

# **Building an Outward-Oriented Social Family Legacy: Rhetorical History in Family Business Foundations**

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*Manuscript accepted for publication in Family Business Review*

## **ABSTRACT**

Scholars have recently paid growing attention to the transfer of family legacies across generations, but existing work has been mainly focused on an inward-oriented, intra-family, perspective. In this article, we seek to understand how family firms engage in rhetorical history to transfer their social family legacy to external stakeholders, what we call “outward-oriented social legacy.” By carrying out a 12-months field study in three Italian family business foundations, our findings unveil three distinctive narrative practices—*founder foreshadowing*, *emplacing the legacy within the broader community*, and *weaving family history with macro—history*—that contribute to transferring outward-oriented social legacies.

**Keywords:** *family firms; rhetorical history; family business foundations; social family legacy; family boundary organizations.*

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/08944865231157195>

## INTRODUCTION

Organizations regularly use and manage history for various objectives, such as acquiring legitimacy (Foster et al., 2017), enrolling stakeholders (Suddaby et al., 2021), or fostering strategic change (Suddaby & Foster, 2017). Family firms are distinctive in this regard, as they engage in the uses of history for a long-lasting legacy. The temporally extended, multigenerational involvement and vision of the family (Chua et al., 1999; Le Breton-Miller & Miller, 2011; Magrelli et al., 2022) generate historical consciousness (i.e., a “degree of reflexivity or heightened appreciation of how our collective assumptions about history can influence our understanding of the present and how we envision the future”; Suddaby & Foster, 2017, p. 35) as well as a sense of legacy toward the past (Hjorth & Dawson, 2016; Jaskiewicz et al., 2015; Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020). Indeed, family business research has identified the motivation to leave a legacy (also called “dynastic motives”) as a key factor distinguishing family firms from other types of business (Chua et al., 1999).

With growing attention being paid to the concept of legacy in family business research, scholars have started to acknowledge different types of legacy, such as biological legacy, material legacy, and social legacy (Hammond et al., 2016). In this article, we focus specifically on social legacy, defined as “the network of meanings associated with the family transferred through the use of stories or broader social tactics” (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1218). Social legacy is commonly understood as being transferred across generations mainly within the boundaries of the family or the firm—that is, an “inward-oriented,” or intrafamily, legacy that involves the internal constituents of the business family and/or the family business (Barbera et al., 2018; Burton et al., 2022; Jaskiewicz et al., 2015). Nevertheless, sometimes a family legacy grows and becomes relevant outside the boundaries of the family, as the family seeks to communicate it with external constituents and stakeholders through different organizational forms. For instance, family business foundations (i.e., corporate foundations of family firms; Bothello et al., 2020; Gehringer, 2021; Renz et al., 2020), such as the Merck

Foundation and the Ford Foundation, are often founded with a specific purpose of fostering a family legacy by engaging in nonbusiness activities, philanthropy, community engagement, or corporate social responsibility.

However, these dynamics have been little recognized in prior studies. Extant research on legacy tends to assume that the business family is both the sender and the receiver of legacy. For instance, Jaskiewicz et al. (2015, p. 31) explored entrepreneurial legacies as “rhetorically reconstructed narratives of the family’s past entrepreneurial behavior or resilience,” which is transmitted from family generation to generation. Likewise, Burton et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of a social legacy as a motivation for engaging in intrafamily succession. In contrast, much less attention has been given to cases in which the business family is the legacy sender but not necessarily the receiver, what we call an “outward-oriented” social legacy. Potential receivers might be customers, local communities, or other family boundary organizations (De Massis et al., 2021). This idea has been somehow envisaged by Hammond et al. (2016) who wrote that social legacy “creates deeper and longer lasting social ties not only with each other [*i.e., between family members*], but with key stakeholders through local community projects and long-term partnerships” (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1218). However, this idea has not yet been addressed explicitly.

To investigate the outward-oriented social legacy concept and understand how it is transferred to stakeholders outside the family, we build on the theoretical framework of rhetorical history, defined as “the strategic use of the past as a persuasive strategy to manage key stakeholders of the firm” (Suddaby et al., 2010, p. 157). This framework enables us to reinterpret the outward-oriented social legacy as a network of meanings that is transmitted to different stakeholders through leveraging historical narratives, that is, stories about the past (Suddaby et al., 2010, 2023), around the family, and/or the family business (Coraiola et al., 2015; Foster et al., 2017). While current research has covered the particular role of family firms vis-à-vis the local community (Randolph et al., 2022; Reay

et al., 2015), stakeholder groups (Cennamo et al., 2012), and the broader social context (De Massis et al., 2016), it does not explain the rhetorical mechanisms through which family firms communicate an outward-oriented social family legacy. Thus, we ask the following research question: *How do family firms engage in rhetorical history to transfer their social family legacy outward?*

To answer our research question, we carry out a multiple case analysis of three family business foundations (henceforth, FBFs), that is, corporate foundations of family-controlled firms (De Massis et al., 2021; Schillaci et al., 2013). FBFs are an ideal context to better understand outward-oriented social legacy as they are often founded to preserve the legacy of the family firm through the collection of historical sources which in turn constitute the historical narratives of the family business itself (Foster et al., 2020; Wadhvani et al., 2018). To give a better understanding of the situated nature of an outward-oriented social family legacy and its transfer through rhetorical history, we carried out a 12-months field study in three Italian FBFs: Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna, Fondazione Pirelli, and Fondazione Dompé. These FBFs belong to family firms that operate in different industries, respectively, fashion, tire manufacturing, and pharma/biotechnology, and that have different key resources and assets.

Our findings unveil three distinctive narrative practices that are performed by FBFs: *founder foreshadowing*, *emplacing the legacy within the broader community*, and *weaving family history with macro-history*. The mobilization of such practices favors the transfer of outward-oriented social legacy highlighting, respectively, the *temporality* of the family (considering the founder's legacy as a source to respond to the most urgent and pressing trends and issues that are occurring in the present), the *spatiality* of the family (considering the family firm and the family places as bearers of meanings and values), and the *historicity* of the family (considering family history within a broader flux of macro-historical events). We also find that such practices about social legacy are linked by a historicizing process (Hatch & Schultz, 2017), which aims to keep it authentic, and consistent with the

core values and the historical development of the family firm. Overall, this study seeks to provide a more nuanced understanding of social legacy and history in family firms and FBFs. First, we contribute to the literature on social legacy (Burton et al., 2022; Hammond et al., 2016) by theorizing the concept of “outward-oriented social legacy” characterized by the distinctive narrative practices that FBFs mobilize to transfer it. Second, we contribute to the literature on rhetorical history (Suddaby et al., 2010, 2023) by showing how historical narratives can be distinctively leveraged by family firms to make sense of their role in society. Third, we contribute to research on corporate foundations, and in particular to FBFs (De Massis et al., 2021), by describing them as distinctive spaces of “history production” of family firms (Lasewicz, 2015; Suddaby et al., 2023).

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### **Social legacy within and beyond the family firm**

The concept of legacy is inherently linked with one of the distinctive features of family firms—that is, their intent of intergenerational continuity. The aim of pursuing a legacy, usually held by elder generations, or the objective of latter generations to continue a received legacy is some of the most commonly recognized noneconomic goals that characterize the behavior of family firms (Berrone et al., 2012; Sharma et al., 2014). Thus, legacy involves something that gets transferred from the past to the present and whose relevance for present actors is persistent and evident. Consistently with Hammond et al. (2016), we define family legacy as “collective or shared perception reflecting a unique and continuous stream of meanings associated with the family that are transferred to and shared most often, *but not always exclusively [our emphasis]*, among generations of family members through a collection of legacy artifacts.” (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1210)

This idea supposes the presence of a temporal chain of transmission which entails someone or something to be the legacy sender and someone, or something, to be the legacy receiver. There are

three forms of family legacy that arise in family firms: biological, material, and social legacy (Hammond et al., 2016). The biological form is transferred via legacy artifacts, such as family name and genes, the material form is related to artifacts such as family properties and heirlooms, and the social legacy is formed by activities and the channels through which networks of meanings and values are reproduced and transmitted through a web of stories, which might entail the engagement with different stakeholders (Hammond et al., 2016).

Scholarly theorizations about legacy have been so far mainly inward-focused, that is, considering when both the legacy sender and the receiver belong to the family or the family business system, with an emphasis on the transmission of values across generations (Jaskiewicz et al., 2015), or across decision makers (Sinha et al., 2020). Legacy is often understood as an enduring influence of the past over the present situation of the firm (Hjorth & Dawson, 2016), but so far family business research has taken a restricted focus on the dynamics where the family or the family firm is the final receiver of legacy. In a study about transgenerational entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial legacy, for example, Jaskiewicz et al. (2015) pointed to the importance of recalling stories of the family firms' entrepreneurial past and their founders' entrepreneurial endeavors. Similarly, Burton et al. (2022) studied the importance of a social family legacy in intrafamily succession. Overall, although insightful, this stream of research does not seem to account for the role of other legacy receivers beyond the family.

Despite this, scholars have recently given particular attention to the role that the pursuit of a social legacy has in shaping family firm behavior, such as sharing histories and creating deep social ties within the broader community, thus theorizing this family firms' behavior as social legacy orientation (Hammond et al., 2016). Family firms have a higher degree of embeddedness with the local community than nonfamily firms, as such ties provide socio-emotional returns for the business family in the form of family reputation, altruism, and shared values (De Massis et al., 2016, 2018). Family firms often

direct their socially responsible activities toward preserving the name and the legitimacy of the family (Deephouse & Jaskiewicz, 2013) by using stories or broader social tactics, such as philanthropy (Feliu & Botero, 2016), to pursue noneconomic goals such as environmental sustainability (Cennamo et al., 2012) or maintaining family reputation or status (Sasaki et al., 2019) in the broader community. The orientation to maintain a legacy, that is, a symbolic immortality that goes beyond the biological life of family members in a broader societal context, enables them to feel like a socially constructed collective (Zerubavel, 2003).

