



**RENEWING POMPEII, YEAR ZERO.
PROMISES AND EXPECTATIONS FROM NEW
APPROACHES TO MUSEUM MANAGEMENT
AND ACCOUNTABILITY***

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Introduction

The whole question of a “managerial” approach to running organizations in the cultural field, especially museums, is taking on increasing importance, in Italy as elsewhere (cf. for instance: Wilson, 1989; Kavanagh, 1991, 1994; Pearce, 1991; Moore, 1994; Sherman & Rogoff; Bennet, 1995; Linklater, 1997; Cannon-Brookes, 1998; regarding Italy cf. also Valentino, 1993; Bodo, 1994; Roncaccioli, 1996; Baghdadli, 1997; Morigi Govi & Mottola Molfino, 1996; Zan, 1999, 2000b; the reference to Italy is due to its prominent role in terms of cultural heritage amongst western societies). This is part of a more general phenomenon of the extension of economic discourse to different kinds of organization—as opposed to firms—as the streams of research on Non Profit Organizations and New Public Management underline.

As is the case with health care and educational entities, more than a simple intellectual merging of different analytical perspectives this process seems to be deeply linked—in one way or another—with the crisis of welfare. Indeed most cultural organizations are (or were) public sector bodies, or are (were) dependent on public funding to a great extent. “In either case, they are increasingly coming under pressure in the search for economic efficiency and ‘value for money’”. In some cases funding is drastically cut back, in others institutions become candidates for privatization, or at least candidates in the call for ‘companization’,

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'managerialization': an additional territory for the 'inexorable' diffusion of the managerial rhetoric" (Zan, 2000a).

At the general level, the charge of colonization has been associated with such a process of diffusion and extension of economic and managerial discourses (see for all Broadbent *et al.*, 1991; Power & Laughlin, 1992; Munro & Hatherley, 1993), where all kinds of organizations tend to be looked at as if they were firms, often suggesting the introduction of firmlike mechanisms for running them, according to an alleged neutral meaning of management and economic notions. Interestingly enough, a similar radical criticism toward the introduction of a economic and commercial view of art organizations is often shared by museologists, as the harsh comment by Cannon-Brookes (1998, p. 255) shows: "Market-driven management systems threaten the physical and intellectual integrity of museums as these object-based institutions are forced to increase their cash flow, and thereby trading profits, by searching for new mass publics uninterested in their core functions" (cf. also Paolucci, 1996, on what he refers to as "the silly superstition of the manager", and Detheridge, 1997).

What is here questioned—even when taking for granted the historical pressure towards more "economic" ways of running similar organizations—is the self-referential nature of managerial rhetoric as a self-sufficient, ready-to-use body of knowledge. First of all, it is worthwhile putting behind us the superficial, if not ideological, views of those who aprioristically champion solutions of privatization and generic calls for efficiency, almost as if the private sector were somehow "genetically" better off in managing organizations compared with the public sector, all of which is false and misleading: false because it can be shown that the modern forms of "managerial" control historically grew out of state organizations (Hoskin & Macve, 1994; Carmona *et al.*, 1997; Zan & Hoskin, 1999) even if today the problem is one of "re-importing" this logic from the private sector; misleading because it distracts attention away from understanding the concrete and local conditions hindering the proper functioning of a particular public organization.

This is particularly true when referring to museums, non-profit organizations whose specific nature is difficult to investigate. For the management expert this involves the far from easy task of trying to understand to what extent managerial discourse is relevant and can be applied to such a "strange" object of analysis. To make things even more difficult, a juridical and macro-economic bias seems to characterize the current debate in cultural economics, especially in Italy, where little attention is paid to the micro level, i.e. issues regarding the functioning and development of the single organization (cf. the limits of the debate concerning the reform of the Italian Cultural Heritage Ministry: Bobbio, 1993, 1997, 1998b; Petrarola & Provenzali, 1996; Luther, 1997; Mottola Molfino, 1998; Petrarola, 1998; Santagata, 1998).

Indeed—on closer inspection—the very use of the term "management" risks being misleading: for years and years, as a modern discipline born in the enlightenment period and then diffused by the Napoleonic era throughout Europe, museology (and museography) have given indications and prescriptions on how to run this kind of organization, according to a substantive and professional view. While a serious limitation in the appropriateness of this professional discipline seems to emerge when economic pressure raises new questions and tends to shape new agendas

for these organizations, it is not so obvious that management as a discipline—i.e. management knowledge as we know it from recent development in commercial business in the last 50 years or so—could be a good candidate to fulfil this gap, to make museums and similar organizations “managed managerially”, whatever such an odd expression could mean. If mainstream management scholars would probably deny the very existence of any doubts in this regard, fostering their own disciplinary identity and belonging, and radical critics would stress the political and ideological meaning of any attempt to deal with this contradiction, what I am interested here is the process of translation of notions and concepts between the two disciplinary fields—management and curatorship, their dialogue and possible cross-contamination, within a two-way process.

From this point of view Pompeii constitutes a special, even emblematic, case. In September 1997 a new regulation (law No. 352/1997) gave it a new “status”: from its previous standing as a local branch of the Ministry of Culture (the *Soprintendenza*), it is now configured as an autonomous entity (*Soprintendenza autonoma*) on an experimental basis; the experimentation opens up new paths for future change to the Italian museum system, at least in State run ones. The law indeed seems to largely take on board the general trend towards “managerialization” of art organizations, with the introduction of a new figure: the “city manager”, as normally referred to by the Minister and newspapers (in English, though in the law it is merely called “administrative director”, *direttore amministrativo*).

Furthermore, this institutional innovation, strongly supported by the Ministry of the time (Veltroni), is taking place within a context of a more comprehensive process to relaunch Pompeii, which has placed the site at the centre of international attention, giving visibility to the problem of the crisis of Pompeii (cf. some of the articles appearing in Italian and international newspaper and magazines: Oriani, 1996; Bobbio, 1997; Cerchi, 1997; Che, 1997; *Il mattino*, 1997; *Newsweek*, 1997; Ragone, 1997a,b; Bettini, 1998; Berger & Pacini, 1998; Chiaberge, 1998; Detheridge, 1998; Gumbel, 1998; Schisa, 1998). Such a process has been also formally drafted in a document which can be seen as a true “strategic planning” exercise carried out by archaeologists on the core aspects of the running of a similar organization: *Un Piano per Pompei* (A Plan for Pompeii, 1997). The new law therefore comes, as it were, to shore up an explicit and courageous strategic project for the recovery of Pompeii, in principle providing new organizational instruments: the new figure of the administrative director; the introduction of a board of directors; new financial rules and procedures, etc.

