

The astroBID

Searching through the Italian astronomical heritage

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The cultural mission of the National Institute for Astrophysics

INAF is formed by 17 research centers spread all over the country, including the 12 Observatories, with their scientific and historical heritage.

INAF duties: safeguarding, conserving and making accessible its historical collections.

ITALIAN ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORIES



Astrophysical Observatory of Arcetri



Specola of Bologna



Astronomical Observatory of Brera



Astronomical Observatory of Cagliari



Astronomical Observatory of Capodimonte



Astrophysical Observatory of Catania



Astronomical Observatory of Padova



Astronomical Observatory of Palermo



Astronomical Observatory of Roma



Astronomical Observatory of Teramo



Astronomical Observatory of Torino



Astronomical Observatory of Trieste

INAF astronomical heritage

INAF historical and scientific heritage: rare and modern books, archival documents, instrumentation

Libraries and Archives Unit and Museums Unit: management, preservation and exploitation of the INAF heritage

Unities aim: to make this heritage accessible to everyone through the creation of a single web portal named *Polvere di stelle (stardust)*



Libraries & Archives

Libraries and Archives purchasing policy:
increase of electronic subscriptions and
books.

2010: the Libraries and Archives Unit
purchased a new cataloging software in order
to make a shared cataloging via web and to
make queries through the INAF Libraries OPAC

INAF Libraries modern book collection:
125.000 monographs and 2500 periodicals,
of which 100 as current subscription



Ancient book collection

7000 volumes held mainly in the oldest astronomical observatories (Brera, Naples, Padua and Palermo)

Manuscripts date back to the early XIV century

Printed books cover a time range from 1470 to 1830

Bibliographical data are not available in many observatories. Three phases of work are expected: census, “book in hand” cataloguing and digitization

What has been done so far? The Astronomical Observatory of Capodimonte and the Astronomical Observatory of Rome have cataloged and digitized a large part of their rare books



Ancient book collection



C. Clavius, *In Sphaeram
Ioanni De Sacro Bosco
Commentarius*, Romae
1606 (OA Palermo)



J. Hevelius, *Prodromus Astronomiae*, 1690 (OA
Brera)



J.G. Doppelmayr, *Atlas Coelestis*,
Norimbergae 1742 – (OA
Capodimonte)

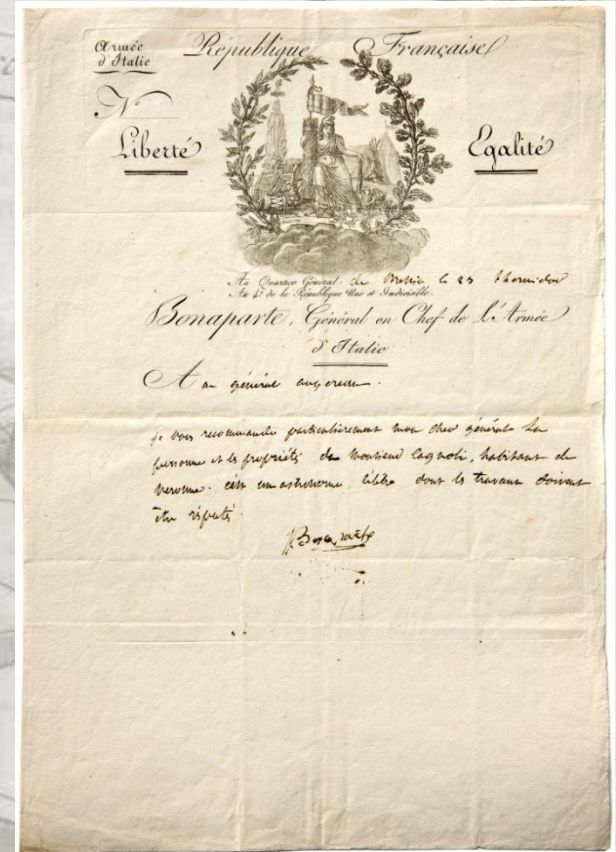
Historical Archives

The historical Archives collect the body of records of the 12 Observatories.

The most ancient document dates back to the XVII century and it is held in the Bologna Archive

The Observatories Archives contain various kinds of documents: administrative, scientific and private. They are unique and fragile pieces exposed to a very high risk of leakage

In 1983 the Observatory of Brera was the first to establish a preservation and valorization program, followed by Turin, Bologna and Naples



Historical Archives

In 2000 the “Specola 2000” Project started on.

