovations are this force that transforms discoveries, research and experiments outcomes in a variety of applications and new solutions; they have a direct impact on the form, appearance and structure of the world. If we assume that research and discoveries is the engine of modernisation processes, then we can legitimately consider innovations a fuel for this engine that affects its efficiency and effectiveness. This is not a new opinion and appreciation of the innovation's role. We can find a similar belief, expressed in a slightly different manner, in the classic book by the Austrian-American economist Joseph A. Schumpeter entitled "The Theory of Economic Development" already published in 1911 [7], which almost a hundred years later provided an intellectual background for the promotion of innovativeness as an important building block of societal development strategies, lately so eagerly employed by the European Commission in its Lisbon Strategy [8].

Innovativeness has been the subject to a great deal of papers, reports books, seminars, workshops, and conferences. It seems, however, in this ocean of proposals, models, and methodologies still is there an epistemological gap. Namely, one has not managed to work out an approach to innovativeness for which social life and/or professional life tout court is the model, the life considered as a multithread well ordered and organised process including many actors, in which, however, all of a sudden come out particular points where as

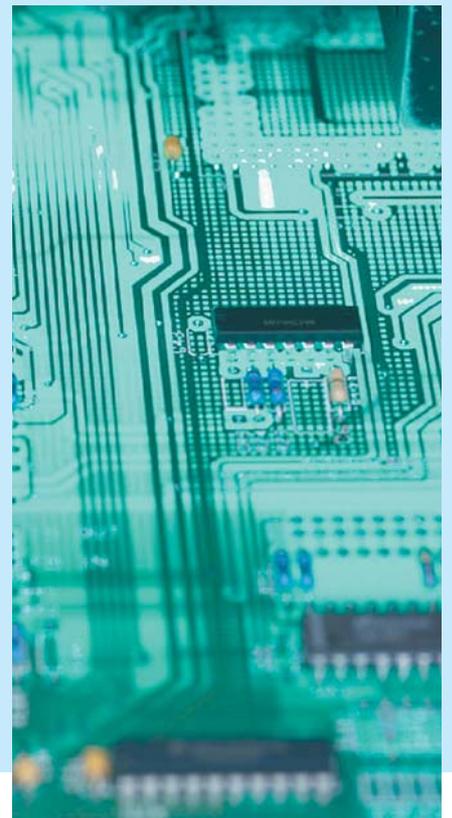
a result of original, fresh, non-routine thinking and acting new elements emerge.

We have already arrived at the point where an explanatory remark has to be made. One has to distinguish innovation from discovery, innovativeness from inventiveness. Innovativeness consists in a new use of the existing techniques, technologies and/or devices to set up new solutions, goods, services or processes. Inventiveness is a creative exploitation of the known things, yet, in a new way, in a new situation or for reaching a new objective. Inventiveness, however, is different for it is aimed at creating entirely new things that have not existed so far. When Sir Winston Churchill was the First Lord of Admiralty in 1911 he initiated a series of deep reforms. Perhaps the most important one was the transition of the Royal Navy from coal to oil, which according to many historians significantly contributed to the British success on the sea and to defeating the Kaiserliche Marine. A more recent example is iPod, a device engineered for listening to the music, watching photos and videos, and playing games on the move. The iPod is a creative amalgamation of previously existing ideas, technologies, and brilliant marketing such as Sony's walkman, digital standards MP3(4) and QuickTime, and the Apple brand, respectively.

We consider innovativeness and innovations a major driving force for both the economy and society that helps introduce the society into what Z. Bauman calls the era of liquid modernity understood as the world of reason, chances, opportunities and development [1]. Owing to a quite common mistake that mixes up innovativeness with inventiveness, it is often said that innovations cannot be planned, that all attempts to set up durable pro-innovation organisational structures in enterprises cannot bring tangible and steady outcomes because the innovations are the results of accidents or fortunate circumstances and, therefore, cannot be efficiently managed. We are of a different opinion, namely, innovation processes can be the subject to management, hence the subject to planning, implementation and further

applications. Noteworthy, Japanese experiences, especially in the context of innovative quality management processes deserve one's attention. To boost and plan the innovations' creation is of paramount strategic importance not only for high-tech organisations and companies where innovations and innovativeness are the condition of gaining and maintaining a comparative advantage, but also, and perhaps above all, of the society governance and coherence.