From this point of view, such a situation represents an ideal “social laboratory” for testing the impact of management culture and rhetoric in addressing attention and mobilizing collective action. A preliminary condition is to overcome a naïve view of management as such: I am not thinking of a totally clear-cut management “science” or even discipline, but rather a fuzzy set of traditions and approaches that can be tentatively labelled as “management studies” as a body of knowledge. Nor am I thinking of management as a set of aseptic, neutral notions and techniques, but rather as elements that tend to structure, shape and modify the relational and decisional field between actors with their own interests, needs, and strategies (*à la* Crozier: Crozier & Friedberg, 1977).

In addition, however, as strategic management literature itself teaches us, it is necessary first of all (“year zero” to borrow an expression from the publication *Un Piano per Pompei*) to achieve a deep understanding of the antecedents—the past and the present of how this organization works—if the promises and expectations for change are to have any chance of success. What is more, any project for change is characterized by the extent to which it wants to affect and break with the past.

With this in mind, the paper focuses on retracing the development of Pompeii from the creation of the *Soprintendenza territoriale* (territorial *Soprintendenza*) in 1982 (D.M. 9.3.82) to the acquisition of the new status of “autonomous” *Soprintendenza*, and it is based on analysis run from October 1997 to May 1998 (therefore before any significant impact of the new institutional form). Without a careful reconstruction one would in fact run the risk of not fully understanding the need for change and the necessary conditions for managing it. This article does *not*, however, provide an analysis of actual impacts of the new regulation: change needs time, and I still do not have access to investigate the results of this first period (people involved seem to have serious problems to deal with before spending their time in talking with researchers on issues that will then become of public domain; and in addition researchers spend time in translating their analysis and in the normal reviewing process for getting published). Seen in positive terms, more than an *ex post* view of “what happened”, this is an analysis which tries to understand change as it occurs, during the process “catching reality in flight” as Pettigrew (1985) puts it.

From a methodological point of view, in fact, the kind of analysis here presented calls for a deep interaction between the analyst and people inside the *Soprintendenza*. Though part of a broader research project, mostly characterized by qualitative field research, this specific study is rather close to an action-research perspective: it was called for and sponsored by the *Soprintendente* himself as a tool for making sense about what the implications of the new law could be; in parallel with more traditional interviews (encompassing 15 important and representative positions, often with repeated contacts) it involved a series of long “talks” with inner actors under a very interactive perspective, if not participant observation; it also involved the deep investigation of internal documentation, often in collaboration with actors dealing with in their production and use. The role of the researchers was something in between that of the scholar and the consultant, and the research report itself is, in a broad sense and to some extent, a free-of-charge consultancy report. Some of the ideas presented in this article are also likely to have had some impact both on sense making and attention addressing processes, and on the following evolution of the whole debate on the new institutional settings within this organization. The whole study, in short, sought contamination with people and discourses within the *Soprintendenza*, far from any aseptic ideal of “objective” research of a positivist nature.

The strong empirical focus of the paper is in itself a critique to generic approaches, of a self-referential use of management rhetoric. In reality, the notion of autonomy associated with the Pompeii institutional experiment is a much more complex issue than what is usually talked about in the debate. The present paper will focus on an aspect rarely underlined even by those calling for greater degrees of autonomy for museums: i.e. the issue of *accountability* as a crucial aspect in the so-called

process of managerialization of museums (in Italy as perhaps in all Europe), calling for serious changes in the institutional and governance structures of these bodies.

In general, the word accountability refers to the idea of “giving account”: “To be accountable means, as any dictionary will confirm, to give reasons and explanations of what one does” (Normanton, 1966, cited by Carnagie & Wolnizer, 1996). More analytically, to speak of accountability presupposes that someone is called upon to be accountable for something to someone. There are therefore two premises, one informative (the information that allows some kind of representation of something), the other organizational–institutional regarding governance, the identification of that “someone” who will take responsibility for managing “something”.

More specific and operational uses of the terms accountability to museum reality are however less clear-cut. The international (especially the US) debate on the management of museums seems today to revolve around a discussion of representational modalities, parameters and leading indicators for the performance of museums where a good deal of controversy surrounds the fact that these parameters—above all visitor attendance—partially or potentially conflict with the overall mission of a museum as such (cf. Ames, 1994; Armstrong & Tomes, 1996; Carnagie & Wolnizer, 1996; Rentschler & Potter, 1996; Oakes *et al.*, 1997; Cannon-Brookes, 1998). Indeed what it is called for is a sophisticated discourse on accountability, even in terms of technicalities, which could dialogue with professional concerns that are crucial and distinctive of these kinds of organization (i.e. visitors, conservation, etc), more than merely forms of financial accountability.

The situation is much more dramatic in Italy (and I guess in most European Countries), and the case of Pompeii is symptomatic: it is not just a question of how much emphasis to give to one particular phenomenon rather than another. Here there is no basic information on personnel costs and financial resources spent on the whole structure and as per generally accepted accounting principles. From this point of view, the *introduction* of accounting for the individual entity (i.e. obtaining some sort of income statement for Pompeii) and the adoption of financial models of accountability is still a crucial priority. What is called for (and what is to a certain extent already emerging) in most of the public sector entities in Italy is a transformation of the governance structure—from the inner office of the Ministry in this case, or from branches of local authorities—towards autonomous entities. Here, financial accountability still has a basic role to play, though in respect of other dimensions of actions and tasks characterizing a museum as opposed to general firms.

And if until the advent of the autonomous *Soprintendenza* there was not even the “someone” mentioned above, I will try to show how the overall design of the new institutional form is just a partial answer to the issue of accountability.

