

Business Archives: New Observations and Old Problems

By Alessandro Lombardo and Giuseppe Paletta

The conditions of business archives in Italy continue to languish. It is true that there are many archival initiatives such as those of Intesa San Paolo and Dalmine, or archival museums; for example that of Piaggio, with its high scientific profile, well grounded and active also from an international perspective. However, the general situation is still conservative and static, which – following a period of flourishing activity in the 1980s and 1990s – has returned to a state of marginalization and voicelessness. A sad example of this is the silent epilogue of Iri Foundation.

Last year, with the creation of the Observatory for Business Culture – commissioned by the Department for Cultural Assets and supported by Confindustria, Unioncamere along with other entities – it was possible to believe in a change but, just when it was beginning to take effect, this initiative was not followed up and was subsequently cancelled. Therefore, we have gone back to square one or worse, also considering the current economic situation, excepting for the attention and the time that the General Management for Archives is currently dedicating to the theme of business archives. Although we maintain our optimism, it is clear that, in this issue, «Culture e Impresa» cannot ignore such a depressing situation. As far as this is concerned, with 2009, we have made some decisions that will contribute to the valorization of the journal. Among these, Museimpresa in Milan and Aipai in Terni will help us in terms of policy and scientific control and the ownership of the journal, which, as of this issue, is divided 50-50 between the Ansaldo Foundation and the Centro per la cultura d'impresa.

Further news will follow with the next issue.