Master CoDe News

30 April 2019

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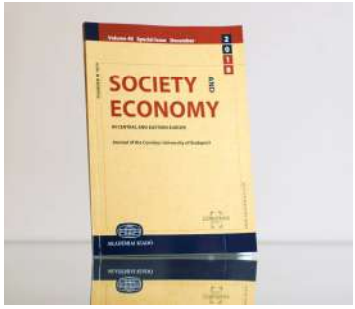
What finds and guarantees the prosperous future of countries or cities?

The answer is **Social Futuring**.

Social Futuring as a concept is a global novelty which offers a new paradigm, a new field of research and a new reality to explore.

This new approach is described in the special issue of **Society and Economy (2018, Vol. 40)**, entitled 'Social Futuring', which includes five fundamental articles.



Cover of Society & Economy's Special Issue on Social Futuring

These articles are:

1. Social Futuring – An Analytical Conceptual Framework by Zoltán Oszkár Szántó
2. Social Futuring – A Normative Framework by János Csák
3. Social Futuring – A Discursive-Conceptual Framework by Petra Aczél
4. Social Futuring – In the context of Futures Studies by Eszter Monda
5. Finite Earth, Infinite Ambitions: Social Futuring and Sustainability as seen by a social scientist by Tamás Kocsis

International Conference & Workshops: Social Futuring 'Connecting Global Potentials' (May 2018)

Conference at the Social Futuring Center in June 2018

Cont.

Master CoDe News

The 5 articles are available on the website of the SFC. Just click on the link:
http://socialfuturing.com/publications-and-events

Furthermore a brief video on the special issue of **Society and Economy** has been released with English, Chinese and Hungarian subtitles, and is available on the links below.

English subtitles: https://youtu.be/tMm3SrekZ74

Chinese subtitles: https://youtu.be/8gOgrMnh19w

Hungarian subtitles: https://youtu.be/6alU4PA0kYY

International Conference & Workshops: Social Futuring 'Connecting Global Potentials' (May 2018)

Workshop on Indexing Social Futuring in February 2019

Interview with Strangers: Prof. Dipak Raj Pant.

Adventures of a wandering professor: Himalayan happiness and Italian charm

Professor Dipak R. Pant teaches graduate students of Economics & Management at Carlo Cattaneo University (LIUC) and the graduate students of Development Studies at the University of Trento, in Italy. Prof. Pant has also been serving as visiting professor at universities and business schools in other countries as well. At LIUC Italy, he founded the ***Interdisciplinary Unit of Sustainable Economy*** *in 2000 (the first academic team of sustainability in the Italian academic context), and headed that research unit team till 2017.*

At first glance, Prof. Pant did not look like a typical academic. From the beginning of the first lecture, he was successful in drawing the attention of the our class. He taught us about the fundamental principles of sustainability with a number of practical cases and examples to illustrate his points. He also mentioned his country of origin (Nepal) and told us that its capital (Katmandu) is like "hell on Earth" nowadays, because of excessive congestion, environmental degradation, unsustainable urban policies and development planning. His examples and comments supported very well his core-teaching about sustainability principles and practices. He explained how 'sustainability' is fundamentally a conscious and practical way of life, an existential mode, right from one's own self: self-awareness, self-control and self-management. At times, his examples and anecdotes also provoked some of our classmates' perplexity. Although he had a very cheerful smile and lively eyes, his lectures were sharp and thought-provoking. Prof. Pant gave us some brief exemplary notes and a quick practical demonstration of a few Asian martial art techniques. It was done to make us understand the basic principle of self-management, energy control, minimalism and resilience. During the four sessions of lectures and seminars conducted by Prof. Pant, we also learned about his experience with sustainable development projects in Italy, Mongolia, Nepal, Armenia, Brazil, Venezuela, Sierra Leone and Cambodia. He is well-experienced and very knowledgeable, with good communication skills.

Such people make you wish to discover their secrets; secrets of their values, passion, energy and life-style.

Discussions in the Kalahari

Lecturing students of the Master CoDe 2017/2019 edition at the University of Trento

Cont.

Interview with Prof. Dipak Pant

Professor, tell us where you come from and what did you do after you left your parents' house.