The *Soprintendenza* of Pompeii as a Multi-Activity Organization

In order to apply the tool-kit of management experts without imposing any “a priori” schema, it is worthwhile trying to characterize the notion of operations for such an organization: what are the elements distinguishing Pompeii as an organization, what are the activities, how are they characterized, what kind of knowledge and

understanding do they call for, what kinds of task, decision, and process are involved?

What emerges is the incredible amount of inner variety, both in terms of activities (preservation, research, restoration, utilization) and geographical areas (the different archaeological sites that make up the *Soprintendenza* as an organizational entity: Pompeii itself, Herculaneum, Oplontis, Boscoreale, and Stabia).

Understanding these aspects is crucial for revisiting in meaningful ways (i.e. ways that are meaningful for direct actors: archaeologists, curators, etc.) the process of organizing human and financial resources of such an unusual entity, and the associated elements of responsibility in managerial action.

Preservation

There are few examples like Pompeii that better illustrate the basic duties of a *Soprintendenza*, which can best be described as a kind of “art police”. These duties consist of ensuring the preservation of all archaeological material, whether excavated or still to be discovered within the jurisdiction of the *Soprintendenza*.

Intervention is necessary if the artistic heritage is to be safeguarded in its entirety. Apart from the illegal activity of grave-robbing, if any citizen carries out building work of any description (even small jobs) the *Soprintendenza*, led by the *Soprintendente* (state functionary in charge of cultural heritage issues in the regions) intervenes with evaluation reports and tests of one kind and another before issuing the permits; sometimes it provides a person to assist with the excavations to ensure there is no illicit pilfering of any relics that might come to light. Should some new finding emerge, it would be inserted in a list of archaeological materials and the owner would subsequently be called on to safeguard the object in question (the object could also be confiscated in exceptional cases).

Bearing in mind just how much in the area has been built in the last 30 years and just how much historically valuable material lies under the ground, it is easy to see how important this work is. In point of fact important discoveries have come to light by pure chance and not as the result of archaeological digs. For example, *Villa Regina* at Boscoreale emerged during building work in progress; the *Necropoli di Madonna delle Grazie* following surveys ahead of the building of a gas station.

This preservation work is time consuming, taking up at least a third of the time of the archaeologists of the four peripheral sites, plus three from Pompeii, not to mention assistants.

Research

If on the one hand “Pompeii represents for the common man the most famous and best-known place of the ancient world” (*Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei*, 1994, p. 3), it should also be remembered that this site is of crucial importance to the scholar of archaeology, a discipline whose very genesis can be traced back to the Pompeii site towards the end of the eighteenth century. Pompeii still today draws research teams from all over the world and is the subject of a whole host of different studies (for an overview cf. Franchi dell’Orto, 1998).

It is difficult to sum up in a few words just how much has been done since the *Soprintendenza* was first set up in 1982, given all the research work that has been carried out since then. It is perhaps enough to point up a few of the characteristic features of this work: first of all the cataloguing itself of the discoveries as well as their publication in the form of catalogues; the publication of monographs; the organization of scholarly conferences and publication of the proceedings (see Table 1). Of particular note is the *Rivista di Studi Pompeiani* which, besides being a perfect place for scholars from all over the world to publish articles in on the subject, also carries a section which acts as a kind of bulletin board on the digging activities of the *Soprintendenza*. There are also many examples of collaborative work with universities worldwide, summarized in Table 1. (While perfectly aware that numbers are hardly the best way of appreciating this kind of exchange, what is nonetheless striking is the large number of contacts there are and the strong international bias, confirming what was said about the importance and the “fame” of Pompeii in the world.)

As part of a more general process, what is becoming increasingly clear at this site is the importance of contributions from disciplines that were once far removed from archaeology. In the Laboratory of Applied Research, work has been going on in two broad fields: first, studies in paleobotanics and palinology (with the recovery, study and, in part, cultivation of the original vegetation on the basis of organic finds: pollens, roots, seeds, etc.); second, the study of more efficient and economical ways of eradicating weeds (resulting in cut costs from 800 to 60 lire/square metre, which, given the size of the Pompeii site, ensured a massive saving).

Less successful—in view of subsequent technological obsolescence and non-use—has been the attempt, as part of the project *Neapolis* (IBM–Fiat consortium, funded by the special law on *Giacimenti Culturali*—cultural deposits, art. 15 L41/86: see footnote 10), to introduce information technology by way of computer inventories for materials and a filing system for monuments and archaeological emergencies (files of paintings and floors with over 10 000 photos and the possibility of confronting present-day pictures with historical images, excavation logs, etc.).

Curiously, in both internal documents and the interviews carried out, temporary exhibitions (and relative catalogues) organized directly or in co-partnership by the *Soprintendenza* are included among the research work. If one looks at the role of these exhibitions and how widely they have travelled in Italy and abroad (Table 2), it is possible to appreciate the incredible appeal of some of them, organized very often outside Pompeii and attracting in the range of 300–500 000 visitors (*Italianische Reise*, 1989; *Fortografi a Pompei*, 1990; *Terracotte figurate*, 1994; *Tesori al buio*, 1994; *Abitare sotto il Vesuvio*, 1996–97; *Picta Fragmenta*, 1997; *Il tesoro di Boscoreale*, 1998) and even over one million (Rediscovering Pompeii, in more than 11 editions throughout the world between 1990 and 1994). What needs to be underlined however is that these exhibitions are viewed more in terms of research activity where the professional skills called for are more those of the archaeology scholar than the expert in management or marketing. The latter would see temporary exhibitions more in terms of “consumption” and would probably frown on the modest success of some of them in terms of visitors. Whatever the case, what emerges here is the close interconnection between research and

