

Memory and Project *by Sergio Maria Carbone*

Abstract

Business is the leading force of the change that took to the current knowledge civilization and to the subsequent logistic and communication revolution of just in time and zero time.

But with no active memory practice, the leading power of business is at risk.

According to Peter Drucker, one of the greatest contemporary experts of business management, **organizations** are the **habitat** of human beings and their «social ecology».

Indeed, over the last 250 years, business has spread various forms of organizational logic. Beginning around 1750 up to the 1900s, the application of technology evolved to gradually conquer the world. The Industrial Revolution established a new civilization that radically changed the meaning of the word «knowledge».

The path of this development can be traced through phases:

- from 1750 until the last quarter of the 19th century, knowledge was applied to tools, processes and products
- then, up to WW II, knowledge was applied to work; the «productivity revolution» took place
- following WW II up to our time, knowledge has been applied to itself, thus defining the «**management revolution**».

This fairly linear course, has led to what is nowadays called the «**knowledge civilization**», and business has been its leading force. This continuously accelerating path, however, has moved us beyond mere **clock time**.

Another more troubling feature in the development of organizational logic is its increasing acceleration. In the final and contemporary phase, we started from **clock time** marked by the stopwatch of the Fordist assembly line, leading to the **just-in-time** logistic revolution, a sort of eternal present in which time/space are compressed, or a **zero time** digital revolution, in which instant response to customers is made possible by the in multimedia communication.

In an **extended present**, even the notion of progress itself ages quickly. As a result, the power of enterprise to spearhead progress and initiative may be jeopardized.

«**Culture e impresa**» was created to respond to this risk. Our journal aims to promote both a critical use of memory and «active recall», where past, present and future interact.

The same goal is pursued, in full accordance with its statute, by the Fondazione Ansaldo, whose basic targets are **preservation and enhancement of memory**. This is a time of pluralism where many «cultures» co-exist. We strongly believe in recognizing the real value of business as a virtual

place where knowledge and work meet through the active **practice of memory** and **project** in order to reconquer time and space on a human level.