For this reason, the diffusion of a reconstructed history of the family and their firm is important as it can create a channel to expand and preserve the social legacy (Ge et al., 2022). For example, in their review of the literature, Feliu and Botero (2016) explicitly maintain that the pursuit of a legacy is one of the reasons why family firms engage in philanthropic activities, as it “provides a vehicle to learn about what the family has done in the past” (p. 126). As family firms often trace their origins as an integral part of a local community or a region, maintaining a legacy within groups of stakeholders is of paramount importance (Erdogan et al., 2020; Sasaki et al., 2019). For these reasons, social legacy, and in particular outward-oriented social legacy, captures an interesting yet overlooked aspect of the behavior of family firms, as it provides a conceptualization of how the social legacy of the family can transcend the boundaries of the family or the family firm (De Massis et al., 2021). However, the explanatory potential of this concept has not been fulfilled yet, as its empirical investigations have been scarce (Burton et al., 2022) and fully oriented toward the family or the family firm rather than the broader community as the main legacy recipient. As the communication of a social legacy is based on stories, we turn to rhetorical history to understand how “stories about the past” are mobilized to transfer the social legacy outward.

### **Rhetorical history and family business**

Family business scholars have only recently started to study history in the family firms' context (Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020), in particular highlighting the importance of the approaches that stress its narrative malleability for strategic uses. The theoretical lens of rhetorical history provides tools to understand “the strategic use of the past as a persuasive strategy to manage key stakeholders of the firm” (Suddaby et al., 2010, p. 157). According to rhetorical history scholarship, history is a set of “stories about the past” that can be rhetorically managed for strategic purposes (Foster et al., 2017; Ge et al., 2022; Suddaby, Coraiola, et al., 2020; Suddaby et al., 2021). Instead of being conceptualized as an objective fact, history is considered a social-symbolic resource mobilized under the form of narratives (Suddaby et al., 2023). By investigating rhetorical history as a crucial explanatory mechanism of continuity and change in organizational contexts (Dalpiaz & Di Stefano, 2018; Popp & Fellman, 2020; Suddaby et al., 2023; Ybema, 2014), scholars have shown not only its inward focus but also the outward focus that strategically connects the values and the identity of the organization with its stakeholders (Foster et al., 2011; Sinha et al., 2020). For example, Foster et al. (2011) provides an empirical account about how the Canadian restaurant chain Tim Hortons used historical rhetoric to present itself as a “true” Canadian company, and it did so specifically by connecting its identity with the Canadian national sport, hockey. Overall, rhetorical history provides a theoretical instrument to interpret why and how historical narratives can be strategically important for organizations in connecting their own enduring legacy, transmitted from one generation to another, with the values and aspirations of external stakeholders (Foster et al., 2017).

Rhetorical history appears to become particularly important in family firms (Ge et al., 2022; Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020). As an organizational form that has continuity and consistency across generations as its own distinctive burden and advantage (Hjorth & Dawson, 2016; Miller & Le-Breton Miller, 2005), family firms are distinctive in the way they narrate their history and think about their legacy (Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020). Investigating the role of historical narratives in



family firms, Ge et al. (2022) showed different strategies through which family firms can create and diffuse historical narratives around the family firm for the acquisition and mobilization of resources for competitive purposes, which is thus consistent with a strategic perspective on history (Suddaby, Coraiola, et al., 2020). In a similar vein, but focusing on the family level, Rabaki et al. (2019) theorized the need for family stories or myths, which stretch over time and over generations as a key component of the long-term survival of the family firm. Although this link has not been made explicitly by family business scholars, rhetorical history appears to be a useful and fitting theoretical lens in this regard, as social legacy refers to the “network of meanings associated with the family transferred through the *use of stories [italics is ours]* or broader social tactics” (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1218). With these ideas in mind, we conducted our study to better understand how family firms engage in rhetorical history to transfer their social family legacy outward.

## METHODS

### **Empirical context: Family Business Foundations**

FBFs are becoming relevant around the world, and their number has increased exponentially in the last decade (Renz et al., 2020). FBFs exist to implement forms of philanthropy, social engagement, and cultural diffusion that the reference family firm is not readily able to implement (Feliu & Botero, 2016). This stream of work brings attention to a growing but understudied phenomenon—that is, the creation of FBFs as a primary means to manage legacy in family firms—and to how foundations are not isolated organizational forms but are crucial in finding and building important connections over time between the family firm and the external community of stakeholders (De Massis et al., 2021; Gehringer, 2021; Schillaci et al., 2013). Yet, although previous studies have enriched our general understanding of philanthropic activities, this research has been mostly focusing on the presence of the contemporary logics of prosociality and business within the organization, without

considering the importance of communicating the legacy of the company via corporate foundations activities.

Our context of interest is Italy, where FBFs are characterized by the connection to family firms that have built and leveraged unique symbols and meanings to create value (Pedrini & Minciullo, 2011; Schillaci et al., 2013). Such advantages of Italian family firms cannot be separated from the importance of pursuing an enduring social family legacy, as their role in shaping the societal culture is well-recognized (Schillaci et al., 2013). Foundations are a relatively young and growing phenomenon, and their number has more than doubled from 1999 to 2011 (Bernini et al., 2019), especially in Italy, a country where the social, cultural, and economic incidence of family firms is very high. According to the report written by Bernini et al. (2019), for Italian corporate foundations education, culture, and art and research represent the first three most common fields of engagement of their overall organizational activity.

### **Case selection**

To develop more robust theory development, we adopted a qualitative multi-case study approach (Stake, 2006). To select our cases, we searched for Italian corporate foundations belonging to family businesses, which are at least at the second generation and at least one family member is involved in the ownership or governance (board) or top management. Then, we filtered only for those FBFs that have family involvement in the governance (board) or top management. In this way, we focus only on those organizations where family involvement, and presumably its influence, have been long lasting and still present. Finally, we chose FBFs that have an archival fond<sup>1</sup> and/or a museum<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Defined by the General International Standard Archival Description of the International Council on Archives (ICA) as “The whole of the records, regardless of form or medium, organically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular person, family, or corporate body in the course of that creator’s activities and functions.”

<sup>2</sup> Defined by the International Council on Museums (ICM) as “a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.”

having a curator responsible for the organization of the archive or the museum, and having an acquisition policy for a continuous augmentation or update as well as the presence of a continuous and consistent engagement in cultural heritage activities and projects. In this way we made sure that, at least from our ex-ante case selection criteria, the engagement with history by the FBF is not sporadic or instrumental but requires some degree of awareness and reflexivity regarding its importance for the family and the family firm. In other words, we considered such criteria as “proxies” for the presence of some form of reflective awareness of the importance of history within the FBFs (Suddaby, 2016; Suddaby & Foster, 2017).

We purposefully selected three FBFs that were consistent with our criteria, as Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna, Fondazione Pirelli and Fondazione Dompé. They are all located in Italy and connected to three different family businesses that are still operating, each of them in radically different industries (fashion, tire manufacturing, and pharmaceuticals-biotechnology, respectively). The relative homogeneity in the geographical location and the high heterogeneity in the family business’ industry belonging help us to observe the phenomenon more clearly and to better achieve transferability of our findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), because families belonging to different industries might have different goals and practices that are grafted in the FBF. Table 1 provides an overview of the key information about the FBFs that are object of the present study.

[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

As it is common for family businesses, these corporate foundations are eponymous (Belenzon et al., 2017), and they bear the family name, like Dompé or Pirelli, or they are named after the founder of the original family business, like Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna. This choice clearly reflects the willingness, grounded in historical cognizance, to preserve the legacy of the family firm through the

activities of the FBF. Furthermore, this choice has another rationale. Indeed, the FBF does not have an inward stance toward the family, but it is often a means for outward-oriented activities, like preservation of environmental and/or cultural assets, grant-making, or even supporting innovation projects within the family business. Due to this plurality of activities and goals, projects that involve the re-use of history rarely have the pure celebration of the reference entrepreneurial family as the sole purpose. Rather, these projects enable the foundation to have a broader outreach toward the community where the FBF is embedded in or toward the society at large. Such plurality also reflects the heterogeneity of the chosen three FBFs in terms of family involvement in the ownership and the management of these organizations, which crosses the boundaries between the family business and the FBF. In Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna, two Zegna family members belonging to the third generation have an active role in directing and supervising the FBF activities; in Fondazione Pirelli, three Pirelli family members plus two in-laws are involved in the board of directors (which counts six members); Fondazione Dompé's President is also Executive President of the family business founded by his father.

To better understand the situated nature of how these FBFs engage in rhetorical history, we investigated five different projects carried out to transfer the social legacy outward. We selected projects that informants highlighted as the most important for the foundations in terms of scale, social outreach, and use of archive materials or historical sources related to the family and/or to the family firm. The types of projects mainly relate to producing seminars, conferences, and exhibitions; publishing books and magazines; and developing product lines. For each FBF, we chose two projects from a list of five, except for the Fondazione Dompé, which, due to its recent birth in 2020, only had one project. Table 2 describes in detail the project of each FBF.

[INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

## **Data collection**

Our data comprise a 12-month field study devoted to examining three FBFs managing five history-related projects. The multiplicity of empirical data collection techniques (interviews, virtual observations, and archival material) allowed us to integrate and triangulate findings from diverse sources to build stronger assertions regarding our interpretations. In total, we conducted 24 interviews through virtual communication platforms with 11 informants. Interviews and secondary data gathering were carried out only by the first two authors, while the other three provided support in the data analysis as outsiders, to improve the trustworthiness of the analyses. One important epistemological standpoint of our research is that individuals are knowledgeable and reflective agents, whose agency co-constitutes the structure they are embedded in. This standpoint enables a rich understanding of how actors working in the foundations engage with the legacy of the family and the family business and make sense of the historical sources and artifacts stored in their archives to convey the narratives outside the boundaries of the organization and toward society. Table 3 provides a summary of the sources of data we used to ground our analysis.

[INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

Before beginning the fieldwork in each of the three FBFs, we collected secondary data from national and international newspapers mentioning the three FBFs as well as publicly available documents on each FBF (company reports, journal articles, books, etc.). The first two authors conducted the semi-structured interviews and the data collection process. The semi-structured interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 3 hours and were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interview guide that we used was initially exploratory and focused on understanding the key facts, people, and events in the

history of the FBF, on the motivations to create a corporate foundation, and on the family involvement in the FBF. We selected informants through theoretical sampling, starting with the upper echelons of the FBFs, such as the chairman or the managing director, and moving to the FBF professionals related to the FBF activities and projects, that is, archivists. Then, the interview guide evolved, on the one hand, to accommodate the emerging findings and, on the contrary, to delve deeper into the modalities and processes associated with the preservation of the heritage of the FBF by its personnel, and with a thorough and in-depth description of the temporal unraveling and sequencing of the chosen projects.

The preservation of historical artifacts motive was interpreted in different ways in each FBF, but its presence was persistent and central in all three FBFs. In our analyses, we also incorporated the study of internal archival data, belonging to the FBFs and related to each project, to triangulate the data sources and provide a rich and trustworthy account of the narrative tasks that are performed in FBFs. Due to COVID-19 limitations, we accessed the internal archival data in a digital format, sent to us by the FBF personnel. Also, the observations regarding the FBF physical site were completely digital, thanks to the past and long-standing efforts of the three FBFs to digitalize the whole experience of the FBF, thus also including the material spatiality of each FBF. Consistently with qualitative research best practices, the first two authors independently sketched memos after each interview within 24 hours to fix first impressions on paper and to probe into the relationship between emerging theoretical concepts leveraging researchers' reflexivity, which were then discussed.

### **Data analysis**

Our methodological and analytical strategy was informed by the methodological prescriptions for case study analysis (Micelotta et al., 2019; Stake, 2006), combining the analytical principles and techniques of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and thematic analysis (Bruner, 1991).

Specifically, in our analysis, we incorporated the principle of “constant comparison,” which goes back to Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) indication that data should be collected and analyzed simultaneously. Our use of grounded theory is consistent with our objective of elaborating middle-range theory around a specific phenomenon. Before entering the field, we familiarized with the specificities of each context. We started by developing case study write-ups, which traced the historical changes in governance and family involvement, recent activities, main objectives, and target areas of activity. Our initial research question was broad and centered around how FBFs use history to manage their legacy.

In the first stage of coding, we open-coded the interview data and the archival data, which include both public sources and private sources that come from the FBFs’ archives. Memos of interviews were fed into the process of open coding for crystallizing a specific moment and for probing into tentative bits of the relationship between emerging concepts. To increase trustworthiness, the first two authors coded the data independently and met regularly to discuss the codes as they emerged. The divergence between coding interpretation was solved by discussion. The other three authors reviewed the codes with the function of questioning and unsettling the theoretical understanding of the first two authors. At the same time, we “interrogated” the data, as we sought to make sense of the phenomenon under study. It emerged that the interview data were focused mostly on how the people inside the FBFs thought about and “worked with” the historical sources preserved in the FBF, while the archival data were focused on displaying and communicating “network of meanings” associated with the family legacy.

In the second stage of coding, we sought to aggregate them and provide tentative conceptual explanations, by iterating between data, emergent theory, and the literature. Delving into the literature on legacy, we identified the actions that FBFs perform and the outputs that they produce as a form of social legacy around the family. We found three interesting issues that shaped our data

analysis process. First, contrary to what family business research has shown, and likely due to our distinctive empirical context, the social legacy was not being transferred from one generation to another within the family but from the family firm to external stakeholders. Second, contrary to our expectations, this legacy was not perceived by FBFs as negatively burdensome (Hjorth & Dawson, 2016; Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020) but as a way to communicate the institutionalized and idealized values and meanings that are associated with the family firm (Micelotta & Raynard, 2011). Finally, this legacy was made up of stories and artifacts about the past, which are historicized. Considering these elements, we identified our object of study as the outward component of the social family legacy, and we decided to use rhetorical history as the lens to interpret our findings. Accordingly, we refined and settled our research question, and started to systematically revisit our codes in light of rhetorical history, seeking an understanding of how FBFs “perform” rhetorical history (Suddaby et al., 2023; Wadhvani et al., 2018) in communicating the outward-oriented social legacy. We revisited our codes according to these two criteria that, in our view, represented the presence of the expression of a family legacy: (1) the way the founder was interpreted, understood, and depicted, (2) the way generations and generational unfolding was represented and considered. After this step, we proceeded to identify which were the social legacies about the family firm that the FBFs tried to convey within their situated activities. The social legacies were interpreted as being the meaningful “stories” about the founder and the past generations of the family firms that needed to be transferred to external stakeholders, which are represented in Table 4.

[INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE]

By cycling between data and theory, we identified three narrative practices (Dalpiaz & Di Stefano, 2018) that every FBF engaged in to tell the social legacies of the family firm, although the FBFs had



different histories and core values. After elaborating on the three narrative practices, we further coded each of the occurrences in our dataset, both from interviews and from archival data, where the evidence of each narrative practice emerged. For example, for the “weaving family history with macro-history,” we coded each piece of data where the history of the family—for example, specific events of the family business, references to generational transitions in the family business, and so on—was contextualized, within a broader, macro-historical narrative, referred to events that related to the political, economic, and social history of countries or other aggregations of social actors, like the World War II or the rise in the welfare state in its aftermath. We iteratively cycled between data and emerging interpretations to crystallize our findings. When we settled on these interpretations, we engaged in members check (Miles et al., 2019) to strengthen the trustworthiness of our findings, which consistently confirmed our findings. Table 5 shows supporting evidence for our analytical interpretation.

[INSERT TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE]

## FINDINGS

Our findings provide an empirical basis to better understand how family firms, through their FBFs, engage in rhetorical history to transfer an outward-oriented social legacy. Based on our analyses, we show that the FBFs performed three narrative practices to develop such legacy: *founder foreshadowing*, *emplacing the legacy within the broader community*, and *weaving family history with macro-history*. These three practices, respectively, deal with three fundamental narrative dimensions through which an outward-oriented social legacy can be mobilized, as (1) the *temporality* of the family (capturing the founder legacy as a source for responding to the most urgent and pressing trends and issues that are occurring in the present), (2) the *spatiality* of the family (understanding the

family firm's and the family places as bearers of affective elements and values), and (3) and the *historicity* of the family (where family history becomes embedded within a broader flux of macro-historical events). We also find that what links such narrative practices is the ongoing historicizing process of the FBF, which aims to make them authentic and consistent with the core values of the family firm.

How each family interpreted the role of the FBF vis-à-vis the family firm, and vis-à-vis the society at large, reflected their idiosyncratic and complex conditions and objectives, the common thread that bounds them is the stark consciousness of the value of sustaining and narrating the social legacy of the family firm toward stakeholders. Constituting an FBF enables “*not only to find, let's say, a place of memory preservation, but also a place that would then become open to our various stakeholders who follow us,*” as the managing director of Fondazione Pirelli said. Informants from each of the three FBFs under study posited explicit and recurring juxtapositions between conserving an “inert, dusty past” and giving “value” to such legacy for its outward diffusion. The idea of giving value to historical sources that represented social legacy clearly emerged when informants talked about how and why they used the historical sources stored in the FBF archives to develop their outreach projects. The value was constructed through the proactive use of the source for current tasks and activities that engaged external stakeholders to infuse meaning for the present in sources and artifacts that referred to the past.

The deep importance of the legacy of the family was also expressed by mottos and statements inscribed in the FBF. The motto of Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna is “Roots and wings” (in Italian, “*Radici e ali*”), which is also materially placed as an artifact at the entrance of Casa Zegna (the name of the archive of the Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna), while the managing director of Fondazione Pirelli stressed the importance of keeping memory alive, as the FBF must not focus on “*worshipping the ashes,*” but on “*keeping the fire alive.*” The efforts of the Fondazione Dompé and the reference

family firm are directed toward establishing continuity across generations by stressing innovation and technology as core values that belong first to the family members, and only afterward to the family firm itself. In our analysis, we found that, although the reference family firms were heterogeneous in terms of industry, structure, and strategy, their FBFs had recurrent and strikingly similar narrative practices that aimed at transferring an outward-oriented social legacy.

### **Founder foreshadowing**

The first narrative practice is *founder foreshadowing*. Within this narrative, FBFs seek to interpret the legacy of the founder as being relevant to the contemporary world. Such relevance is about ideas, values, and actions that the founder believed or engaged in, which are particularly important for interpreting the most urgent and critical issues that are happening in the contemporary world. In this sense, the meanings about the ideas, values, and actions of the founder are not simply “persistent” and do not just indicate continuity from the past to the present. Instead, this historical narrative leads to nest the legacy in a more fluid and malleable temporality, where the ability to tackle the problems of the present and the future is a direct function of rediscovering and preserving the meanings associated with the social legacy of the founder.