Table 1 Research publications and collaboration

Table 1a List of publications	
Catalogues of objects	
I vetri romani di Ercolano	1986 Scatozza-Horicht L. A.
Le lucerne di bronzo di Ercolano e Pompei	1988 De Spagnolis Conticello M., De Carolis E.
I monili di Ercolano	1989 Scatozza-Horicht L. A.
Le terracotte figurate di Pompei	1990 d'Ambrosio A., Boriello M.
Il vasellamen bronzeo di Pompei	1993 Tassinari S.
I monili dell'arte vesuviana	1997 d'Ambrosio A., De Carolis E.
Books	
La villa dei papiri di Ercolano	1986 Wojcik M. R.
Archeologia e botanica	1990 Mastroberto M.
Pompei: the "Casa del Marinaio" and its history	1990 James L., Franklin J. R.
The Sarno Bath Complex	1991 Koloski Ostrow A.
Le Terme di Sarno di Pompei	1992 Ioppolo G.
Ercolano 1738–1988. 250 anni di ricerca archeologica	1993 AA.VV.
Neapolis. La valorizzazione dei beni culturali e ambientali	1993 Furnari E.
Il pons Sarni di Scafati e la via Nuceria-Pompeios	1994 De Spagnolis M.
Pompei: Vecchi scavi sconosciuti. La villa romana rinvenuta dal marchese Giovanni Imperiali (1907–1908)	1994 Stefani G.
Le pitture erotiche delle Terme Suburbane di Pompei	1994 Jacobelli L.
Libero d'Orsi. Gli scavi di Stabiae. Gironali di scavo	1997 Pesando F.
Domus. Edilizia privata e societa' pompeiana fra II e I secolo a.C.	1997 Pesando F.
Vega	1997 Pagano M.
Other Publications	
Pompei. L'informatica al servizio di una citta' antica	1988 AA.VV.
Le ville romane di Terzigno, Terzigno	1989 Cicirelli C.
Restaurare Pompei, Milano, Sugarco edizioni	1991 AA.VV.
Parchi e giardini storici. Atti del convegno, giugno 1993, Salerno, GRG.	
Tiilitografica	1993 AA.VV.
Teaching papers	
Piccola guida di Pompei, Tip. Sicignano	1994
Piccola guida di Ercolano, Tip. Sicignano	1994
Piccola guida di Olpontis, Tip. Sicignano	1994

Table 1b Research collaboration

	Italians	International collaboration	Total
I Excavation tests & stratigraphic drilling	1	7	8
II Other research and scientific publications	7	18	25
III Training	3	1	4
IV Applied Research Laboratory:			
biological research	4	1	5
on physical environment	2	1	3
on scientific and technical knowledge	4	1	5
on materials	4	3	7
IT and non-destructive analysis	0	1	1
Total	25	33	58

Table 2 Exhibitions organized by the *Sorveglianza* of Pompeii

	Exhibition	Year	Visitors
1	Casina dell'aquila	1995	5000
2	Gli ori di Oplontis*	1987-96	25 500
3	Pio IX a Pompei	1987	20 000
4	Legni e Bronzi di Ercolano	1988	8000
5	Progetto Pompei (Fio)	1988	9000
6	Il tesoro di Boscoreale	1988	520 000
7	Petroglyphs	1988	27 000
8	Stabie pitture e stucchi	1989	5000
9	Italianische reise	1989	480 000
10	Testimonianze da area archeologica vesuviana	1989	35 000
11	Ville romane di terzo zigno	1989	2000
12	Rediscovering Pompei*	1990-95	1 223 000
13	Tra stabia e Pompei*	1990	4200
14	Fotografi a Pompei*	1991	404 000
15	Casa del bracciale d'oro	1991	2000
16	Spazi verdi dell'area archeologica di Pompei	1991	4000
17	Il giardino della casa dei casti amanti	1991	5000
18	Le terme del sarno a Pompei	1991	9000
19	Cronache dal 79 dc	1991	1500
20	Italian garden	1991	6000
21	Il territorio vesuviano	1992	5000
22	Domus viridaria horti picti	1992	4000
23	La memoria ritrovata	1992	25 000
24	Parchi e giardini storici	1993	4500
25	La storia del giardino	1993	4000
26	Mulierum ornamenta	1993	50 000
27	Terrecotte figurate	1994	480 000
28	Ercolano e Pompei illuminazione	1994	n.a.
29	Via religiosa nell'antica Pompei	1995	1018
30	Abitare sotto il vesuvio*	1996-97	665 966
31	Lucerne romane	1997	41 585
32	Picta Fragmenta*	1997	502 095
33	Gemme e ori di Pompei	1998	20 386
34	Pompei oltre la vita	1998	2128
	Total		4 600 878

* Multiple editions.

marketing orientation which often get artificially separated in the debate and in recent legislative proposals (cf. Bobbio, 1998a; Zan, 1999).

The recourse to a range of highly skilled professionals well connected with the academic world is worth mentioning; to what extent these skills represent shared, organizational rather than individual assets is another question.

Maintenance, conservation and restoration

Conservation and restoration at Pompeii is no easy task if we look at the numbers involved (over 1400 buildings, 20 000 square metres of frescoes, 3000 square metres of mosaics, for the Pompeii excavation area alone: a city in the true sense of the word) and the many years the site has lain exposed to the elements (weather and man).

Though one-third of the city is still buried, priority, as far as excavation work is concerned, has in recent years been given to restoration of the parts above ground. This policy was begun in part by the previous *Soprintendente* (*Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei*, 1994, p. 3) and has been developed further in recent years (Guzzo, 1996, 1997; *Un Piano per Pompei*, 1997).

Exceptions to the rule are few and far between: the continuation of excavations begun and then left off in the 1950s (the insulae of *via di Nocera* and *Villa dei Papiri*), the excavations at the *Terme Suburbane* of *Porta Marina* and above all the important excavations, still going on, at the *Casa dei Casti Amanti* (cf. Varone, 1988). Aside from these albeit important exceptions, conservation at Pompeii is more a problem of restoration than excavation (Figure 1)¹.