I was born and raised in the central Himalayas, Nepal. After high school, I was enrolled in an elite and expensive college, where the students had every available support and facilities. Children of wealthy and powerful families studied at that college. My school-mates' values, interests and behavior were quite different from mine. I felt boredom and alienation in that college. I did not make any friend there. A times, I used to have quarrels, and once also a fight broke out between myself and some other bully boys, with negative consequences for me. I felt like being at the wrong place in the wrong time. Eventually, I dropped out from the college, and I was really happy to leave. Having left the college, I decided to explore the world on my own. Thanks to my mother's sponsorship, I could travel a lot. First, I travelled within my own country which is made up of high mountains and villages, of farmers, herders, craft-workers and retail traders. Mostly trekking in high altitudes, I passed through a number of villages. I also did some volunteer works here and there at primary schools and health-posts of the rural highlands. During that period of my trips to the tough highlands of Nepal, I became interested in the remote and marginal human ecosystems, communities, traditions and economy in the extreme lands.

After almost a year of travelling and volunteering in Nepal's rural highlands, I decided to resume higher studies, but somewhere else, not in Nepal. So I went to India where I was enrolled at a good college of Varanasi, northern India, the place where Buddha is said to have delivered his first public sermon. Later, I joined the Indian Air Force as a senior cadet (trainee pilot officer); the citizens of Nepal and Bhutan were allowed to join India's armed forces in those years. I underwent the basic cadet course of the Indian Air Force. I was interested in the flying experience and in learning about military matters. But I knew very well right from the beginning that the military career was not for me, because I was (and continue to be) a pacifist; and I think that investing in military development is an investment in mistrust; it also seems to me a waste of resources, talents and time.

How much time did you spend in the military?

Almost two years, not always in the camps and barracks; for long periods also as a regular non-residential trainee while following the undergraduate university course and staying at an officially designated hostel on campus. In India, it was like being at an international forum. India is so big and diverse; my comrades were young guys from all regions of that large and varied country with so many different languages and customs. English was our *lingua franca*, although many of us used Hindi too (also I learned some workable Hindi). My military instructors were very helpful; my fellow cadets were very kind and friendly to me. It was a very positive experience altogether. We finished the first year, and a few of us also passed the very tough Pilot Aptitude Battery Test (PABT) in the second year. Most of my comrades continued and effectively were commissioned as officers of the Indian Air Force; I opted out and went back to civilian life.

What did you do when you finished military service?

I completed my university degree in India, and travelled to many corners of the Indian sub-continent during the holidays and breaks.

What did you study there?

Within the broad frame of Social Sciences, I concentrated on Anthropology and Philosophy.

Cont.

Interview with Prof. Dipak Pant

What did you do after university?

I picked up my backpack again and went on travelling and exploring various parts of Asia for almost a year. Later, I moved towards the Middle East and Europe; thanks to my generous sponsor (my mother) I could afford to make long-haul trips. I was a low-spending (austere), slow-pace traveler with cultural curiosity, easy-going and adaptive to new circumstances. Perhaps, I was a bit freakish too, like a hippy, in those years. Mostly, I was using surface transport modes (trains, auto-vehicles...). On some occasions, I had difficulties on the inter-state land borders in western Asia, and was forced to detour and buy a plane ticket to fly over the problematic land borders of the Middle East in order to continue my long-haul trip to the West.

Where did you go in the West?

London and Rome were two places where I had contacts and support. I travelled by trains and buses in western Europe; in an austere, freakish and slow-pace manner. I remained longer periods of time in Rome where I also went to university for graduate and research courses. I chose Rome because it was more "exotic" than London or any other modern cities that I visited. Rome is the cradle of Western civilization, the centre of a modern industrially advanced nation (among the G7), and the site of the oldest and largest Christian tradition. And the food was better too than most places I have been in Europe. Rome became my base-camp from where I visited other parts of the western world. I completed a graduate research course at the Pontifical Gregorian University (founded in the 16th century, by St. Ignatius of Loyola) of Rome, the central higher educational institution of the scholarly Catholic order ('Society of Jesus', the 'Jesuits' order). I was the first non-Christian admitted into the Gregorian of Rome.

Prof. Pant with CoDe students at the University of Trento

Which do you consider as your most successful project in local development?