In the activities within the centennial commemoration in Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna, many efforts were put in place to celebrate the operation of the first wool mill, founded by Ermenegildo Zegna when he was 18-year-old, which is also the same place currently hosting the headquarters of the FBF. In this commemorative project, a part of the efforts of the FBF is to pay homage to the figure of the founder, whose social legacy associated with his behavior (hard worker and reserved) and personal values (care for the environment and the living beings, care for product quality) rhetorically foreshadowed the importance of sustainability in fashion life cycles, materials, and supply chains for the company. The grandson of the founder, also called Ermenegildo Zegna—

known as “Gildo,” to be distinguished from his grandfather—and CEO of the Zegna Group released the following announcement in occasion of the Centennial editorial project of the FBF:

*“Today we celebrate one hundred years since the foundation of our Group and we look towards future global developments... This is the heritage that our grandfather left us: savoir faire in craftsmanship, entrepreneurship and loyalty to our ethical founding values. Strong families make strong companies and strong companies make strong families.”*

In Fondazione Pirelli, the narrative of founder foreshadowing is at the center of the spirit of the “Industrial Humanism” project. The informants who were involved in the development of this editorial project highlighted how the choice of the different thematic columns followed the original columns of the Pirelli magazine, published from 1948 to 1972. The value of this project resides in the reproduction for the contemporary audience of the persistence of the social legacy of Pirelli. In particular, the core idea of such legacy is the combination of cultural repertoires related to humanism—that is, a spirit connected to the importance of humanistic disciplines—to interpret and make sense of the recent trends of society associated with technological progress, innovation, and engineering expertise. As every informant from Fondazione Pirelli stressed, this blend of humanistic and technical cultures nurtured the birth of the corporate culture which became one of the core values of Pirelli in the 2000s (see also Calabrò, 2022; Zaghi, 2021). Fondazione Pirelli sees itself as the custodian of such corporate culture, and foreshadows the origin of this idea to Alberto Pirelli, son of Giovanni Battista Pirelli, the founder of the Pirelli company, writes in the first number of the Pirelli Journal in 1948, a few years after the end of World War II: *“This industry uses a huge number of different products... It employs the greatest variety of machines and tools. It develops scientific laboratories from which progress is fed. How many possibilities then to contribute to the most characteristic evolution of modern life! But if in this magazine we can raise ourselves sometimes*

*even higher, we shall do so with the stark awareness that every contribution to mechanized civilization must be framed in the highest cultural and social values of life.”*

In Fondazione Dompé, a younger FBF, family members and archivists started with a deep rethinking of what was the rationale for the value of history and legacy for the FBF and the family firm, in a context that is becoming increasingly more dynamic and innovative, where novel areas of technological innovation, like biotechnology, are rapidly shaping how people are living. Sergio Dompé, Executive President of the family firm and President of the FBF, traced the contemporary relevance of the legacy of the family firm to his father Franco Dompé: *“The focus on the history of the company, which is also the history of the family itself, actually comes from my father Franco. The rediscovery of the [Fondazione Dompé] Archive has allowed us to understand that the narrative about the origins of Dompé farmaceutici was actually crafted by him in the 1960s. Without his contribution and attention to the preservation of this memory, we might have almost no record of those beginnings today. He was certainly a forward-looking entrepreneur in this regard.”*

By mining the history of the family firm through the historical sources from its archive, the Fondazione Dompé generated a sense of legacy regarding the core values of the founder, which inspired the activity of the foundation as a grant-making actor, particularly active in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines. These activities appear to be justified by the importance attached to innovation and technology at the service for the improvement of the health of the humankind by the Fondazione Dompé and by the reference family firm. Through historical narratives, these values appear to be clearly linked with the life of Franco Dompé, which, through an event that occurred in his life, foreshadowed what the family firm will become in the future: *“1937. Franco crashes violently during a bobsled training. In the following two years he will*

*undergo numerous surgeries and, most importantly, choose his career path: build a company with the mission to help both the doctors' job and the convalescents' recovery*"<sup>3</sup>

### **Emplacing the legacy within the broader community**

In the narrative practice of *emplacing the legacy within the broader community*, the FBF mobilizes historical narratives to connect the social legacy of the family and the family firm to spaces, which can be either in the natural environment or in the built environment, transcending the physical, spatial boundaries and are effectively connected to the local community in which the FBF operates. This narrative practice “emplaces” the legacy by reconstructing stories about the past that symbolize a deep connection between the family firm, and especially the figure of the founder, and its community, as a group of individuals that share the inhabiting of a bounded place.

By analyzing Fondazione Zegna and its projects, we noticed that important ancestors like the founder of the family business are rhetorically considered as a hinge between the family and the broader community. For the centennial project in 2016, Fondazione Zegna organized an exhibition called “Dare/Avere”<sup>4</sup> in collaboration with the South African artist William Kentridge in London. The FBF task was to find cues that were able to create an ideal link between Kentridge’s art and the history of Zegna cultural universe—that is, the “business centric” world of the family firm was represented by the accounting books of the company in late 1920s. The “family centric” world of the family firm was represented by a photo of the founder from the 1930s and by the social context of the family firm, constituted by a map of the Trivero territory, which belongs to the Zegna family. In the Zegna Forest project, the FBF retrieved documents that testified to the exact point of plantation of trees done by Ermenegildo Zegna in the 1920s and 1930s in the forests of Trivero, where the headquarter of the

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<sup>3</sup> Extracted from the website of Fondazione Dompé, and publicly available at the following link: <https://www.fondazione-dompe.org/en/our-roots>

family business is located since its establishment. In particular, the history of the family and the history of their territory are intertwined and conflate in the figure of Ermenegildo Zegna. The idea of bringing the legacy to the present is evident in the words of Fondazione Zegna Chairman, who is also a family member: *“We give emphasis to the continuity of the vision of being attentive to those themes that have been inspired by our founder as part of a global vision of a company that is careful to generate value for the territory, to be focused on the social issues, to be stewards of the environment.”*

Figure 1 is a vertically split photo of the Trivero territory, used by Fondazione Zegna to communicate the impact of the Zegna forest project, showing the forest in 1920 (on the left) and the same forest in 2020 (on the right), thus highlighting the ideal continuity between the role of the founder and the impact that Fondazione Zegna in the Trivero area.

[INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Furthermore, the sense of place connected to the spirit and the deed of the founder is stated in a book edited within the centennial project of Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna: *“As you enter the “lanificio” [in Italian in the original version] in Trivero, you can go up the marble stairs, hand polished to a redoubtable shine, to the office of the founder, Ermenegildo Zegna, grandfather of the Gillo, Paolo, and Anna, who are among those who run the company today. They have restored their grandfather’s office so that it is exactly as he left it. “Dov’era. Com’era”<sup>5</sup> [in Italian in the original version]. And holding pride of place among the counting-house books in which he recorded the look and weight of fabrics eighty years ago, there is a green and blue painted plate with a portrait of a sheep on it. This anonymous animal is a Merino sheep. (Centennial book, p. 120)*

Figure 2 stresses, even more, the symbiosis of the family firm and its employees with the surrounding environment, as the former is purposefully placed at the bottom of the photo, de-

emphasizing the anthropic element in favor of the natural environment that has been hosting the family and the family firm for more than a century. Interestingly, this disposition of anthropic and natural elements is present also in a photo taken in the early 1940s by the founder Ermenegildo Zegna (see Figure 3). The idea of emplacing the legacy is not limited to the natural environment, to the mountains, fields, hills, and forests. It is also related to more specific and more intimate spaces that hold effective value for the family members and that are hosted within the family firm, such as the office where the founder used to work for running the company. Furthermore, the Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna is located in the original house of the founder of the firm.

[INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE]

[INSERT FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE]

While Fondazione Pirelli now resides in the headquarters of the family firm, it was previously placed in the Pirelli Tower, a skyscraper that was designed by the renowned architect Gio Ponti under the will of Alberto Pirelli, known as of Pirelli Cultural Centre. Although such a skyscraper only sometimes hosts Pirelli's activities (as it is now the place of the regional government of Lombardy), it still retains the name of the Pirelli family. In an exhibition organized for the commemoration of 60 years from the inauguration of the Pirelli Tower, Fondazione Pirelli curated an exhibition where it stressed the evolution of Pirelli tower within the city of Milan, which has been hosting the family firm since its inception. In particular, Figure 4 shows the statue of the Virgin Mary (in Italian "*La Madonnina*"), which is one of the most recognized and well-known cultural symbols of the city of Milan, placed atop the roof terrace of the Pirelli Tower, to further stress the



long-standing legacy of connection between the operations of Pirelli and the cultural history of the city, made of its most famous symbols and artifacts.

[INSERT FIGURE 4 ABOUT HERE]

This choice stresses the link between the legacy of the family and the place of the local community, enmeshing the two aspects, and highlighting its active role in shaping, as a member, the cultural aspects of the city of Milan, beyond the most immediate economic consequences. The city of Milan becomes more than just the geographical space in which the family firm is embedded, and the family firm becomes more than just one of the many enterprises that are part of the economic structure of the city. Through the sustained nurturing of Pirelli “culture of the enterprise” through historical narratives, also the industrial facility, that is, a space dominated by techniques and machines, becomes an expression of cultural values that represent the entrepreneurial spirit of the city. For instance, for the commemoration of the 150 years of Pirelli, the family firm engaged in an exhibition of historical material to showcase the evolution of the company. Among the material that was shown, Figure 5 shows a picture of the canteen established by Pirelli in 1957, a place that combined attention to social welfare and design, as it was planned and devised by Guido Minoletti, an important Italian architect and designer.

[INSERT FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE]

In a similar fashion, also Fondazione Dompé shows a strong linkage between the legacy of the family and its localization in the city of Milan. Mined from the archive of the Fondazione Dompé, Figure 6 shows a picture of a historical advertising poster for the Dompé’s family first

pharmacy, which Onorato Dompé, grandfather of Sergio, opened in Milan in 1895. The poster stresses the place of the Dompé pharmacy in Della Scala square, one of the most iconic squares in Milan, where also the homonymous opera theater is placed.

