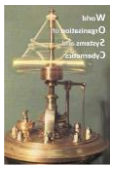


From Homo Sapiens to Homo Digitalis

Keynote speaker: **Sergio Barile**

In the history of human evolution, we can recognize unique moments that, generally only by future generations, are definitively recognized as very important in the anthropological and social evolutionary process. These are those moments often remembered, conceptually borrowing from epistemology, as periods of paradigmatic change. Basically, in an interpretation translated from the philosophy of science in favor of a possible explanatory perspective of social phenomena, the paradigmatic change – which is essentially a cultural paradigm change –, can be considered a phase of profound change of those habits of thought and action that accompany the interpretative and behavioral dynamics typical of the 'modus agendi' of not less than 65% of the reference population.

In fact, even if it is difficult to understand and accept, most of our behaviors referable to the interpretation of information received, or to actions to be carried out in specific contexts of ordinary everyday life, are carried out through the application of interpretative schemes that lead to behavioral modalities well-established in practice. It is a mode of action common to almost all human beings who, in the desire to reduce the problematic anxiety of deciding, are led to act on the basis of well-known elementary stimulus-response mechanisms, thus creating a scenario, sometimes only apparent, of existential lightness. In such a context, the ideal condition in which 'there is no problem for which there is no solution' appears believable.

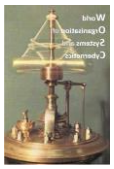
Normally, the temporal cycle of pro tempore validity of a given paradigm is interrupted by events that propose problematic scenarios that no longer appear to be resolvable through the application of known decision-making processes, and therefore, in this evidence, contradict the presumed certainty of resolutive capacity.

It is important to underline that, to affirm that we are in the presence of a paradigmatic change, the above mentioned events cannot concern only some specific social contexts, such as, for example, the political legislative, the school or others, but it is necessary that, in a given epoch, all the different contexts, which represent the expressive and operative modalities of reference of an organized community, must be involved in the change as a whole.

Past studies explained the contribution of the Viable Systems Approach with reference to the conceptualizations summarized in the context of the consonance between information varieties, in order to better comprehend the factors that actually lead to the need for a paradigm shift. It is reasonable to believe that only the advent of a change in the values system and general schemes shared by a population of individuals leads to the need for evolution of the current paradigm.

According to these assumptions, certainly, what we are experiencing is a phase of epochal transition. We observe the passage from one paradigm to another, experiencing a phase in which the customs of the past gradually disappear to allow a 'new world' to come to light, in which we see the evolution from Homo sapiens to homo digitalis

We are well aware that phases of similar transitions have already occurred, and scholars from many and different disciplines have provided ample and interesting literature to best explain both the reasons and the dynamics of the observed changes. Think about the Fordism and post-Fordism epochs.



However, all these considerations, which range from apodictic evidence to common sense do not explain anything about the existence of a common denominator, capable of grasping the common features, epoch after epoch of transition, of the different transformations.

Hence the question arises: there may be a possible assimilating conceptualization of the observed transformations?

The hypothesis is that, given the necessity of a technological innovation that can act as a detonator, the explosion of change must concern a profound change in the perception of the time and space factors for a large, or in any case significant, part of the population. The advent of steam and the consequent development of motor traction have certainly, as many scholars claim, amplified the 'human muscularity', but above all they have changed the perception that most people had of distances. And the world has become progressively closer! Similarly, the discovery of radio waves has changed both the spatial and temporal perception previously existing.

A systems logic analysis, which considers the processes necessary to achieve any goal that can be practiced by any human being, regardless of ethnicity, class or culture, immediately highlights that the paradigmatic changes correspond to profound modifications of the approach in terms of method, technique and tools, which each individual uses to decide and act in their daily life.

However, there is more. It is possible to glimpse a more ambitious frontier than that of having found a common denominator to the processes of paradigmatic change. Digital transformation, highlighting the increasingly significant interchange relationship between physicality and virtuality of phenomena, makes it increasingly understandable that the concept of 'information' simplifies and unifies those apparently distinct and distant of space and time.

In the digital world, the representation of the materiality overcomes the limits of space-time dimensions allowing, on the one hand, proximity and ubiquity and, on the other hand, an optimization of the time dimension which results in a possibility of asynchronous representation of events.

Thus, the space-time dimensions find a synthesis in a mental representation of reality that has a common reference in information. Here, the information variety becomes a generalizable model of representation, opening up to a new way of reading, interpreting, analyzing, and measuring interaction based on information.

But, in the context in which multiple intermediaries operate who all have this ability to reduce spatial distances and compress time intervals, how can an ordered, non-entropic representation of interactions be conceived? What drivers will address the composition of clusters?

One possibility concerns the spontaneous regulation that derives from the concept of consonance: certain information varieties are led to composing together, to be attracted into unique clusters, sharing a sense of belonging and defining levels of information 'vibration', which compose them together. Thus, the entropy that would derive from the large multitude of interacting subjects thus becomes an organization.

The consonance principle, therefore, seems to inspire the composition of the different clusters making consonant entities vibrate together informationally.