They are two. The first, I showed you during the lecture, that mountain village in north-western Italy. The mountain locality gradually slipping to become a ghost village; so we investigated its current socio-demographic and economic dynamics, then we offered some suggestions; and positive things happened. There were less than 200 residents in that mountain village when we were involved in the project. And in 4 and a half years, after projects' implementation, more than 300 persons were counted as residents. Some ex-residents and retirees returned to their native place, some new residents came in. One shop opened, an agricultural business, a local restaurant. It was a success. The second is the 'mobile community training project' in Mongolia's steppes and taiga, where we established seasonal itinerant adult training camps in the countryside: for the environmental and business education of local herders and entrepreneurs. It was a success as well.

Cont.

Interview with Prof. Dipak Pant

Professor, through which channels do you usually get the local development projects?

Each case is singular and different from others. There are no fixed channels. Sometimes, I get invited to help. Sometimes, I solicit my services to concerned institutions, particularly in case of the contexts of my interest (like the remote and marginal human habitats, the extreme lands). My colleagues and collaborators respond to various open calls (tenders) for project coordination and/or partnership. Our team has served as the scientific coordinator and management partner in a number of projects supported by private, non-governmental, and public organizations (including the Italian government and the European Commission).

What was the most surprising or interesting channel through which you got into the project?

Sometimes, people just notice you and then something comes up. Sometimes, there are the institutional contacts through university. Most channels are official. Sometimes they are just spontaneous, individual, unexpected. You never know. It is as mysterious as one's *Karma*.

Thank you for answering. Now let us ask you some very special things. What was the most dangerous situation which happened in your life?

Aaah! There were quite a few temporary situations in which I feared for my life. Once there was a poisonous snake crawling around my shelter. Another situation was an abrupt and un-scheduled landing due to serious hitches in the aircraft that was carrying me and some other passengers. Once, I had a last-minute escape from a landslide while trekking in high altitude. Once, I was almost mugged by some rough teenagers brandishing knife, in a large South American city.

Where did the flight situation occur?

It was in Cambodia. I suppose Cambodian aircraft did not receive sufficient maintenance, care and control in those years, in the early 1990s.

Do you have a family?

Yes. I have a grown-up daughter who lives in The Netherlands; we meet quite often, several times a year. My mother (the biggest sponsor of my expeditions) lives in Nepal; she is very fit and fine for her age (90 yrs.), and is aging well, well-cared. I manage to meet my mom a couple of times a year (sometimes more, happily). My wife, a very well educated and polyglot lady, passed away many years ago due to in incurable disease when my daughter was still a child. I did not marry again, raised the child alone, and took her along in work trips and research missions in different corners of the world. Now I am free as my daughter is an adult and independent person.

What does she do today?

My daughter is a wildlife biology research scholar. She studies wild animals and insects: bees, birds etc. and is concerned about biodiversity conservation. She is currently engaged with a Dutch university.

Is she married?

Not yet. She is free and on her own; and she will take her decisions as per her timing and convenience, I suppose.

Cont.

Interview with Prof. Dipak Pant

Which features of character do you think help you the most in life and your job?

I think 'humanity' - being compassionate and trying to understand human beings of different places and cultures - helped me a lot. Humanity is beyond all differences. I think also 'spirituality' (including an agnostic curiosity about the mystery of universe) has been very helpful. Spirituality is above all traditions as Humanity is above all nations.

Of which country do you have the best memories, apart from Italy and Nepal?

I love many countries, including Nepal, my birth-place which I visit regularly, and Italy, my current base-camp. But not necessarily I like these places more than others. Loving is not liking. So, to be frank, I like to pass a substantial amount of time in Peru, Taiwan, Armenia, Mongolia, Spain, The Netherlands, China, Russia, USA. These are the places where I always look for a chance to return.

What do you like most in Peru?

It is the combination of many things: massive and majestic Nature, variety of landscapes, the people, their cultural traditions... and, of course, peace and tranquility.

What do you especially like in Taiwan?

Peace, tranquility, relaxed and liberal social environment, kind and educated people, reliable infrastructures and services, people-friendly bureaucracy, beautiful landscapes, and great food.