[INSERT FIGURE 6 ABOUT HERE]

The President of the Association of Italian Corporate Museums commented: “*Dompé has always been eminently Milanese. The family firm couldn’t evolve as it has evolved without considering the cultural environment of the city.*” Fondazione Dompé efforts in transferring a social legacy are not bounded only to the city of Milan but deal more broadly with the Italian context. In the “Bellezza d’Italia” editorial project, the Fondazione Dompé seeks to re-propose the celebration of the heterogeneous regions and provinces that make up Italy. The meaning behind this choice is to re-narrate and re-propose, through the rediscovery of Dompé’s own historical sources, the importance of attachment to a place that motivated Italian entrepreneurs, including the Dompé family, to rebuild the country after World War II.

### **Weaving family history with macro-history**

In the narrative practice of *weaving family history with macro-history*, the outward-oriented social legacy gets actively transferred by the FBF through the engagement in a narration of mutual co-constitution of the events that punctuated the history of the family with the “macro-history”—that is, the collection of past events that occur at a more aggregate level of analysis and that are institutionalized within a specific field. This narrative practice finds its rationale in the consideration of the family not just as an actor de-embedded from the historical context and inward-focused on its own trajectory but as a cultural actor that operates within a macro-history. The importance of this

narrative practice for outward-oriented social legacy is that it enables the latter to be considered as a flux of historical meanings that are not relevant only within the family but also to a broader set of stakeholders. This is revealed especially in the “Bellezza d’Italia” project, through which Fondazione Dompé was able to retrace its history and, at the same time, with the same means, provide cues for the interpretation of its history within the broader societal trends that occurred in post-war Italy, as the Communications Director of the Fondazione Dompé highlighted: *“Bellezza d’Italia can be read from different angles, that range from the history of social costume to the history of design, from journalism to corporate communication. We are talking about an extremely diverse audience. . . From this point of view, our archive is really serving the community as a whole.”* Through the retracing of past cultural activities, this narrative practice generates historical consciousness about the role of Dompé farmaceutici in shaping the nationwide cultural debate from the 1940s to the 1960s. Figures 7 and 8 represent photos that have been used for exhibitions that represent the importance of Dompé vis-à-vis the most important “subject actors” in politics, like the President of the Italian Republic Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, and in science, like the Nobel Prize Rita Levi Montalcini. In this sense, the outward-oriented legacy is not just about prestige and status, but also to be able to create entrepreneurial projects that are meaningful and successful over time, functioning as creators and aggregators of energies and resources. The legacy of Dompé focuses on blending the entrepreneurial spirit of the family with specific care for technological innovation, considered the engine of well-being for human beings.

[INSERT FIGURE 7 ABOUT HERE]

[INSERT FIGURE 8 ABOUT HERE]

Further evidence emerges from the book for the centennial project which highlights the process of re-telling the different fashion designs, garments, and clotheslines that Ermenegildo Zegna engaged in across its history, becoming also a way to re-tell the key events that have been significant when such designs and fashion lines were introduced: *“It is significant that Zegna, famous for its fine cloth, made its first foray into suits in 1968, when “La Dolce Vita” in Rome and “Swinging London” had both captured the upheaval in societies transformed by sexual freedom and the energy of a liberated young generation. Over half a century before, Ermenegildo Zegna had founded his wool mill in Trivero, in the Biella Alps. “Su Misura” was launched in 1972—made-to-order suits that were to bring the quality of traditional tailoring to industry, through a dedicated factory in Switzerland.”*

These words show the grafting of the social legacy of the Zegna family firm within a broader eventful history, represented by the social trends that impacted consumer behavior in the 1960s and 1970s and also the previous geopolitical events and international relations that characterized the first half of the 20th century: *“It was mere chance that the Fascist campaign against “perfidious Albion” and the industrialist’s obsession with breaking the British hegemony coincided. The Anglo-Saxons would say that he was a man in love with policy. The New World was the ideal battleground on which to show the stuff Ermenegildo was made of. In April 1938 he wrote from the transatlantic Rex: “Yesterday evening, dressed impeccably in dark blue, while everybody else wore dinner-jackets, we went dancing. We intend to parade our dinner-jackets in America.”* (“Centennial Book, Fondazione Zegna”). Similarly, as in Fondazione Zegna, the theme of developing and expanding the family firm from its inception to the newer generations is juxtaposed with the historical development of society also in Fondazione Pirelli. Informants at Fondazione Pirelli tell recurrently the metaphor of the family firm as a “tree” that grows and evolves over time. Historical recollection of the key Pirelli products, which identify the style and the enduring character of the family firm, present them as tightly linked with iconic movies and events that characterized the cultural life of society, like the

1907 “Beijing-Paris” race, or the movie “Amarcord” by Federico Fellini, which won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1975.

## DISCUSSION

While previous research on legacy (Jaskiewicz et al., 2015; Kammerlander et al., 2015) hinted at the importance of “the use of stories and broader social tactics” (Hammond et al., 2016, p. 1215) as a means to transfer a social legacy, it did not explicitly incorporate historical narratives in its explanation of how the social family legacy can be communicated and thus transferred to external stakeholders. In this article, we seek to explore the role of outward-oriented social legacy in FBFs, conceptualized as a type of social legacy where the legacy sender (i.e., the legator; in our case the family) and the legacy receiver (i.e., the legatee; in our case the broader community of stakeholders) do not belong to the same social system. Instead, social legacy needs to “travel” beyond the boundaries of the family and the family firm. Our qualitative study builds on the rhetorical history lens (Suddaby et al., 2010) to uncover the ways through which family firms, and in particular FBFs, transfer an outward-oriented social legacy by strategically using historical narratives (Foster et al., 2017). By focusing on three FBFs of Italian family firms that engage systematically in re-narrating the legacy of the family for a broader audience beyond the boundaries of the family firm itself (De Massis et al., 2021; Schillaci et al., 2013), we show that they consistently mobilize three distinct and distinctive narrative practices regarding the history of the family and the firm: *founder foreshadowing*, *emplacing the legacy*, and *weaving family legacy with macro-history*. These narratives are linked by the ongoing historicizing process (Hatch & Schultz, 2017; Ravasi et al., 2019) that FBFs mobilize to transfer the outward-oriented social legacy as an authentic part of the history of the family and the family firm, eliciting “emotive commitment” and a sense of intertemporal consistency of the values of the family firm (Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020; Zundel et al., 2016).

A growing body of research on organizational history has focused on the ways organizations and social actors in general use history strategically (Coraiola et al., 2015; Foster et al., 2017; Suddaby & Foster, 2017; Wadhvani et al., 2018), as a social-symbolic resource (Crawford et al., 2022; Foster et al., 2011; Suddaby et al., 2010). As history is a set of “stories about the past” that are narratively constructed (Foster et al., 2017; Suddaby et al., 2021, 2023), social actors perform narrative practices to strategically influence the content and the outcome of the narrative (Dalpiaz & Di Stefano, 2018; Lubinski, 2018). Building on these studies, we found a set of narrative practices that enable FBFs to transfer an outward-oriented social legacy stemming from an inward-oriented legacy. Specifically, our theorization of the narrative practices (summarized in Table 6) is consistently reproduced by the FBFs in the situated efforts to communicate the legacy of the family firm to a broader audience, which is one of their core objectives. These narrative practices strategically lead to a reconceptualization of the social legacy’s components which appeal and resonate with the broader group of stakeholders—that is, *founder foreshadowing* reconceptualizes the temporality of the legacy at the micro level; *emplacing the legacy* reconceptualizes the spatiality of the legacy at the meso level and *weaving family legacy with macro-history* reconceptualizes the historicity of the family at the macro level. By transferring outward-oriented social legacy, these narrative practices allow theorizing family firms as historically conscious organizations (Suddaby, 2016; Suddaby & Foster, 2017) that think strategically about their social legacy.

[INSERT TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE]

While family business research has stressed legacy as the persistence of imprinting of the founder over the family business (i.e., the founder shadow; Davis & Harveston, 1999), we theorize founder foreshadowing as the narrative practice that enables the temporal connection between a distant past

and the present. Within this narrative, the historicized deeds, ideals, and beliefs performed and held by the founder are represented to be a prefiguration of the actions and values that the family firm needs to engage in to tackle the most pressing and contemporary issues for local communities or groups of stakeholders. This new narrative practice goes beyond an interpretation of legacy based on imprinting (Jaskiewicz et al., 2015; Marquis & Tilcsik, 2013; Sinha et al., 2020), which posits an objective past that can be reproduced and modified, also narratively (Jaskiewicz et al., 2015). Instead, it uses narrative time (Suddaby, Schultz, & Israelsen, 2020) to break the linear concatenation of past, present, and future. Through a more fluid temporality, the past becomes a prefiguration of the present and the future, enabling a tighter connection between the legacy of the founder and the contemporary emerging issues in society. Founder foreshadowing is particularly key for family firms, where the importance of family myths and recollected narratives enables a distinctive posture toward temporality vis-à-vis nonfamily firms (Dalpiaz & Di Stefano, 2018; Rabaki et al., 2019; Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020). By theorizing this new narrative practice, we expand the current understanding of legacy in family firms providing a more varied explanation about the link between different temporalities that make up outward-oriented social family legacy. As the social legacy is about orchestrating a network of meanings that are transmitted from one generation to the other through stories (Hammond et al., 2016), we advance an empirical account in family firms about how the temporal aspect of legacy can be more malleable (Suddaby et al., 2010; Wadhvani et al., 2018) but also more fluid than the classic linear sequence of past, present and future (Barbera et al., 2018).