Innovativeness is the process that combines technological, organisational and psychological factors, which is getting more and more democratised, mainly owing to information technology and mobile communications technology. It should be noted that the democratisation of innovativeness is a new and promising phenomenon in the history of innovativeness whose consequences are hardly predictable. Information technologies allow more employees, users and customers to be involved in pro-innovation activities [5], what gives rise to the emergence of innovation networks [4] and the concept of a prosumer, i.e. the consumer who becomes a co-producer of the consumed goods and services.



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Now, after having discussed aspects of modernisation, knowledge society, and innovativeness and its democratisation let us come out with the working thesis that innovativeness becomes of the most important factors, perhaps even a condition sine qua non, of our civilisation survivability. Therefore, every effort has to be made to transform the present knowledge society into the innovativeness society (yet not the innovation society).

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Get ready for the EU Hitachi Science & Technology Forum 2008!



*During the Working Group Meeting:
Pierre Longin, Dr. Eiji Takeda, Fabrice Llabres (left to right)*

The Working Group for the 2008 EU Hitachi Science & Technology Forum met in Brussels on October 13th and 14th. As usual, the objectives of the meeting participants were to define precisely the title and the contents of the next Forum and to set the agenda.

Before coming to Brussels, the Working Group members were asked to discuss the theme that was chosen at the end of the 2007 Forum: "ageing and technology". The email discussions process started in September and, thanks to the efficient moderation of the Working Group Chairwoman, Linda Geux, and the active participation of all the Working Group members, we had a rich and fruitful discussion, enabling us to come to Brussels well prepared to help in setting the goals and the objectives of next year's Forum.

On the Friday evening, Mr Takahashi and his team from the Hitachi Corporate Office in Brussels welcomed the Working Group meeting participants through a delicious dinner party, the perfect prelude to the next day's working session. The dinner party was indeed a moment of conviviality where Hitachi staff, Forum Fellows and Working Group participants could informally catch up and start exchanging ideas about the working session.

Then, the first key announcement, on Saturday morning, was the location and timing of the 2008 Forum: it will take place in Munich, Germany on April 26th-27th 2008 at the Sheraton Arabella Bogenhausen hotel. After Krefeld in 1999, the Forum is coming back to Germany, with some innovation in the

timing of the overall event: next year, the Forum will indeed start on Saturday at 12:00PM and will end on Sunday after lunch.

Thanks to Mr Longin's active and efficient moderation, the meeting participants then settled on the exact title for next year's Forum: "Ageing Society and Technology". Simple at first sight, this title will actually allow the Forum participants to discuss about many different aspects of ageing society and technology. It leaves an open door to many discussions and debates, with the background idea that ageing should not exclusively be seen as an "issue" or a "burden" but also as a "chance", an "opportunity" where technology has a key role to play. In that respect, the following 2 themes were agreed to guide the debate throughout the Forum weekend:

I – Technology for Ageing Society
II – Technology for Ageing Individuals
They will then be followed by a third session the Sunday morning about "Needs & Expectations for Longer Term Future".

