

Introduction (An interview with Giancarlo Gonizzi, February 26th, 2001)
by Giuseppe Paletta

The interview with Mr. Gonizzi took place before **Culture e impresa** was founded, and the Schedule research project was planned. Therefore, some of the data mentioned in the above introduction do not appear in this interview. However, we have decided to publish Mr. Gonizzi's interview here because it explains the original features of the Barilla business archive.

This archive was not created as a natural consequence of the Barilla company organization. Previously, there was nothing but the belief (typical of a multinational company such as WR Grace & Co) that company identity is just a leftover from old-fashioned family capitalism, and that the achievements arising from good archives management are insignificant. The retrieval of historical records was carried out thanks to the dedication of Pietro Barilla, who realized that this could be a tool to assert his leadership (see 1994 issue of *Cento anni di pubblicità e comunicazione*, ed. Giancarlo Gonizzi).

The archives, coined by Mr. Gonizzi as an «**archives of reconstruction**», was formulated by collating records found within and outside the company. This is the reason why the order of the records is actually based on **library**, rather than **archival**, standards.

Lastly, the archives development: the presence of a professional archivist from the beginning helped to make sense of discrepancies and create a real archives based on the organizational make-up of the company.

To sum up, the cultural institution was created through an act of business policy designed to bridge the gap between two different styles and times in the Barilla management. The «archive of reconstruction» described by Mr. Gonizzi is a symbol of the family commitment to the business conceived as a community. The archive is now a key moment in the training of new employees, thanks to its growing value.

The link between entrepreneurial family, company and archives becomes irrevocable and is demonstrated by a section of the company archive concerning the family.

This process doesn't necessarily follow the basic principles of classic archival science, but has proved effective in terms of leadership assertion, and business organization.

We are invited to a further reflection on this subject by Mr. Gonizzi's use of the expression «business cultural institutions», thus escaping the ineffectiveness of the traditional taxonomy (archives, museums, collections) as far as cultural assets are concerned. The core of the matter is

that a company has no established place within the traditional classification of «cultural assets».
Business culture is a complex whole, which cannot be split up into types or origins.