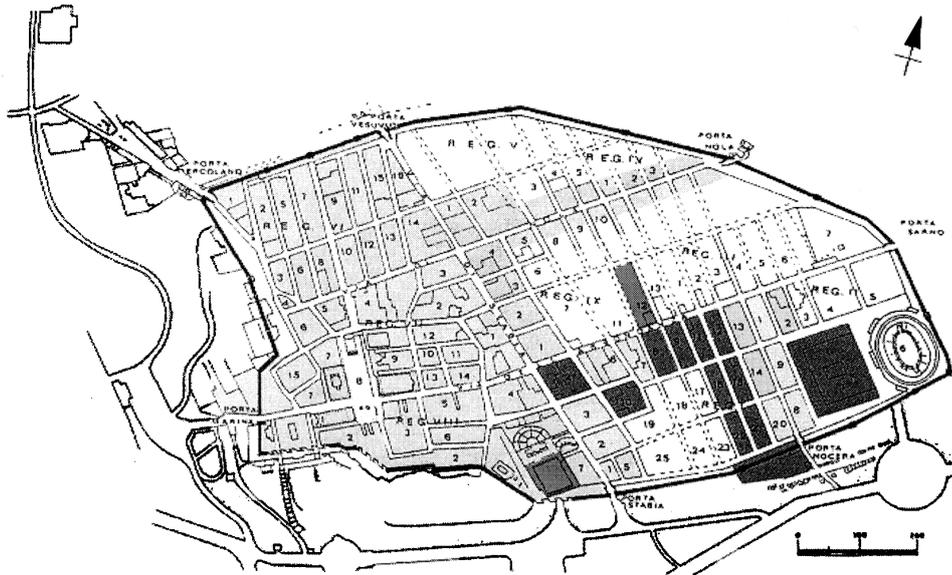
Apart from certain kinds of restoration work calling for highly skilled professionals of one sort or another (frescoes and mosaics), Pompeii requires an enormous amount of manual building work, even if a degree of cultural awareness in organizing, managing and executing the task is also required. To a certain extent, Pompeii can be considered an enormous building site, highly labour intensive, and like every urban building operation, restoration brings with it the need for later maintenance of what has been restored with important repercussions on the organization of the restoration work itself:

- (a) The ability to manage and oversee the individual sites where the restoration work is being carried out becomes crucial, often involving complex project management and surveying reports at an early stage. At the same time, the work of certain professional figures also becomes crucial, with their reports and drafts being of the essence if the manual work is to be done properly: archaeologists, architects, quantity surveyors.
- (b) Outsourcing the restoration work is of the essence unless the *Soprintendenza* were to be staffed by hundreds of workers.
- (c) The issue of the division of labour between those who do the restoration work and those who will do the maintenance raises its head. Indeed, the *Soprintendenza* only does a small, and routine, part of the restoration work (focusing on mosaics and frescoes), and most of that is usually minor maintenance work.

The key question that arises is how exactly to co-ordinate all the different elements, i.e. to come up with the concrete organizational modalities for externalizing the restoration work. And here the policy to date has been for a radical recourse to outsourcing via the granting of concessions: indeed, everything restored in the period 1984–1994 (mainly financed out of the Fio funds, with the exception of the excavations at the *Casa dei Casti Amanti*) was based on the logic of total delegation to an outside concessionaire. This ends up depriving the *Soprintendenza* of vital information and knowledge regarding the post-restoration phase, i.e. maintenance. Not being involved in the restoration, by way of some kind of “co-production”, huge problems arise in managing the restored monument. Being unaware of the conditions, materials and details of the work carried out makes it extremely difficult to

Figure 1. Map of interventions on Pompeii excavations

-  Excavation and restoration work FIO '83
-  Excavation and restoration work Law 449/87
-  Excavation and restoration work Fio '89
-  Excavation and restoration financed by ordinary funds
-  Areas with weed control programs and upkeep of garden areas



manage any kind of programmed maintenance (e.g. how often to apply the preserving agent that oxidizes every so many months, how often to test the cement between the bricks, etc.), as per the “maintenance manuals” called for by *Un Piano per Pompei* (p. 37).

Alongside this type of restoration work comes a second type of equally vital importance, even if less interesting from a professional point of view: i.e. disinfecting the monuments of weeds. This was an issue which after years of neglect for lack of resources occasioned the introduction of a wide-sweeping reclamation scheme in 1988, in the wake of the introduction of new techniques replacing manual cutting.

Table 3 Attendance

	1994		1995			1996			1997			Inflows mil
			Paying	Free	Total	Paying	Free	Total	Paying	Free	Total	
Pompeii	1 575 377	1 785 219	1 350 850	555 487	1 906 337	1 387 360	576 919	1 964 279	16 648			
Herculaneum	201 235	209 641	109 530	126 247	253 777	114 577	126 562	241 139	1374			
Oplontis	27 178	38 463	0	36 036	36 036	3525	28 478	32 003	14			
Antiq Stabia*	5059	3879	771	4095	4866			0				
Stabia	1173	6848		19 725	19 725	0	18 757	18 757				
Boscotereale	15 940	13 001	985	9635	10 620	1059	14 407	15 466	4			
Total	1 825 962	2 057 051	1 462 136	751 225	2 213 361	1 506 521	765 123	2 271 644	18 040			

Beyond possible controversies about the how and how much, one thing is clear: restoration work is the top priority in view of the uniqueness, complexity and intrinsic fragility of this unique archaeological site. Referring to the how, it could be argued that with all that has been restored at Pompeii over the years, the opportunity has been lost to capitalize on knowledge, especially technical, regarding restoration, as has been the case elsewhere (e.g. the *Opificio delle Pietre Dure* in Florence in the events that happened after the flood: cf. Narduzzo & Zan, 1999). However, on the “how much”, the extent of degradation, the state of repair and the dramatic nature of the current situation at Pompeii are factors known to everyone, continually reported in domestic and foreign newspapers (with a key role played by the publication of the white paper *Un Piano per Pompei—A Plan for Pompeii*, an aspect we will take up later)².

Access and the visitor

As is well known, Pompeii is the most visited “museum” in Italy with about 2 million visitors in 1997 and rising numbers in recent years (more than double the 860 000 visitors of 1982; +24% between 1994 and 1997: see Table 3). It is part of that small circle of museums where the problem is not so much a lack of visitors as excess demand. The visitors are mainly foreigners (60% in 1996) while those from Campania region account for some 7.5% (cf. research under way by Manente & Minghetti, 1997); the non-paying public, as per ministerial decree for state owned museums (under 18, over 60), is about one-third. Naturally enough, seasonality plays an important part with periods of relative calm between October and March; in actual fact, a large proportion of Italian visitors (38% in 1996) are school groups that flock to the site between April and May, which begs the question of why they cannot be moved to less congested periods.

