

**Chapter 1 : The Oxford Handbook of Innovation - J. Fagerberg, D. Mowery, R. Nelson - Librairie Eyrolles**

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Innovation is the attempt to try out new or improved products, processes or ways to do things – has always been with us. Today innovation appears as relevant as ever. Firms care about innovation because their future depends on it. Scholars are interested in innovation too and increasingly so. In a recent survey Bart Verspagen and I estimated that nowadays several thousand researchers study the phenomenon. It has not always been like that. For a long time scholarly contributions about innovation were extremely rare. The major exception was the Austrian-American economist Josef Schumpeter, who already a century ago advanced a theory in which innovation, and the social agents underpinning it, was seen as the driving force of economic development for more information see Fagerberg. At the time he had few followers, however. In fact, as the Figure shows, as late as around the number of new publications focusing on innovation at least as reflected in the title was extremely low. This started to change in the 1980s, though, and from that time onwards scholarly interest in the phenomenon has increased steadily with – as the Figure shows – a particularly steep rise in recent years. Freeman was also the person who attracted me to the emerging field. Innovation and the global economy My research for the Ph. D. Or as he puts it: While these papers focused on the country level, the perspective developed there might be just as relevant for analysing the performance of regions within countries, and later, together with Bart Verspagen and others, the analysis was extended to include regional dynamics as well. A selection of my papers in this area is published as a book *Technology, Growth and Competitiveness*, Edward Elgar. You can download the list of content and introduction. The latter also tells the story of how I have come to look at global dynamics in the way I do. Innovation and development One popular perception of innovation that one meets in media every day is that it has to do with developing brand new, advanced solutions for sophisticated, well-off customers, through exploitation of the most recent advances in knowledge. There is, however, another way to look at innovation that goes significantly beyond the high-tech picture just described. In this broader perspective, innovation – the attempt to try out new or improved products, processes or ways of doing things – is an aspect of most if not all economic activities. It includes not only technologically new products and processes but also improvements in areas such as logistics, distribution and marketing. Hence, even in so-called low-tech industries, there may be a lot of innovation going on. Moreover, the term innovation may also be used for changes that are new to the local context, even if the contribution to the global knowledge frontier is negligible. Thus, in this broader sense innovation may be as relevant in the developing part of the world as elsewhere. But the analysis was much constrained by lack of relevant data. Since then, however, there has been a growing effort to produce relevant statistics for a wider set of countries including developing ones and this implies that the possibility for analyzing these issues in more depth – and for a broader range of countries – has improved a lot. The analysis presented there clearly suggests that innovation, and the technological capabilities it depends on, are just as relevant for countries in the process of catching up as for the already developed part of the world. Technological and Social Capabilities Innovation does not occur in a vacuum. Innovative firms, therefore, do not only depend on what happens inside the firm but also on the character of the broader environment in which they operate. Such societal factors may be challenging to measure and include in empirical analysis, however, and Abramovitz himself was quite pessimistic in this regard. But in recent years several new sources of data have become available that in a better way reflect such factors, and together with Martin Srholec I have tried to exploit these opportunities in new research see, e. g. Although in several cases the nature of these data does not allow for very extensive testing of causality, the correlations are striking: Successful economic development clearly goes hand in hand with well-developed

social capabilities. Fagerberg Arguably, countries that discriminate against an important part of their talent pool are shooting themselves in the foot. They may never catch up unless values, norms and associated practices change towards a more open, pluralistic stance. This is an important lesson. You may download the paper or see a video of the presentation. Innovation systems and policy Innovation, Path Dependency and Policy, Between and I was responsible for the IPP Innovation, Path-dependency and Policy project, financed by the Norwegian Research Council, which focused on the characteristics of the Norwegian innovation system. While much previous work on national systems of innovation has been static in character and lacked historical depth, the IPP project applied a historical and evolutionary perspective. This led to a focus on the co-evolution of policy, the research infrastructure and key sectors in the economy. You will find a paper summarizing some of the main findings of the project here. How far back in history interest for “ and experimentation with “ innovation policy can be traced, is an open question. Innovation is clearly not something new, and policy instruments that affect innovation, in one way or another, may have existed for a long time. However, the term innovation policy is of more recent origin. In fact, its use is “ as the below figure shows “ closely related to the emergence and spread of the national systems of innovation approach from around onwards. Fagerberg based on information from <https://www.oxfordhandbook.com/view/document/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780191013612/chapter-11>: This makes innovation policy very relevant in discussion of how to handle the climate challenge, the solution of which will require extensive changes the economy, business-models and ways of life, see Fagerberg, Laestadius and Martin and Fagerberg for an extended discussion. Understanding innovation The Oxford Handbook of Innovation Innovation is a multifaceted phenomenon that calls for insights from different disciplines and approaches. An important step in improving our understanding of innovation, therefore, is to bring together researchers with different backgrounds, try to develop a common knowledge base and work towards a shared understanding of the phenomenon. This I considered to be very important for the future of the field and I still do. You may download the introduction to the handbook here. However, in my view it is also interesting to understand how the field has evolved towards its current stance, learn more about the characteristics of those active in this area and, not the least, explore the relationships between innovation studies and other disciplines or inter-disciplinary fields. Reference list Abramovitz, M. Journal of Economic History, Research Policy 41 7 , The Triple Challenge for Europe: Technology, Growth and Competitiveness: Schumpeter and the revival of evolutionary economics: The changing global economic landscape: Nations, Industries and Households. Research Policy 40, Fagerberg, J. Exploring the knowledge base, Research Policy 41, Innovation and Catching-Up, in Fagerberg, J. Innovation, Path Dependency and Policy: National Innovation systems, capabilities and economic development, Research Policy, Knowledge, Capabilities and the Poverty Trap: The complex interplay between technological, social and geographical factors, in Meusburger,P. Knowledge and the Economy, Springer , p. The Competitiveness of Nations: Innovation and Economic Development. Innovation studies -The emerging structure of a new scientific field, Research Policy,

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*Jan Fagerberg, editor Jan Fagerberg, Professor, Centre for Technology, Innovation and Culture (TIK), University of Oslo. David C. Mowery, editor David Mowery is Professor at the Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley.*

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*Fagerberg (, Handbook of the Economics of Innovation and Technological Change, (, The Sources of Innovation, New York: Oxford University Press.*