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Faliero Sarti: reclaiming social heritage and artisan know-how for a glocal market.

This paper considers how the longevity of craft know-how embedded in some European manufacturing communities can be a key enabling factor in the resilience and transformation of textile enterprises.

In the context of the Made in Italy brand, the family owned and managed woolen mill, Faliero Sarti, provides a case study for our focus. Faliero Sarti's development of a luxury accessories range, we suggest, demonstrates the underestimated commercial value of organizational and social memory, craft skills, and local knowledge that, according to economist Stefani Micelli, form the cornerstones of scalable, high quality product innovation and competitive global manufacturing.

Excerpts from an interview with Roberto and Monica Sarti, owners of Faliero Sarti, will offer unique insights into the challenges faced by a local family run business to transform and compete in a global market. Their comments on the role and cultural heritage of industrial artisans, identified as facilitators of innovation, are set in the context of textile industry data reported by Euratex, the European Apparel and Textile Confederation.

In 2014, the turnover of textiles and fashion manufacture in Europe amounted to €165 billion euros, with further additional investments worth around €4 billion euros. Following the revival of textiles production in the European Union post the 2008 crisis, 173,000 active textile and clothing companies employed over 1.6 million workers. Our research indicates that behind these impressive figures, the headline economic importance and large-scale of the European textiles and fashion industries conceal smaller scale specialist companies that can offer different models to add value and sustain growth in the manufacture of textiles in Europe.

In our example, the journey towards innovation is seen as an uninterrupted culture of evolution within a familiar manual artisanal context, supported by socially connected, craft based knowledge. This has enabled this modest scale family business to design and produce unique textiles, able to compete in the luxury sector of an increasingly far-reaching glocal textiles market.

Key words:

artisan, know-how, manufacture, innovation, craft skills, luxury, Made in Italy, Faliero Sarti, glocal.

References:

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Word count: 358