

Comments and observations on session 2

Bart Verspagen

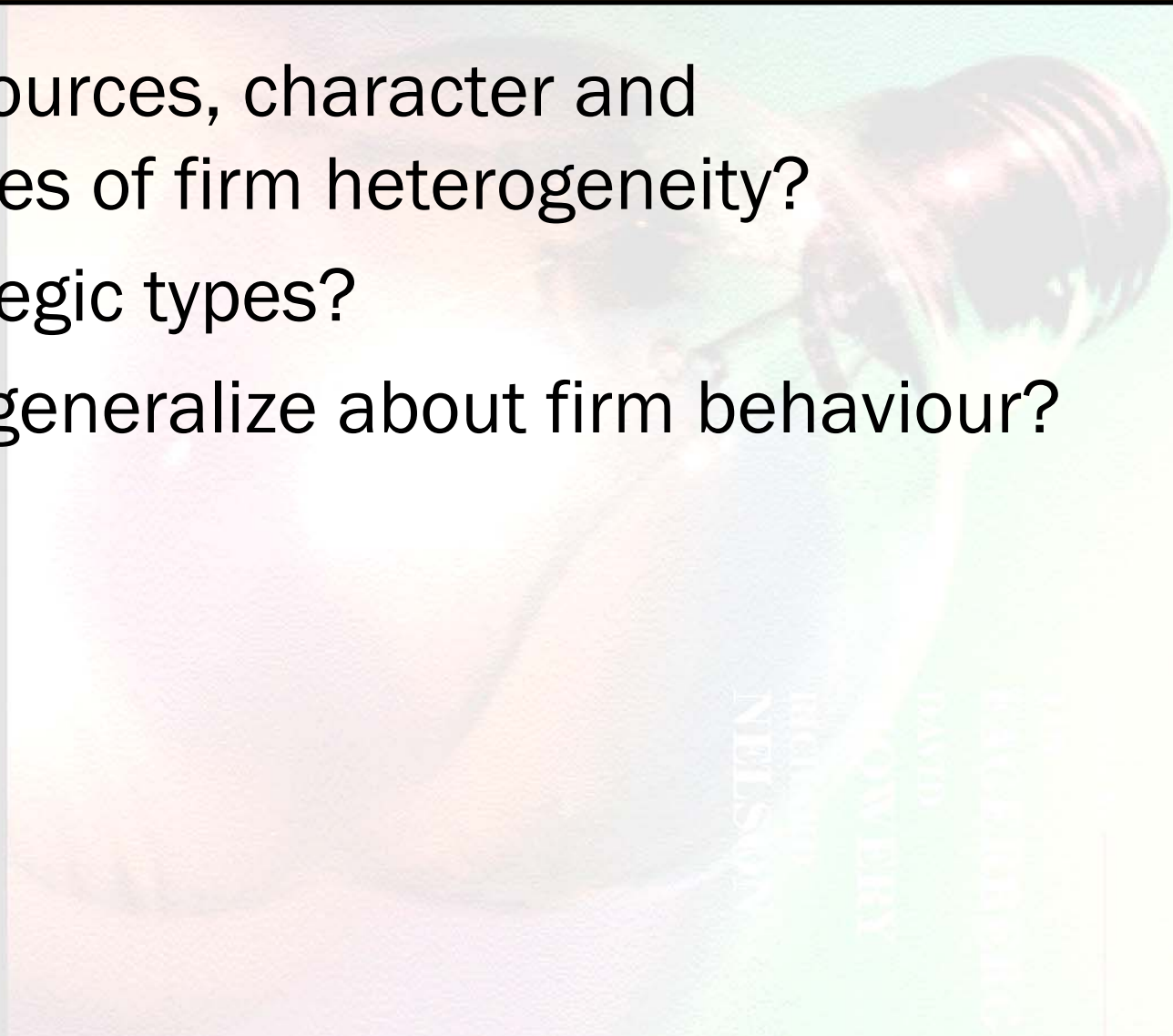
INNOVATION
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Questions

- existence, sources, character and consequences of firm heterogeneity?
- Typical strategic types?
- can we still generalize about firm behaviour?