Professor, we always studied about the development stories of western cities, which are not fitting, for instance, in the case of non-Western contexts like Pakistan. For example, the city of Lahore or Karachi. These megacities have different dimensions and complex problems. In Europe all cities are mono-centric; but Delhi (India), for example, has multiple centers. Bombay is so big. Calcutta is so big.

Well. Not all European cities are mono-centric and not all Asian cities are pluri-centric. Lahore is a nice city and has a big potential as a high value place-brand, because of its history and culture. I have been there a long time ago. It's a very fine place. But there is an urgent need of massive and continuous efforts to improve Lahore's urban eco-system quality. If there is a strong political will and appropriate financial commitments over a period of time, Lahore can become a great Asian city. Three decades ago, Taipei was among the worst cities of eastern Asia. Then they decided to improve. It took them more than two decades of constant improvements. They are still improving as there is more to be done. Now, Taipei is one of most livable mega-cities of Asia.

End of a lecture, CoDe students with Prof. Pant (centre)

Cont.

Interview with Prof. Dipak Pant

Professor, a few 'last but not least' things. Which book can you recommend to young fellows for inspiration?

There are many good books; some for knowledge, others for fun, and a few also happen to stir our consciousness and inspire us. Right now, a little book comes to my mind that inspired me: The book's title translated into English is "The man who planted trees", originally written in French by Jean Giono. I have read its Italian translation. It is a story of a man who decided to save a mountain by planting many trees; did so tirelessly for many years, and was successful to grow a forest before he died.

Can you recommend some movie?

Well, there are many good films in many languages. I am not good in evaluating movies, because I haven't gone to a movie theater for many years. Most of the films that I have watched in the past decade or more were displayed on the screens of aircraft during long flights.

We finished our interview, got to know an amazing life of studies and adventure. We shook hands and agreed to meet again. The daylight was getting dimmer in Trento. A November evening of beautiful twilight and a cold breeze was forewarning us about the forthcoming chilly winter in north-eastern Italy's Alpine region of Trento.

Prof. Pant has a young soul which keeps him lively in the young crowd. He taught us incredible stuff in the shortest time. Above all, he is a good storyteller

By: Maksym Koltunov
and Muhammad Ubaid Iqbal
Master CoDe 2017-2019

Prof. Pant with Maksym and Ubaid

The latest news from the Masud Parves Library in Satkhira, Bangladesh

The Masud Parves Library was founded by Abu Sayed (Master CoDe 2010/11 edition).

What began as a dream for Sayed --- who as a student of the CoDe program wished to do something positive for his village and to put into practice the theories of Local Development he had studied --- has now been functioning for over three years. The Library has proved a great success and has certainly improved the lives and activities of the people of the village; and especially of the children who represent, after all, the future for any community.

As well as providing a centre for reading and acquiring further knowledge, the library also organizes competitions, sports events, helps the more needy in the community, and assists in furthering the education of those who want to continue their studies.

Among the events organized, there are the ever-popular competitions (see photos below). The following competitions have taken place during the past year.

The Recitation from the Holy Quran Competition: about 15 students took part in the last edition and three were declared the winners.

The Vocabulary Competition: This is a month-long activity aimed at developing the English-language skills of the children. Participants are asked to memorize and practise a different word each day. At the end of each month, the best performer becomes the "learner of the month" and is awarded a gift from the library. At the end of the year, a "learner of the year" award is given to the best overall student.

Other competitions include a **Typing Competition** for students who attended the computer courses given by the library; an **extempore speech competition**; **reading competition**; **essay writing competition**; and a **poetry recitation competition**.

https://www.masudparveslibrary.com/

Cont.

The library also organizes football, badminton, Ha-Du-Du and Gaadon games for the students. Participants are usually students who attended the library during the month preceding the game. Games are used to encourage participation in the library's activities.

Various events & activities organized by the Library

Moreover, the Masud Parves Library encourages students who want to study further. For example, with a "**Congratulations Ceremony**" the library congratulated Md. Masudur Rahman in November 2018 when he qualified for admission to the Jessore Medical College, Bangladesh. At the ceremony Md. Masudur Rahman was also awarded gifts which were presented to him by the president of the library.

What's more, the MPL has received money from friends and supporters which is given directly to students with the express aim of assisting these students in furthering their education.

Cont.