The problems the visitor complains of are those that have been written about by newspapers the world over, chief among them being that a significant proportion of the monuments are closed to visitors: “In 1956 therefore Mauri described as visitable, among domus and villas, 64 buildings. Only 16 of these are today accessible” (*Un Piano per Pompei*, 1997, 32). However, alongside this problem there is a series of others: the crush of people trying to get to see the areas open to view,

the filth, the stray dogs roaming round dirtying the sites, the lack of professionalism of some of the guides (who, though independent operators, tend to be perceived as part of the package by the visitor), the poor quality facilities for the visitor etc (cf. *Newsweek*, 1997; Oriani, 1996). Particularly biting, and bitter, is the story of Maurizio Bettini's visit (1998), the subtitles of which sum up well the extremely critical content. "Visit to the city of excavations overwhelmed by degradation and neglect. Its sickness is most serious. It is intellectual penury. Incomprehensible captions and pointless cigarettes; everywhere idle custodians and guides spouting a sea of banal vulgarities"³.

However, what emerges from Table 3 is another feature characterizing the *Soprintendenza* at Pompeii, i.e. the asymmetry and differentiation between the various archaeological sites in terms of access (if until now we have spoken generically of Pompeii, lumping the main site with all the rest, from now on we will try and distinguish between Pompeii as a whole, Pompeii excavations and the other individual archaeological sites). Only Herculaneum manages to arouse a degree of interest in the visitor, while all the rest seems to go unappreciated by the visitors. The prevalence of Italian visitors at these sites is probably the result of an attempt by the *Soprintendenza* to reroute the student traffic towards less crowded areas (in effect, the almost all non-paying entrants bear out this hypothesis).

Work is now being done to address these issues by coming up with customer-oriented solutions. A first important initiative is one aimed at developing the educational services on offer to schools: this will be run by outside professionals with proven track records, offering guided assistance and developing *ad hoc* teaching aids while trying to stagger visits over time (the aim is to cater for about 300 000 students in 1998). Attempts are also being made to offer guided visits for the ordinary visitor, though they have met with resistance from independent guides. As regards Pompeii excavations, and in line with the indications of *Un Piano per Pompei*, a series of preferential or thematic itineraries are under study: on the one hand, this will add value to the visits (a leaflet is being studied to give to all visitors at the entrance) and, on the other, it will channel the tourist flows into the different areas, so as to ease pressure and allow a more systematic approach to maintenance work. In this direction a "green tour" outside the walls was begun in May 1998. Finally, further measures are being studied to make the sites more user friendly (new sign posts, catering services, etc.), while recently a new well stocked bookshop and audio-guide service were launched.

The management process: multidimensional activities and territorial differentiation

This brief report points up three features characterizing the management process of Pompeii:

- (i) the close tie between different activities that can be singled out only analytically (preservation, stewardship, research, restoration–maintenance, access and visitors) but which play a synergetic role in the production and diffusion of idiosyncratic knowledge (on Pompeii as such);

- (ii) the difficult relationship between conservation and consumption (and in general the question of customer relations) finds an interesting balance in the idea of “sustainable consumption” introduced by *Un Piano per Pompei*. From an ecological point of view, the limited “natural resources”, in terms of excavation sites, are steadily eroded by visitors. Given the limited possibility of reproduction (via caring processes and restorations), consumption (in terms of number of visitors and their impact) has to be modelled accordingly;
- (iii) the extent of territorial differentiation, which is a further element increasing the complexity of the whole management process, both as regards the supply side and the demand side. If Pompeii excavation is something the consumer can clearly identify, complete with all its specific problems (too many visitors, degradation and the need for maintenance), all the rest is a bit of a haze, largely unknown to and unperceived by the visitor. Different organizational dynamics seem to apply, calling for resources and attention from the centre, from a preservation and stewarding point of view, and minimal tourist flows.

If the above describes the nature of the organizational complexity characterizing Pompeii as an entity, it is then interesting to investigate how current organizational practices and routines in the managing of human and financial resources can cope with such complexity.

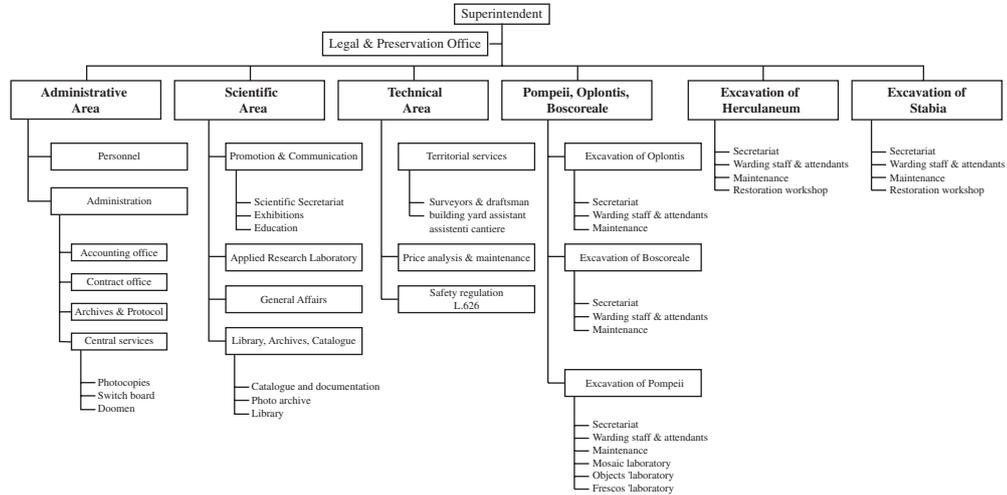
Organizational Structure and Personnel: an Archaic Organization

Focusing in this section on human resource management, the following aspects will be taken into account: the organizational structure; personnel and the operating mechanisms for managing staff as well as other operating mechanisms regarding technical work.