Indeed, while extant family business research has stressed legacy as a purely temporal matter, the narrative practice of emplacing the legacy enables a connection between the meanings attached to the places of the family and the family firm to the broader context in which they are embedded. Even if the place recalls the idea of boundaries (Crawford et al., 2022; Wright et al., 2022)—thus providing a potential demarcation between places that are shared between the family and its stakeholders, and

places that are not—we find that through this narrative practices, FBFs are better able to express and communicate the meanings of the social family legacy. By emplacing the legacy, FBFs can link their legacy to places that have been inhabited by generations of stakeholders, and provide a stronger connection between the place and the family as a legitimate subject actor that has been inhabiting such place. We find that this narrative practice is dependent on the family firms' goals and history and can involve the natural environment and the local community; the spaces of industrial research and manufacturing (e.g., production facilities); or the places that enmesh the family and the family firm, thus leveraging on emotions of familiarity (e.g., the celebration of the office where the founder used to work in). FBFs give meaning to the relationship between the family and the space they have inhabited over generations. In this way, the social legacy of the family is resonant and meaningful not just for the family or the family firm but also for different external stakeholders, like the local community. It is also a way to rhetorically signal the reinforcement of the enduring symbolic bonds that have tied a family firm to its territory across generations. While community embeddedness has been highlighted by many family business scholars as an outcome of pursuing the noneconomic goal of “binding social ties” (Berrone et al., 2012) that allow them to accumulate bridging social capital (Arregle et al., 2007), our study opens up the way to investigate the symbolic and cultural meaning around the place in family business research (De Groot et al., 2022; Reay et al., 2015).

Finally, while family business scholars have considered legacy as an intrafamily, historical self-narrative (i.e., narrated by the family and for the family), we find that the FBF can embed the family legacy in a broader historical narrative by weaving family history with macro-history. This narrative practice brings forth the importance of managing the historicity of the family for building an outward-oriented social legacy. Through this narrative practice, the FBF nests the narration of the social legacy of the family within a broader flux of events of history at large (Lubinski, 2018). The objective of this practice is, on the one hand, to contextualize the family firm legacy, and, on the contrary, to represent



the family as a subject actor within society at large. In this way, it is possible to heighten the resonance that the social legacy might have for external stakeholders. Building on Suddaby et al. (2021)'s narrative model of stakeholder enrollment, we provide an empirical account of how rhetorical history can communicate the role of the family firm in society by blending it with an eventful macro-history.

### **Theoretical contributions and practical implications**

This paper provides three main theoretical contributions. The first contribution regards the dynamics of social legacy transfer. In this paper, we provide an empirical account of the distinctive narrative practices that communicate the social legacy of family firms to external audiences, what we call “outward-oriented social family legacy.” While previous family business research hinted at the intuitive importance of history in passing on an inward, intrafamily, social legacy (Hammond et al., 2016; Jaskiewicz et al., 2015), where the legacy sender (the legator) and the legacy receiver (the legatee) belong to the same system, we theorize the transfer of an outward-oriented social legacy, where the legacy sender and the legacy receiver do not belong to the same system. We elaborate theory that explains the narrative base of social legacy transfer using rhetorical history. Our study acknowledges the importance of historical narratives for the family firm as a way to engage with external stakeholders beyond the boundaries of the family and the firm. In this way, we provide a more fluid conceptualization of legacy compared with most of the management research as well as family business research (Boers & Ljungkvist, 2019; Diaz-Moriana et al., 2020; Harris & Ogbonna, 1999).

Our second contribution is to rhetorical history in family business research. Our findings shed light on the use of rhetorical history as a lens for a better understanding of family business concepts and phenomena, as emerging research is increasingly showing (Ge et al., 2022; Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020). Delving into the concept of outward-oriented social legacy helps to extend the

“societal turn” in family business research that systematically investigates the role of family firms in society (Sasaki et al., 2019). Also, we enhance the combination of the societal and historical turn by highlighting family firms’ and business families’ behavior as cultural operators that communicate the social legacy to signal and strengthen the bond between the family firm and the external audiences. Thus, this also allows us to unearth the complex temporal, place-based, and historical dimensions of family firm legacy beyond functionalist interpretations as well as to give richer accounts of mostly ignored aspects, like the symbolic drivers behind the construction of dynastic motives or the engagement of a family within a territory and a community.

Finally, our article highlights the important role of the FBF as a site for “history production” (Lasewicz, 2015; Suddaby et al., 2023) beyond the boundaries of the family and the family firm (De Massis et al., 2021). The FBF extends over time the value produced by the founders beyond their physical life over the life cycle of the same company through the maintenance of the social legacy. Until now, research has investigated organizational archives (Popp & Fellman, 2020) and corporate museums (Nissley & Casey, 2002; Ravasi et al., 2019) as sites of history production, without considering the specificities of the family business context as a contribution to the field (Howard-Grenville et al., 2021). In our article, we focus on specific organizational forms whose primary mission is not just to store historical artifacts but to use such artifacts and its associated meanings for mobilizing the historical narratives at the base of outward-oriented social legacy. Our study expands this stream of research by showing the narrative practices (Lubinski, 2018) used for the transfer of social legacy, although this activity is not performed within the family or the firm.

This article also has practical implications, both for family firms and nonprofit organizations. First, we show that history is a critical and distinctive asset for family firms that can be effectively managed by an FBF. Having a systematic collection and management system of historical data should not be considered by the family as a pure “cost center” for their firm but as a powerful

repertoire of potentially infinite stories that can be remembered and retold, which in turn enables the diffusion of a social legacy. It is important to stress here that managers and leaders should not consider family firms as purely instrumental and functional organizations, but as expressive organizations, whose link with the family firm enables them to infuse symbolic values. Second, we show that controlling families and family firm managers should be cognizant of the symbolic dimension of their outreach activities and strategies. Sustainability, care for the territory, or cultural advancement are not topics that can be reduced just to the strict monetary dimension of philanthropic activities but can be addressed more effectively through the awareness of a symbolic dimension made of systems of meanings. Family firms and FBFs are particularly well-positioned to do so because of their emphasis on pursuing, maintaining, and transferring a social family legacy as an overarching goal. From our observations, we conclude that the effectiveness of such pursuit is tightly linked with the ability of the family firm and their boundary organizations to effectively communicate their history (Micelotta & Raynard, 2011) to transfer a social legacy that facilitates, rather than hampers, the connection to an ever-changing environment.

### **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

The present study is not exempt from limitations that may however open the doors to further lines of inquiry. As we studied how FBFs transfer social legacy outward, a key question is whether our findings are idiosyncratic to multigenerational family firms and/or to the Italian context, or whether our insights from our three cases might be transferable to other contexts as well. One might argue whether our findings can be transferred to family firms that do not have an FBF. According to our study, they do, given the caveat that the family owners possess historical consciousness to some degree, and express it through policies of maintenance of the historicized material legacy of the family firm, like corporate archives. As Suddaby et al. (2023) highlight, rhetorical history is an

expression of historical consciousness in organizational contexts, and family legacy as well. Indeed, not all FBFs in the world engage in the transfer of outward-oriented social legacy, but, when they are coupled with family firms whose key family decision-makers have historical consciousness, FBFs are most apt to do so. It also depends on the history of the family itself. We witnessed a case of a family firm with an FBF, which was left out of the present study, whose founder deliberately did not conserve any material artifacts because he conceived the “dusty relics of the past” as not compatible with the innovative and future-oriented spirit of the entrepreneur. Indeed, after 15 years since the death of the founder and the constitution of the FBF, the family finds a hard time expressing an outward-oriented social legacy through the FBF itself. Being conscious of the importance of transmitting a legacy, and perceiving the past to be meaningful for the future, is a disposition that emerges often in the latter generations of the family, and less likely in the first, which is more entrepreneurial and future-oriented. There are at least two further contextual features that we believe are important when considering the transferability of the findings, which indeed might inform future research directions. First, we investigate family firms that have not engaged substantially in profound misconduct, and whose past is not characterized by irresponsibility (Mena & Rintamäki, 2020; Schrempf-Stirling et al., 2016). Companies that engaged in misconduct might experience the re-narration of their legacy as something traumatic, which can entail several consequences at the organizational level (Booth et al., 2007), as well as different responses from other stakeholders. In family firms, such recollection of past misconduct might trigger a decoupling strategy between the family and the firm, placing the responsibility for the misconduct entirely on one system or the other, or acts of forgetting. Future research can use rhetorical history to further investigate these issues. Second, we investigate family firms whose business families are at a relatively similar stage in their life cycle (Steier et al., 2015). When families enter the domain of the “enterprising family,” and might not even own a family business anymore (Salvato et al., 2010), there might be different

organizations (De Massis et al., 2021) and different strategies that they might mobilize to transfer an outward-oriented social legacy. Therefore, in line with Suddaby and Jaskiewicz (2020) and De Massis et al. (2021), we encourage family business scholars to investigate FBFs and other organizational forms managing history as resources, rather than a burden for family firms (e.g., family offices, family advisors, family business consultants specialized in heritage management).