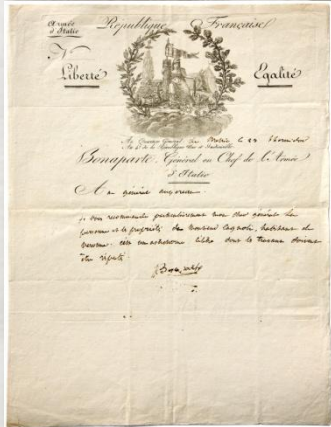
What has been done so far? Brera, Bologna and Palermo have almost completed the reordering and inventorying of the documents; Arcetri, Padua, Rome and Trieste are under completion; Teramo and Cagliari have not yet started

A new cataloguing software were acquired according to the ISAD(G)

In 2009 *Polvere di stelle*, a first website of an Italian scientific institution and a booklet with the same title were published



Precious Observatories archival documents

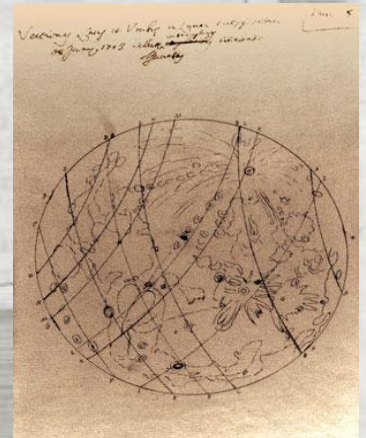


Letter by Napoleon Bonaparte (1796),
Brera Observatory

Drawings of the Mars surface by G.V.
Schiaparelli (1877), Brera Observatory

Drawings of the Bourbon lilies by
Luchino Visconti (1962), Palermo
Observatory

Sketch of the Moon during the eclipse
of June 18th, 1703 by E. Manfredi,
Bologna Archive

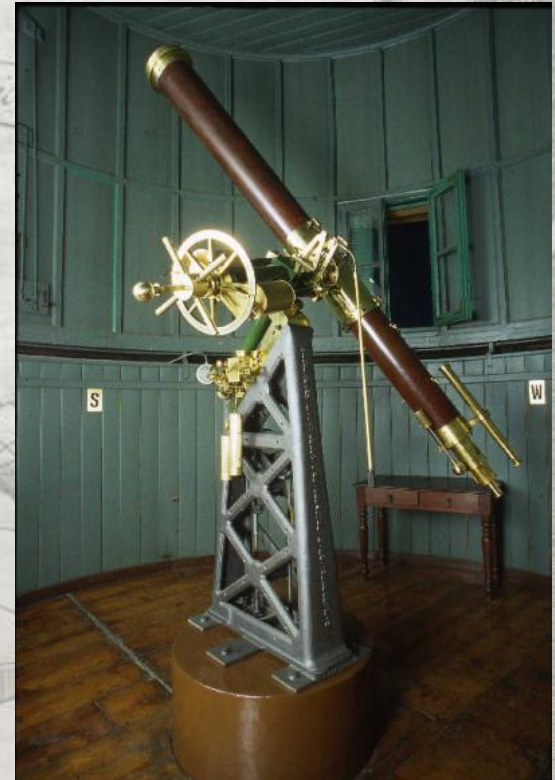


The Museums Unit

The INAF Museums Unit has the task to preserve and to exploit the instrumental historical heritage located into the INAF research centers

The Museums Unit is made up of: 6 museums (Naples, Brera, Palermo, Padua, Bologna and Rome); 6 instrumental collections (Catania, Cagliari, Teramo, Arcetri, Trieste and Turin)

The INAF instrumental heritage consists of a total of over a thousand instruments time ranging from the XI century to the first half of 1900. The most ancient instrument is an astrolabe dated 1090 and held in Rome



INAF instrumental heritage

The instrumental collections were formed in the course of the time from the gathering of each observatory apparatus, set apart and replaced with new instruments when they became unsuitable

The only exception is the Copernican Astronomy Museum belonging to the Astronomical Observatory of Rome founded in 1873

All the INAF collections have not been catalogued according to a common standard so far. In order to make uniform the records, a cataloguing software is just acquired in compliance with the PST description developed by ICCD



Precious Observatories instruments

Arab astrolabe by Ibn Sahid el Ibrahim (1096), Copernican Astronomy Museum, Rome Observatory

Celestial globe by Roll-Reinhold (1589), Museum of the Astronomical Instruments, Capodimonte Observatory

Clock by O. Chlasner (1567), Museum of the Astronomical Instruments, Capodimonte Observatory



Astrum 2009

In 2009, during the celebrations of the International Year of Astronomy, an exhibition “Astrum 2009”, accompanied by a printed bilingual catalog, was set up in the Vatican Museums

The exhibition can be considered a prototype of *Polvere di Stelle*, the new web portal of the Italian astronomical cultural heritage



Polvere di stelle

Polvere di stelle allows you to search simultaneously on all types of material catalogued in the different databases by promoting access to more complete information on the INAF cultural heritage. The link to the INAF web portal is: beniculturali.inaf.it



Conclusion

What will we aim for the future? We expect a collaboration with other cultural institutions that have embraced our philosophy