Handbook of
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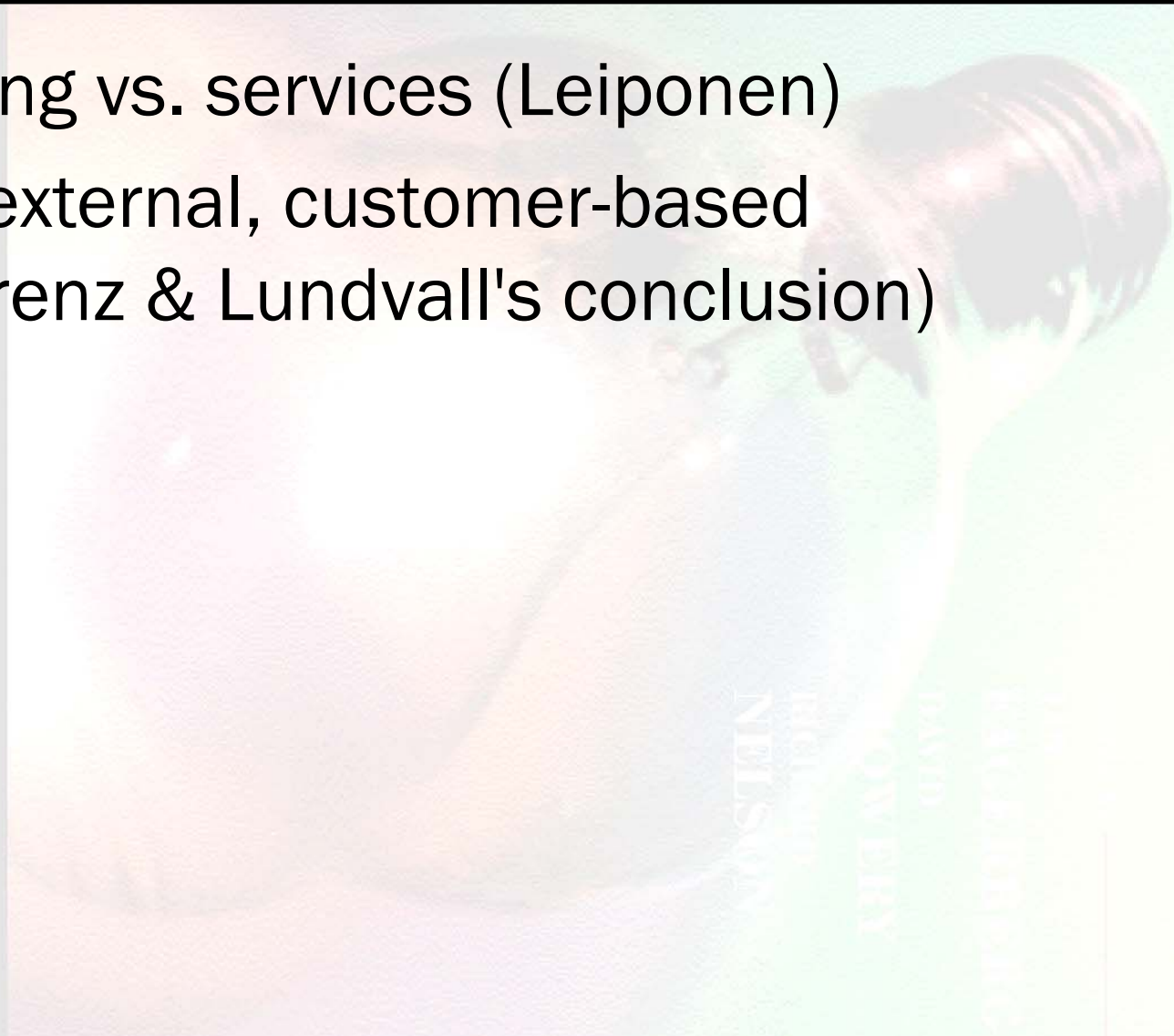
Going back to Schumpeter (Mark I & II)

- Local search / cumulative capabilities (Laursen, Dahl, Lorenz & Lundvall)
 - cognitive restraints (Laursen, Metcalfe & Marshall)
 - human capital and capabilities (Dahl)
 - labour markets (a macro factor) and employee mobility (Lorenz & Lundvall's starting point)
- This set of papers puts much emphasis on Mark II or routinized, in the literature, this is often contrasted with Mark I or entrepreneurial

Knowledge sources and contexts (related)

- Manufacturing vs. services (Leiponen)
- Internal vs. external, customer-based (Srholec, Lorenz & Lundvall's conclusion)

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Typical Strategic Types?

- Services / manufacturing (Leiponen)
 - there are typical strategies at this level and below
 - but also similarities between services and manufacturing
- Firm-level not (much) influenced by sectoral or national systems (Srholec)
- Strategic management theory (local search vs. boundary spanning, Laursen's business school approach)

Can we generalize (and develop a firm-based theory of innovation)?

- Derived from Marshall (Metcalfe): yes we can, using either
 - the representative agent (Pigou)
 - a population dynamics view (Nelson & Winter), heterogeneity (only) as a more realistic micro foundation

(interestingly, L&L "casually" observe that their labour market systems are related to different modes of doing innovation; they do not comment on levels or types of innovation)

- Multi-level perspective: reality has multiple levels, and heterogeneity is relatively small within units of higher levels (the taxonomy or systems view); Srholec is somewhat critical

Some other points (per paper)

- Metcalfe
 - How can evolutionary analysis take the firm serious?
- Laursen
 - "Evolutionary analysis centers on path dependent processes", but this is a biased reading of the literature (even of N&W)
- Leiponen
 - Interesting findings, but for a small sample (extend to other countries and panel, especially since timing effects seem important)

Some other points (per paper)

- Lorenz & Lundvall
 - a more explicit link to innovation is welcome! (paper with Arundel & Valeyre)
- Srholec
 - The type of analysis is somewhat comparable with Lorenz & Lundvall, but a different methodology (hierarchical factor analysis & multi-level analysis)
- Dahl
 - what about sectoral differentiation (are there entrepreneurial and routinized sectors)