The organizational structure

Within the powers of the Prime Ministerial decree of 8 January 1997, the *Ministero dei Beni Culturali e Ambientali* (Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Environment) mapped out the staffing plan for the whole Ministry and, within this overall framework, the *Soprintendenza di Pompei*. On the basis of this general map and the positions actually carved out, it is possible to arrive at the organizational chart of the *Soprintendenza*. The “picture”—as it was called by a trade union representative—was not however available and reconstructing it required a lot of hard work and serious thought in interpreting documents and oral information that did not always square (see Figure 2 for a simplified reconstruction).

The *Soprintendenza* presents a semi-divisional structure (Figure 2), with the part pertaining to the excavations organized in three divisions: the Pompeii excavations (including the Boscoreale and Oplontis digs), the Herculaneum excavations and the Stabia excavations. A fourth division also exists in the shape of the *Soprintendenza* headquarters.

Figure 2. The organizational chart of the *Soprintendenza* (before the autonomy)

As far as the excavations are concerned, all five sites have a director, secretariat and security/maintenance/curator services; at the three biggest sites (Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabia) there is also a restoration laboratory. Albeit to different degrees, similar activities are carried out at all five sites (preservation, research, maintenance and consumption). The work requires a series of professional figures, the chief ones among which are: (a) the archaeologist in charge of the site, whose responsibilities include preservation, excavation and research work and, very often, valuation reports and management of restoration work tendered to outside companies; (b) the assistants who help the archaeologists in their preservation work (e.g. being present during excavations by private individuals whenever possible discoveries are expected) and the archaeologists and architects in their on-site field work, and (c) the manual labouring staff for everyday and emergency maintenance, including, at times, skilled workers; the guards who work shifts day and night and often take it in turns to man the ticket offices.

Obviously, the Pompeii excavation is the most complex not only because of the size of the operation (preservation, restoration/maintenance, visitors, etc.) but also because of the more complicated organizational structure (three separate restoration laboratories, frescoes and mosaics) and the fact that it acts as a centralized service facility for the different excavation sites (e.g. restoration of objects).

The *Soprintendenza* headquarters (i.e. all that which does not immediately concern the running of the archaeological sites) is in reality divided into three main areas:

administrative, scientific and technical and—as part of the *Soprintendente's* staff—the legal and preservation office.

The *administrative area* deals with personnel and accounting, concerning the aspects delegated the *Soprintendenza* by the Ministry—extremely limited in their professional content but carrying a great deal of responsibility. Other administrative

and legal tasks are also carried out (contracts and acquisitions, archives and protocol), and central services of a general nature (switch board, doormen, photocopiers, etc.).

The *scientific area* is in turn made up of four units:

- one that looks after the library, archives, catalogue and documentation;
- one that deals with promotion and communication (organizing exhibitions, teaching and educational material);
- a third comprising the Laboratory of Applied Research in Paleobotanics and
- a fourth called general affairs, which in reality takes care of a whole range of issues of the utmost importance. These include an internal branch for research (from the carrying out of excavation work at the *Casa dei Casti Amanti*; to help in compiling the *corpus scriptonum latinorum*; and organizing the exhibitions), coordination of the planned activities of the entire *Soprintendenza* and relations with the Ministry and other institutions as well as planning partnership ventures for the project of renewing Pompeii.

The *technical area* deals mainly with the managing of restoration work (arranging for the necessary valuation reports/estimates in cases when the work is outsourced), as well as monitoring and managing the building work, and checking the final result, if outsourced, through its own group of architects, specialized in the different areas of excavation. It also helps the archaeologists in their work as regards both stewardship and execution of work by providing quantity surveyors, assistants and sometimes even designers. It finally deals with pricing in the complicated procedures governing quotes and estimates and also looks after the testing of materials purchased and prevention issues.

The impression one obtains from talking to people in the field is that there is a good deal of confusion about the extremely complex web of functions and duties at play, where the “who does what” is not clearly understood. As often happens in the public sector in Italy, the focus is more on hierarchy and careers than on tasks and responsibility⁴.

On the other hand, drawing on the Ministry organizational chart, job contents tend to be narrowly defined (e.g. one finds four employees devoted to making photocopies). This is likely to generate waste, but also tends to lead to a lack of flexibility, especially in a situation of scarce resources⁵. At the same time, critical positions are understaffed (general affairs), if not missing (a programming body for scheduling restoration work and setting priorities).

Indeed, despite the leadership style of the individual *Soprintendente*, this organizational form tends to be highly monocratic, in its turn part of a pyramidal hierarchy (the Ministry). Delegation processes are minimal, most of the decisions having to be made by the *Soprintendente* (the only person with powers of signature).

Personnel

If we look at the labour force from a quantitative point of view, what is striking is its sheer size (difficult to pin down because of all the transfers, leavers, etc.):

Table 4 Personnel according to professional background and sites

Table 6a Professional background of employees							
Area	<i>Soprintendenza</i> headquarters	Pompeii excavation	Herculaneum	Stabia	Oplontis	Boscoreale	Total
Archaeologist, architects and historians	9	1	1	2	2	1	16
Other technical positions	20	18	9	8	4	2	61
Indirect & administrative staff	71	17	14	8	5	9	124
Warding staff	13	189	61	74	48	38	423
Manual workers	6	54	14	6	6	1	87
Total	119	279	99	98	65	51	711

Table 6b The composition of *Soprintendenza* headquarters

	Administrative area	Scientific area	Technical area	Legal & preservation	<i>Soprintendenza</i> headquarters
Archaeologist, architects and historians	0	4	3	0	7
Other technical positions	0	7	16	1	24
Indirect & administrative staff	52	19	10	5	86
Warding staff	4	0	0	0	4
Manual workers	0	2	0	0	2
Total	56	32	29	6	123

overall 711 people work at the *Soprintendenza di Pompeii* (cf. Table 4a with staff classified by profession during 1997). Not included in this count are the significant “Gepi resources” (about 90 workers, devoted to what is called “useful social work”, who come from the unemployed list) in view of their controversial contribution from a management point of view.