In continuity with last year's event, the principle of having lectures alternating with parallel group sessions have been kept. This was introduced during the Forum in Paris and greatly contributed to the richness of the debate. Regarding these parallel sessions, many of the 2007 Forum participants pointed out some possible improvements for the parallel group sessions, mainly linked to a reduction in the number of participants in each session. Following on from this feedback, the Forum

organization team and the Working Group meeting participants decided to improve the format of parallel sessions by dividing the discussions into 5 sub-topics for each of the 2 Forum themes: Health, Social Inclusion, Knowledge Sharing & Experience, Productivity/Autonomy and Mobility. We hope that dividing group sessions into 5 instead of previously 3 will lead to more productive and well-moderated discussions. The parallel group sessions are indeed at the heart of the Forum, hence it is important to make sure that every participant can have an input in the debate and that the group session moderator, thanks to his or her experience and knowledge of the subject, can drive the discussion efficiently. Another innovation is to take place on the Sunday morning. While the third session ("Needs & Expectations for the Long Term Future") will take place with the Forum participants, a group formed by the Saturday speakers, moderators and voluntary Forum members will meet in parallel. Their goal will be to summarize the Saturday discussions on themes I and II and produce a position paper to be reviewed, discussed and endorsed by the whole Forum during the plenary session. The objective here is to facilitate the preparation of the main Forum output, i.e. the Forum report, and make sure it adequately mirrors the result and proposals that came from the Forum discussions.

I think that the message is very clear: the Forum needs you, it needs the variety you can bring to the debate and I hope to see you all in Munich on April 26th-27th 2008 for this great event!

Finally, I would like to thank sincerely the Working Group members (Guillaume, Ingeborg, Linda and Winston) and all the participants of the Working Group meeting, Hitachi staff, Forum Fellows, for their time, their ideas and their contribution to the Forum organisation. There is no doubt that, with the quality of the participants and the innovations that will take place, the 2008 Forum will be even more successful.

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Hitachi's Challenges for the new urban infrastructure toward Ageing Society

One of the impacts of Ageing in Japan is the downturn in City Center life, due to a request by seniors for a more convenient living environment to compensate for a decline in their quality of life (QoL). Combined with a decline in the working population, and therefore economic activities, some major cities in Japan have experienced a gradual downturn and depreciation of their city centers. This has led the Japanese government to formulate a public policy for the realization of Compact City Initiatives, aiming at city center re-invigoration and sustainable development, thru private-public partnerships.

For supporting such compact city initiatives, Hitachi has taken the challenge to design and build up new urban infrastructure to uplift totally QoL. In this concept, ICT and basic infrastructure are merged seamlessly, for example in building management systems, security systems, etc. Likewise, lifestyles are more and more integrating ICT through one-stop information delivery systems, Secure Network Systems (SNS), Health monitoring services, life-long wellness support... On the information content side, the convergence of TV Channels, Networking Systems, Broadcasting technologies and related services will help to increase the quality and the variety of the content; coupled with an easier access to this content, like the analogously-based image search, it will give more chance to seniors to enrich their lives with a better content. Trials, like the SNS for Hitachi Community, which is connecting Hitachi employees, their family and retirees, or like NTT's Next Generation Network based services trial, which aims at the connectivity of e-homes, are helping seniors not only through health management or remote monitoring but also for their social inclusion and knowledge or experience sharing.

In some large-scale re-development areas, Hitachi is also promoting town-wide universal design and barrier-free information services in order to deliver real-time integrated information in a variety of applications spread over a railway stations or a multi-purpose buildings for example.

Lastly, although health management system and hospital location are key concerns in an Ageing Society, there are very few urban development projects based on the concept of wellness for their inhabitants. As both a contribution to society and a business opportunity, Hitachi is now planning to develop on some unused lands, in collaboration with Hitachi-owned hospital and fitness club, a new town-wide healthcare/wellness service platform.

It is important to note that the above projects are not designed only for seniors but will also benefit the entire society, helping the younger generation to see Ageing Society as an opportunity rather than a burden.

Koichi Seto

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NEW Forum Website



The Forum website is in the process of being re-designed. New functionalities, particularly a dedicated section for Forum members only and password protected, will be added over the time.

You will be able to access this site soon on <http://www.hitachiforum.eu>

Please let us have your comments and suggestions on the website or new Connexion layout.

We welcome your contributions and photos to include in future issues.

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The Hitachi Corporate Office, Europe welcomes and encourages your comments and ideas.

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