

## Business with a memory

*by Alessandro Lombardo and Giuseppe Paletta*

Once again, “Culture e Impresa” focuses on the stewardship of business and economic archives. And, we can assure our readers that we will continue to deal with this question in the future. The reason for this is simple: these archives are in danger of being lost or destroyed.

In the economic decline that currently marks our country, over twenty years of progress in the safeguarding and valorization of these sources are threatened by a sense of paralysis. Let us remember that no specific laws regarding business archives preservation have been passed. No official action to stabilize the fragmented field of preservation has been undertaken. Finally, new hierarchies and new values in Italian cultural policies have fostered disregard for archives and their preservation.

For this reason, even while looking at the broader horizon of corporate social responsibility (see articles by Stefano Zara and Pierpaolo Baretta), we reiterate our basic assumptions:

“Cultura e Impresa” was set up to be a virtual forum, where key participants in this long archival adventure meet to tell us their experiences and explain their points-of-view. Our contributors also suggest further writings, perspectives, and interlocutors, thus encouraging both an exchange and a reflection on the present and future conditions of business and economic archives (Valerio Castronovo and Isabella Orefice deal with this broad theme, while Paola Carucci demonstrates the inadequacy of our national code of cultural assets to guarantee proper stewardship of business cultural heritage, which has features distinct from that of public administration.

“Cultura e impresa” promotes an international point of view. Thanks to the International Council on Archives ([www.ica.org](http://www.ica.org)), we have published overviews of archival experiences developed in various countries around the globe (in this issue: Italy by Fabio Del Giudice, Scotland by Alison Turton and England by Lesley Richmond);

Moreover, we encourage debate and the free flow of information with the contributions of researchers from other countries, starting in this issue with Hans Naess (Chairman International council on Archives – Section Business and Labour ([www.ica.org/body.php?pbodycode=SBL&plangue=eng](http://www.ica.org/body.php?pbodycode=SBL&plangue=eng)), and to be continued in the future with articles by experts of UNESCO, the European Union and other international organizations.

However, our concern with archives doesn't end there; it continues with the description of particular situations (A. Bilotto with the reorganisation of the archives of the Chamber of

Commerce of Genoa ([www.ge.camcom.it](http://www.ge.camcom.it)) and with reviews of websites (Daniela Brignone) and books (Luca Mocarrelli).

Last, but certainly not least, in this issue, we have devoted particular attention to former Ansaldo factory worker Vincenzo Guerrazzi, an artist who, as our readers will see, has been moving freely between painting and writing for a long time.