The latest news from the Masud Parves Library

Other activities include the Eid Bazar: during the religious festival, Eid, groceries were donated to the poorer people in the village.

In addition, the library collected used clothing which is distributed to those who need them most. Clothing is also kept in a box in the library and those with genuine needs can take without having to ask. This is very much appreciated particularly during the colder winter months.

Just recently the library has also begun a "Keep your Village clean" initiative.

All the activities and programs – games and competitions -- are designed to attract students to the library. Quality education cannot be achieved by putting students under pressure. Quality education has to be achieved by creating something interesting for learners that triggers engagement and curiosity.

Helping to keep the village clean

Happy library users!

IMPORTANT NEWS!!
Abu Sayed, as the founder of the MPL, has been invited to attend a multinational workshop known as Deliberative Democracy Institute, organized by the Kettering Foundation, USA (https://www.kettering.org/). The Workshop will be held in July 2019 in Dayton, Ohio, USA.

More about this event in a later edition of the Newsletter.

TO DONATE TO THE LIBRARY:

Name of the account: Masud Parves Library
Savings account no: 2931010013709
Rupali Bank Limited, 2931-Nawabenki Branch (Branch code-2931)
Post office- Nawabenki, Post Code- 9452
Shyamnagar, Satkhira
Bangladesh

SWIFT/BIC Code: RUPBBDDH

Dear friends,
With this post I start a series of sketches on the departments of Trentino Sviluppo (https://www.trentinosviluppo.it/) as the perfect example to follow for any local development agency

Maksym Koltunov (Master CoDe 2017/2019)

We start with the Internationalization Department.

Internationalization Area

The Internationalization Department deals with assistance to local companies in expanding into foreign markets. The major tools can be considered:

1. Preparation of market research for the specific product and consumer segment that the company wants to transfer abroad.

2. Using a database of foreign companies: more specifically, the Department can provide contacts of foreign partners to the local company.

3. Department specialists personally can go abroad with the local firm to meet representatives of possible partners. During meetings they assist with legal provisions and communication in foreign languages.

4. The Department provides data about financial instruments available in the countries of destination and teaches how to use them. (Access to loans from different public/private institutions, insurance services, assurance commitments.)

5. The Department participates and organizes exhibitions and fairs abroad regarding products produced in Trentino.

6. The Department promotes, internationally, in collaboration with the central authority, "Made in Italy" and "Made in Trentino" brands.

7. The Department gives access to local companies to international networking events as well as invites foreign companies to events organized in Trentino, assisting foreigners while they stay in the Region.

8. They provide support on the legal framework of foreign countries to ensure successful expansion of local businesses and partnerships.

9. Assisting in calls for bids for public procurements abroad.

In some other Italian regions, the above mentioned functions are performed by the Chambers of Commerce. However, in Trentino these functions were transferred to the local development agency. By this resolution the synergetic effect has been utilized. The support of local companies in fundraising, grant awarding, legal support, R&D will be closely interconnected with the internationalization support. All of these functions, under one structure, create a systematic solution to the more stable and wise support for local startups and grown businesses.

Cont.

by Maksym Koltunov, Master CoDe 2017/19

FDI Attraction Area

FDI Department attracts FDI investments by utilizing the following methods:

1. Designing the database of the profile companies outside the region: both in Italy and abroad. Looking for suitable firms to contact, discover their needs, make an offer.

2. Preparing suitable information for the designing of the INVEST IN TRENTINO brochure. The content is later delivered to the communication department which creates a final version of the brochure.

3. Hiring an external scouting company which searches for the special profile of enterprises that Trentino Sviluppo wants to attract. The scouting company finds the list of the right profile companies (for Trentino, they are mechatronics, green innovation, sport industry companies), after which Trentino Sviluppo contacts them by calling, email, etc. If an interest is discovered, a visit to the company can be organized. However, the best approach is to bring the interested company directly to the Region. Here it is possible to organize meetings with the research institutions, local government if needed, and other stakeholders. Also a site visit, where the firm could establish its activities in future, can be arranged if the meeting is in Trentino.

