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Exploring Possibilities to Implement Impossible... (Comments of the editors)

This fourth volume in the knowledge cafe series deals with the peculiarity of the 'through or against' alternative for the intellectual entrepreneur. Different authors reflect on the implications of institutional barriers to entrepreneurship. The obstacles are of both objective and subjective character. Faced with institutional barriers, the intellectual entrepreneur seizes the opportunity to act even in the face of perceived hindrances, feeling that such impediments may also deter competition. Thus, the entry barriers for those who are not afraid to learn from the past experience only, but from the dreams of future as well, are lowered! The boundaries between 'now or then', 'new or old', 'past or future', 'impossible or possible', and – in the context of this book - 'through or against', are really blurred for the knowledgeable and the informed potential entrepreneurs! The richer the knowledge base, and experience of potential entrepreneurs, the more courageous and persistent they are, and the further they can dare to reach.

Intellectual entrepreneurs are not gamblers, however. They dare to take a calculated risk ONLY if they are knowledgeable enough, i.e. if they can TELL BETWEEN what is and what might be, here and there, with these or those people, markets, products, dreams and needs, and with these or those cultures, regulations, life styles, learning modes, and educational achievements. For those who are courageous and knowledgeable, barriers might signal opportunity, and what is commonly perceived as a warning sign "against" certain behavior, might be seen as a clearly marked green light pointing "all the way through".

There certainly exist institutional and informational barriers to intellectual (and to any) entrepreneurship. Intellectual entrepreneurs have confidence that their knowledge generating networks, good technological education (in both highly developed and in developing countries), and a growing tendency for potential investors to couple intellectual capital with the financial one, seem to augur well for potential ventures undertaken on their own or within already existing corporation. Success is difficult to achieve, however, and striving toward

success has its costs. These costs are not of financial character only. Besides them, substantial political and social costs might be implicated. And once the latter ones are mentioned the “dark side of intellectual entrepreneurship” epitomized by explosion of transnational criminal enterprise comes in mind immediately.

During preparation process of this book the Knowledge Generating Network of scholars engaged in the study of phenomenon of Intellectual Entrepreneurship has been significantly extended by the group of professors of AUDENCIA, Ecole de Management, Nantes. The value of their contributions is in highlighting formerly neglected or unknown evidence and consequence of intellectual entrepreneurship, and in emphasizing different aspects of it. This newly established ‘French Connection’ opens new avenues of research, and new perspectives of research based and inspired reflection.

In this context it is a special privilege of one of the editors to report on another “French Connection”. This year The Leon Koźmiński Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management celebrates centesimal anniversary of the birth of its Patron, the late Professor of Warsaw School of Economics. Leon Koźmiński received his doctoral degree from University of Paris (Sorbonne) in 1929. The title of the dissertation was simple and self-explanatory – “Voltaire Financier”. In fact, it is probably one of the first, and the only so well known to us, modern study of a real “blood and flesh” intellectual entrepreneur with all his powers, weaknesses, virtues and vices. The anniversary is so important, and the discovery so enlightening, that we decided to reproduce here the cover page of the dissertation book, its contents, the introduction, bibliography, and the unusual appendix presenting Leon Koźmiński prepared four-page list of economic works quoted by Voltaire in his writings.

Some pieces of art and scholarly achievement cannot, and probably should not be translated. This is why we reproduce above mentioned parts of Leon Koźmiński dissertation in French. And thus our newly established ‘French Connection’ is emphasized again.

In closing, we wish to thank our many contributors. They are truly intellectual pioneers in the quest of how to convert the intellectual energies of societies into sustainable businesses. Given the tremendous investment that societies and individuals are making in education and other intellectual pursuits, our work on how best to stimulate sustainable entrepreneurship has importance for humankind.

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