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TABLE 1 - Family business foundations (FBFs) under study

<b>Family business foundations</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Year of foundation of FBF</b>	<b>Year of foundation of family business</b>	<b>Turnover of the family business (2019)</b>	<b>Number of employees of the family business (2019)</b>	<b>Family involvement in the FBF</b>
<i>Fondazione Pirelli</i>	Milan	Tire manufacturing	2008	1872	5323 mln €	31575	Board (4 family members)
<i>Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna</i>	Trivero	Fashion	2000	1910	1321 mln €	6300	Management (2 family members), Board (2 family members)
<i>Fondazione Dompé</i>	Milan	Pharmaceuticals and biotechnology	2020	1890	450 mln €	750	Management (1 family member), Board (3 family members)

TABLE 2 - Examples of projects of the FBFs under study

<b>Name of FBF</b>	<b>Name of project</b>	<b>Description of projects</b>
<i>Fondazione Pirelli</i>	<i>The Industrial Humanism magazine</i>	The project started in 2017 and was completed in mid-2019. The purpose of this project is to document the experience of the Pirelli magazine, which was published between 1948 and 1972, through an anthological book that reconstructed it. This magazine was not an industry magazine on tire manufacturing, but was a cultural outlet, dealing with the major trends and issues in the post-war Italy, such as mass-market consumption and technology, or the relationship between humanistic and technical cultures, hence the name “Industrial Humanism”.
	<i>“Pirelli Collection” tire</i>	The “Pirelli Collection” project consists in reviving a line of premium tires (such as the Cinturato CA67 or the P7 Corsa Classic) for vintage sport cars, produced between the 1950s and the 1980s. Specifically, the aim of this project, conducted in collaboration with the R&D department of the corporate, is to recreate as closely as possible the aesthetics of the original tires, while using state-of-art materials and industrial manufacturing processes.
<i>Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna</i>	<i>Centennial</i>	The Centennial project reveals a number of activities that were carried out by Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna for the anniversary of the one hundredth year after the inception of the family business and the crafting of the first fabric by the family business founder, Ermenegildo Zegna. Within this project, whose activities were public in 2010 but requested a consistent number of years of preparation, many activities were carried out, such as artistic and corporate identity expositions, editorial projects (a book) and the introduction of different product lines that echo the first fabric.
	<i>Zegna Forest</i>	Zegna Forest is a project that aims at preserving the environment around Trivero, the small town in the Northern Piedmont surrounded by forests and mountains, where the family business was founded and still is the location for the family business headquarters and the family business foundation. This project, started in 2019 and still ongoing, has involved an historical study of the changes that the surrounding Trivero territory has had for the last 110 years, and was dictated by the presence of an insect, the European spruce bark beetle, which migrated

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and diffused in Trivero area because of climate change, creating great harm to the environment. At the end of 2020, the project has led to the plantation of 3600 new trees in that area.

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<b>Fondazione Dompé</b>	<i>The Bellezza d'Italia</i> (“Beauty of Italy”) magazine	This project, started in 2020 along with the institution of the family business foundation, is centered around the systematization and valorization of the magazine “Bellezza d’Italia” ( <i>transl.</i> “Beauty of Italy”), which was started by Franco Dompé in 1947 and published until 1962. This was not an advertising magazine for the family business’ pharmaceutical products, but it is a cultural magazine aimed at, according to the original thought of Franco Dompé, celebrating and shedding light on Italian culture, covering a broad range of topics, from art and architecture to sports and tourism. The graphic design of the magazine was directed by the designer Franco Grignani. The magazine hosted the contributions of important intellectuals of the era, such as Dino Buzzati and Camilla Cederna.
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TABLE 3 - Data sources

<i>Data source and type</i>	<b>Fondazione Pirelli</b>	<b>Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna</b>	<b>Fondazione Dompé</b>	<b>Use of data in the analysis</b>
<b>Interviews</b>	8 interviews with: Chairman (2, NM), Managing Director (3, NM), three Archivists (3, NM)	11 interviews with: Chairman (1, FM), Human Resources director (2, NM), Social Impact director (4, NM), Archivist (4, NM)	5 interviews with: Executive Chairman (1, FM), Marketing director (3, FM), Archivist (1, NM)	Enables a rich understanding of how people give meaning to the actions that they do. In particular, how they engage with the legacy of the family and the family business.
<b>Archival data</b>	Corporate reports (7); FBFs reports and blog posts (21), newspaper articles (24), books (2); photos (51);	Corporate reports (5); FBFs reports and blog posts (33), newspaper articles (17), books (3); photos (92); internal reports (3)	Corporate reports (4), newspaper articles (5), books (2); photos (34).	Enables to triangulate the interview data with material evidence. Furthermore, given our research context and research question, the importance of archival sources, such as corporate books or items from the FBFs' archives, allows us to understand how the actors working in the FBFs interpret and make sense of the historical sources and artifacts stored in their archives.

TABLE 4 - Outward-oriented social family legacy transmitted by the FBFs under study

Family business foundations	Examples of social legacy transmitted	Empirical evidence
<b>Fondazione Pirelli</b>	<p>-Technological knowledge has a deep humanistic and cultural foundation, engineering and humanities are synergic.</p> <p>-Technological innovation is a component of political, social and economic progress.</p>	<p><i>From the recollection of the experiences of the members of the Pirelli family across the generations, we understood that Pirelli's identity was a cultured identity, not trivially technical. The Italian Institute for International Political Studies was founded by Alberto Pirelli in the 1930s. Because Alberto, who is the man who knew and travelled around the world, realizes that Italian diplomacy is very aristocratic and very naïve in the idea of the world. (Chairman, Fondazione Pirelli).</i></p> <p><i>What has been the meaning of the Pirelli magazine [...]? Leonardo Sinisgalli's words come to my mind: "Simulating an analytical prose rather than the usual commemorative article, a description, not a hymn, a comment, not a preach". And those of Alberto Pirelli, who, since the first issue, focuses on the fact that "every contribution to a mechanized civilization needs to be understood within the highest cultural and social values in society". Today we call it "humanistic and polytechnic culture" of Pirelli (Chairman, Fondazione Pirelli).</i></p>
<b>Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna</b>	<p>-The family firm is an expression of the community where it was founded, and it feels responsible for it.</p> <p>-Environmental responsibility is rooted in family values, and it is anchored in stewardship towards the next generations.</p>	<p><i>I think it's also very important to bring back this idea of journey of people in a territory, to give back to those who live the territory a sense of belonging. I live in that territory with a history that has accompanied me, and then, at the same time, to give to those who live it today a sense of responsibility to carry on and to keep nurturing and taking care of that territory. (Chairman, Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna).</i></p> <p><i>Ermenegildo's brilliant business mind was not limited to his particular industrial field. He understood that the quality he sought for his products couldn't be separated from a positive relationship with the local territory and the community.</i></p>

		<i>He understood that the beauty of the natural environment and people's well being – and not just that of his own employees – were indispensable for a company aspiring to long term success. (Centennial project press release).</i>
<b>Fondazione Dompé</b>	<p>-Entrepreneurial endeavors by the family are directed towards the purpose of innovating to improve people's lives.</p> <p>- Scientific and humanistic achievements of local and Italian culture.</p>	<p><i>There are numerous writings by him [Franco Dompé] in which he recounts that fundamental transition of the pharmaceutical industry from the world of galenic preparations to the industrialization of production processes. Dompé was a witness and protagonist of this change. (Chairman, Fondazione Dompé).</i></p> <p><i>To be fully aware of our historical legacy means to look at the future differently, to be always ready and open to change, to be able to have a dynamic approach, able to adapt to market changes and to put to use those scientific discoveries that can completely revolutionize the scenario. From an organizational point of view, the Dompé of tomorrow will not be the Dompé of today. It is precisely our history that teaches us that. (Chairman, Fondazione Dompé).</i></p>



TABLE 5 – Empirical evidence of narrative practices of outward legacy transfer

<b>Narrative practices</b>	<b>Empirical evidence</b>
<b>Founder foreshadowing</b>	<p><i>We had to think about re-centering the attention on Pirelli not as a financial operator, but on what has been over time: a high-quality company. So, we went back in Pirelli and asked: ‘how can we put Pirelli at the front stage, when it is not anymore the shareholder of one of the first three big Italian companies?’ So, we opened up the archive [ . . . ] and put it back in the cultural logic of the family firm. And we built the memory of the identity of Pirelli as an instrument to go forward with the innovation. (Chairman, Fondazione Pirelli)</i></p> <p><i>The idea is that it’s a plan that lasts, let’s say, at least ten years, so our effort is dedicated precisely to what we call “Ermenegildo Zegna’s forests”, because you will see the mountain was completely barren, and those woods he had imagined, he had had followed the plantation work in first person. (Social Impact director, Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna)</i></p> <p><i>Our activity stems from the motivation that gave impetus to the Foundation, which is nothing but the continuity of a vision that is inspired by our founder, based on a value-conscious business that generates value for the territory, and a strong attention to social and environmental issues, which for us cannot be decoupled. (Chairman, Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna).</i></p> <p><i>Today, maybe we can explain this choice [re-publishing and making publicly available the past issues of the “Bellezze d’Italia” magazine] by trying to identify in the spirit that guided the post-war Italy, when many entrepreneurs rolled up their sleeves looking more at the future rather than the past. (Archivist, Fondazione Dompé)</i></p>
<b>Emplacing the family legacy within the broader community</b>	<p><i>It is important to bring back this sense of human path in a territory in order to give to the individuals that live there a sense of identity and belonging. [ . . . ] It means giving to whom lives in the territory today the sense of responsibility to bring forward, nourish and take care of that territory. (Chairman, Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna)</i></p> <p><i>It is still important to meet the people of our territory, the countrymen, the people who have worked in the past in the company or who live in this area, because they often tell us new things or perhaps keep in their homes photographs and documents that can then be useful. (Chairman, Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna)</i></p>