Trentino Sviluppo does not possess its own personnel resources to organize a search for FDI independently. That is why an initial search is performed through an outsourcing company. Today, priority markets are Germany, USA, Austria, and the internal Italian market. However, in the last years outsourcing companies did not succeed in finding a foreign client which would later settled down in Trentino. Thus temporarily Trentino Sviluppo has suspended contracts with outsourcing scouting companies.

SPIN Accelerator Bootcamp – Maksym (front row, left) with participants

4. Scouting of the internal Italian market is performed by Trentino Sviluppo itself. The major attraction advantages for outsider firms are the proximity to the German market, stronger "German" mentality in Trentino and thus clearer rules and lower risks, transparent public authorities, discreet taxation policy. The region endeavors to attract companies which physically would bring employment, opportunities for growth with value added. An interesting case was

Cont.

by Maksym Koltunov, Master CoDe 2017/19

an early establishing in Trentino headquarters of big renewable energy companies about 7-8 years ago. This was done through tax preferences to renewable energy companies provided by local government for a period of 10 years. Taxes were much lower than in other regions. However, nowadays the Region does not aim at attracting renewable energy companies, because, in fact, their generating facilities and thus most employed personnel are scattered in other Italian regions, where sun or wind are better available. This means that the number of employees in Trentino with the attraction of headquarters of renewable energy businesses – will not grow, because most employment is attached to the generating facilities in the center or south of the country.

5. Obviously, an important benefit for the company to settle in Trentino is the common world practice of direct cash reward. Local government provides this reward. The amount and the possibility of the reward is assessed by the special committee of representatives of the local institutions. If the quantitative and qualitative benefits for the region in 7-10 years would exceed the amount of the cash reward – the decision is taken in favor of the reward.

A lot of firms wish to establish their sales departments or research centers in other regions. These firms are the main target for the FDI department. Last year 30 new companies came mostly from other Italian regions and few from abroad as an outcome of FDI department active work. The FDI attraction area was established only 2 years ago. Currently there are 5-6 employees there. However, the department has already its KPI, so they need to attract a certain number of companies annually. In the past, a more random but not systematic approach to FDI attraction was used. Mostly, attraction was a function of the local government. Such big players attracted were Ducati Energia, Bonfiglioli, Microsoft Research Biology Computational Center "Cosbi".

It is important to talk about the tax break which the Region can provide to the foreign company. Speaking about Trentino, here a tax reduction up to 4-5% deducted from 25 % standard Italian tax burden is possible. This incentive is available for the companies from other Italian regions or foreign countries. Autonomy status gives the possibility to decide tax policy locally. It is an advantage for the region where strong institutions exist.

Trentino, together with Lombardy and Emilia Romania, are the only Italian regions which have structured special departments which deal specifically with FDI attraction. A randomized approach, which other regions follow, does not offer such positive outcomes which a well organized structured approach could grant for local development.

Trentino Sviluppo SPA

Via Fortunato Zeni, 8 - 38068 Rovereto (TN) - Italy
https://www.trentinosviluppo.it/

Trentino Sviluppo is a company established by the Autonomous Province of Trento to **foster the sustainable growth** of the "Trentino system" by **developing actions and services** aimed at **supporting the creation of new entrepreneurial and innovation projects**. In particular, Trentino Sviluppo **represents the reference point** for the enterprises willing to operate in Trentino.

NOTICE BOARD

MASTER CODE ALUMNI UPDATE

During 2019 we are once again planning to issue a supplementary edition of "Master CoDe News". For this special supplementary edition we would be happy to receive an **update** of what you, CoDe Alumni, have been doing since graduation.

Please send in a short update of your career and / or studies since your CoDe graduation to: mastercode.news@gmail.com – if possible by mid May 2019.

The update can be from half a page to one page (but this is flexible!) and should include the following information:

- Your first name and surname
- Master CoDe edition (eg. 2010/12)
- Email address or other contact address
- A photo of yourself (optional)
- Further studies since graduation, if any (Master's degree, PhD ...)
- Career: a brief description of the work you are involved in since graduation and, **most important**, how the Master CoDe program contributed to your career

And of course, once completed, this edition will also be circulated to all CoDe alumni and students.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Erasmus Mundus Master Code Website
www.erasmusmundus-code.eu/

Master CoDe Newsletter
mastercode.news@gmail.com

Thank you to collaborators and contributors to Master CoDe News.

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