	<p><i>The names of many collections themselves are often taken either from place names, so the mountain is a location has been used several times, or even historical names that are reused, in some cases of some fabrics that have editions years apart. (Social impact Director, Fondazione Zegna)</i></p> <p><i>Ermenegildo Zegna and his obsession are one and the same thing. Concentrated, untroubled, painstaking. Nursing an ambition to bridge the gap between ethical man and aesthetic man. Elegance devoid of frivolity is the image he presents. The mountains are another projection of himself. Or vice versa. As if by osmosis he carries within him the texture of the foothills of the Biella Alps, an aesthetics of the nature that just before curling up for the winter releases over the space of just a few days the colors it has held back during more sensual seasons, the months of the beginning (Centennial book, Fondazione Zegna)</i></p> <p><i>A phrase greets visitors right at the entrance of our Foundation, said by the engineer Luigi Emanuelli, who was a leading figure in our R&amp;D. It's a phrase in Milanese dialect and it just says, "Adess ghe capissaremm on quaicoss: andemm a guardagh denter." Meaning, "And now to understand something about the matter, we need to go and look inside the projects, inside our archive." And it is really an invitation to, in some way, tell, to go inside our culture, our world and our history to understand more. It was kind of the approach that he also kept in the development of his science and technology projects. And this phrase is right at the entrance and we wanted and chose to translate it directly into English, just to emphasize this very Milanese, but also very multinational nature of ours in our company. (Managing Director, Fondazione Pirelli)</i></p> <p><i>The history of the family and the company are intertwined to such an extent that among the documents kept in the Archives at 12 San Martino Street—the headquarters of Dompé farmaceutici since 1946, and recently also the headquarters of the newly established Foundation—we found very old family photo albums, materials that usually remain in private family homes. At first glance this might appear to be a secondary aspect, I find instead that it is very significant. (President, Fondazione Dompé)</i></p> <p><i>There is no other way to explain the path that led the Milan pharmacy in Della Scala square, which opened in the late 1800s, to transform into a full-fledged pharmaceutical company in the 1950s, and then into an international group focused on biotechnology starting in the 1980s. This seems to us to be a great lesson that we would like to be an inspiration for companies starting up today as well. Witnessing this is crucial at a time in history where the speed of change sometimes makes one lose sight of the value of the past. (President, Fondazione Dompé)</i></p>
<p><b>Weaving family legacy</b></p>	<p><i>The "TOP" magazine, edited by the Ermenegildo Zegna company, has really been an almost unthinkable operation for those years, uniting different contributors from different academic disciplines [. . .] Since the TOP magazine was born, it remained the habit of interrogating ourselves on what are the societal changes that are occurring, such as the shifting perception of what</i></p>

<p><b>with macro-history</b></p>	<p><i>is the “male” figure and the “female” figure—we are talking about the 1960s. It’s not only a corporate history, but in a way it’s also a history of the Italian fashion [. . .] It was a moment of rupture, but not so much because of the generational succession within the Zegna family, but because precisely that was what the whole country was going through. (Social Impact Director, Fondazione Ermenegildo Zegna)</i></p> <p><i>We realized that that narrative, full of challenges and animated by a constant desire to innovate, could also have value today. We therefore decided to reorder the materials, digitize them, and make them available to anyone who wishes to learn more about our history or, more generally, the development of the pharmaceutical industry from the late 19th century to the 1990s. (President, Fondazione Dompé)</i></p> <p><i>We don’t just tell the world of production, but we tell of course what is the history of Pirelli because rightly Pirelli also partly made the history of Italy. So, for example, for some years within our program we have decided to focus on specific historical periods to narrate to the kids. Two years ago, we did a course on the economic boom, so through our documents we went to tell the kids about this very important period in Italian history. And then the importance to also tell this story, the story of Pirelli, which is the history of Italy, but it’s the history of production, it’s the history of the changes in the world of work, it’s the history of corporate welfare, the rights and duties of workers. (Archivist, Fondazione Pirelli)</i></p>
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TABLE 6 – The narrative practices of outward oriented social legacy

<i>Narrative practices</i>	<i>Founder foreshadowing</i>	<i>Emplacing the family legacy within the broader community</i>	<i>Weaving family legacy with macro-history</i>
<b>Description</b>	Narrative practice aiming at connecting the deeds of the family business founder performed in the past with the most urgent and critical issues of the contemporary world	Narrative practice aiming at providing a sense of meaning and resonance around the family and the family business spaces	Narrative practice aiming at connecting the local history of the family or the family firm with an eventful macro-history
<b>Narrative dimension of legacy</b>	<b>Temporality</b>	<b>Spatiality</b>	<b>Historicity</b>
	Provides temporal fluidity to the social legacy, connecting the distant past with the unfolding present.	Provides cultural resonance to the social legacy, connecting the family with recognized places that are resonant with external stakeholders.	Provides historical significance and familiarity to the actions and behaviors of the family by external stakeholders.
<b>Level of analysis</b>	<b>Micro level</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individuals</li> <li>- Family</li> <li>- Relationships</li> </ul>	<b>Meso level</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local Organizations</li> <li>- Groups of people</li> <li>- Local communities</li> </ul>	<b>Macro level</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institutions</li> <li>- Socio-cultural System</li> </ul>

FIGURE 1 - The Mountain of Trivero Before and After Planting.  
© Ermenegildo Zegna Group Archive.

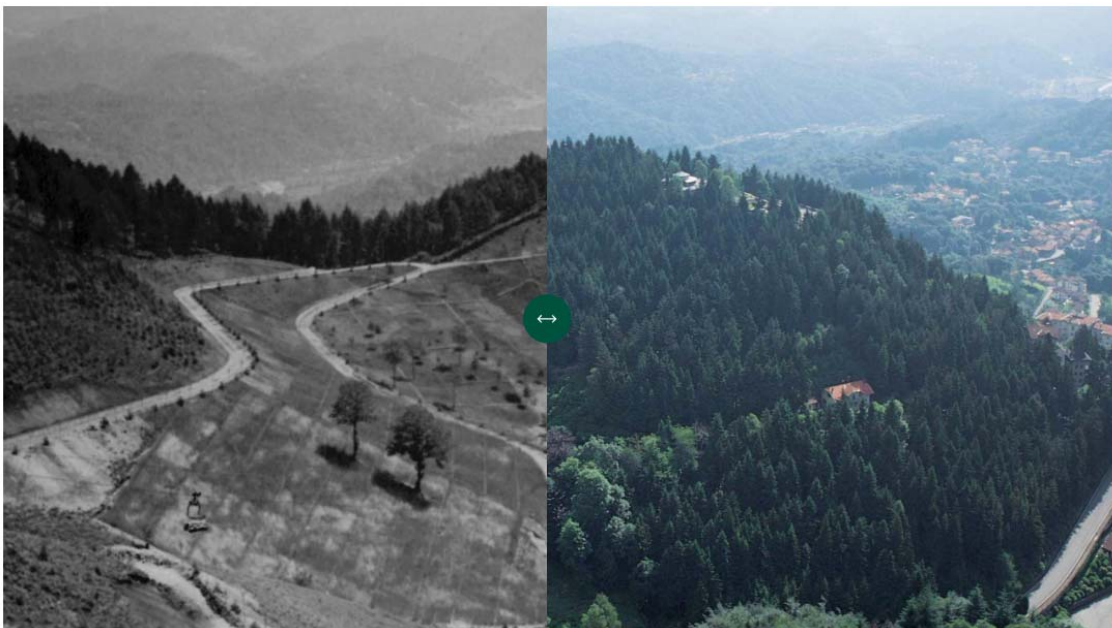


FIGURE 2 - Employees of the Ermenegildo Zegna Wood Mill, 2009.  
© Ermenegildo Zegna Group Archive.



FIGURE 3 - Ermenegildo Zegna in front of the Wool Mill, Trivero, 1942  
© Ermenegildo Zegna Group Archive.



FIGURE 4 - View of the “Madonnina” on the Roof terrace of the Pirelli Skyscraper, 1960s.  
© Fondazione Pirelli.





FIGURE 5. The Restaurant Hall of the Bicocca Factory Canteen, Projected by Giulio Minoletti and Cesare Chiodi, 1957, foto Publifoto.  
© Fondazione Pirelli.

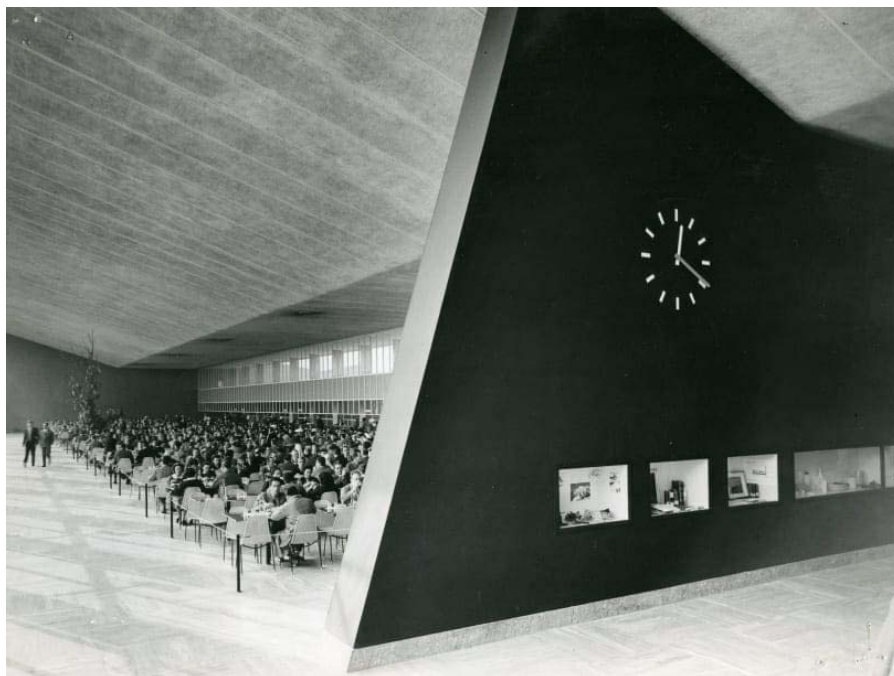


FIGURE 6. Advertising Flyer From the End of the 19th Century, Illustrating the Farmacia Centrale Dompé in Piazza Della Scala in Milan.  
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FIGURE 7 The President of Italy Visiting Dompé Research and Production Plant at L'Aquila (21st June 1993).

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FIGURE 8. The Nobel Prize Rita Levi Montalcini and President of Italy Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, at the Inauguration of the Dompé Research and Production Facility at L'Aquila (21st June 1993).

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