In terms of composition three features stand out:

- (a) The marked prevalence of security-warding staff (423), leaving just 288 workers for all the rest.
- (b) Of these, 87 are manual labourers, which means that the best they can do given the sheer size of the archaeological excavations of the *Soprintendenza* is minor maintenance work and emergency management. This in turn means that much of the restoration work must be outsourced.
- (c) There is a significant number of “administrative and auxiliary” staff (124 employees including 34 typists in an era of information technology!, as well as 18 assistants and three chauffeurs), while the technical staff totals 77. The number of professionals, essential for an archaeological site (archaeologists, art historians and architects), are very few, 16 in all, while librarians are plentiful (two directors and nine assistants). There are, in other words, too many

employees without the right skills, and indirect staff whose skills are not those typical of an archaeological site.

But further data desegregation is called for in order to distinguish those who work at the operative sites (the excavations) from those of the *Soprintendenza* headquarters. From this point of view what is striking is the size of the staff involved in managing the peripheral sites (including guards and other personnel: 189 + 90 at the Pompeii excavations; 61 + 38 at Herculaneum; 74 + 24 at Stabia; 48 + 17 at Oplontis; 38 + 13 at Boscoreale, for a total of 592 employees). This suggests that however different the various sites are on the demand side (conditions of access and visitors), they are very similar on the supply side (current operations for preservation, maintenance, etc.): there are, in other words, serious diseconomies of scale (e.g. in terms of night-time security) as shown by the size of the warding staff at Herculaneum (a much richer area in the number of monuments and bigger) versus Stabia, Oplontis or Boscoreale.

The doubt remains whether or not these undoubted diseconomies (as it were intrinsic) are not accentuated by other factors connected with the way the work is organized. As far as stewardship and security are concerned, the specially constituted commission between the *Soprintendente* representatives and trade unions (*Commissione Paritetica*) does not seem to have made much impact on the previous situation. Apart from a banding together of the security staff in Pompeii (previously split between the *Ufficio Soprintendenza* and Pompeii excavations), the numbers of employees have remained the same in the different areas. As far as the job-type structure in the peripheral sites is concerned, what seems to prevail is a logic that simply replicates the central model: on a smaller scale but with marked diseconomies (54 manual workers at Pompeii, 14 at Herculaneum, six at Oplontis, six at Stabia, one at Boscoreale) and a division of labour that at times does not respond to actual needs and priorities set by the *Soprintendente*. For example there was no carpenter in Pompeii excavations, while there were two carpenters at Herculaneum, where the woodwork shop was closed: a complex series of negotiations with the trade union was needed to allow one of the two carpenters to be moved to Pompeii—while the other still remains at Herculaneum where the woodwork shop is closed, doing basically nothing⁶.

As regards the *Soprintendenza* headquarters (cf. Table 4b, with a few minor changes—124 instead of the 119 in Table 4a—due to different source) a few words can be said about the distribution of staff in the three areas previously mentioned: 56 people work in the administrative area, 32 in the scientific area and 29 in the technical area as well as six employees who work for the Preservation Service under the *Soprintendente*. Once again the impression is that a large part of the staff does not have the specific professional skills a site like Pompeii needs, at least in relative terms (more detailed investigations will be necessary to verify the size of the various offices in absolute terms): if there are 27 typists in the *Ufficio Soprintendenza*, staff with administrative background are prevalent in the scientific area and are well represented in the technical area. This impression becomes stronger when one remembers that the *Soprintendenza*, in relation to the organization of the Ministry, is not directly involved in administration of the staff (except for holidays and days

off). As far as accounting is concerned (see below) the *Soprintendenza* to date has had to prepare only very “banal” accounting reports, regarding merely the ordinary funding of the *Soprintendenza* to the tune of 5 billion lire a year (i.e. an average of 100 million accounted per employee).

What is more, the 32 employees in the scientific area (leaving to one side the question of whether they are too many or too few) are badly distributed, with as many as seven employees in the library plus the director (for a library of 10 000 volumes, which works out at an average of 1000 volumes per head), versus eight employees dealing with promotion and communication (especially exhibitions and schools, with very little time to look after relations with the “normal” customer), and one employee plus secretary to deal with general affairs.

Again leaving aside any judgment on the actual size of the technical area, it is generally accepted that there is a lack of proper “operative” staff (architects, quantity surveyors, and assistants) in relation to the mass of work and building the *Soprintendenza di Pompeii* needs (and will increasingly have) to manage. In most cases recourse is had to outside companies, which involves additional work by way of valuation reports progress reports, building site controls etc.

Operating mechanisms

If we try to analyse the operating mechanisms of the *Soprintendenza* and, more especially, those regarding personnel, we find all the hallmarks of the Ministry organization whose reform has been under discussion for years (cf. Cammelli, 1996; Luther, 1997; more generally on the intrinsic inability of managing “differentiation” within Italian bureaucracy, see Piga, 1985). Not only does the Ministry map out the staff arrangements for the *Soprintendenza* and decide on the various tasks and roles of its employees (in an extremely atomized and rigid way); it also hires (through public examinations), administers (pay wages and looks after contributions and pensions) and directly manages (career developments and so-called reward/punishment systems) the employees of the *Soprintendenza*, which in effect is a mere appendage of the Ministry.

Rather than a systematic description of ministerial operating mechanisms, it will suffice here to describe some of the awkward situations they tend to produce at Pompeii.

- (a) *Office hours and efficiency.* According to the ministerial provisions, employees can organize their 36 hours per week in different ways: working mornings and afternoons (two three-hour afternoons and five six-hour mornings, or a three-hour afternoon and five mornings of six hours and 45 minutes), or a continuous schedule (seven hours and 12 minutes for five days with a facultative half hour for lunch). In any case, the employee can choose to start work at 7:30 a.m., or 8:00 or 8:30. Being an individual choice this kind of time scheduling can, in such a complex organism as the *Soprintendenza* of Pompeii, lead to a state of the utmost confusion with enormous problems of staff coordination (“You never know who is there”) as well as problems checking on attendance, but where the situation borders on the ridiculous is in the case of the workers at Pompeii excavation, where the work is organized in teams but the choice

Table 5 An example of sick-leave procedure

Date	Notification from/to	Content
04.9.95	Doctor to employee	Medical visit, diagnosis: miscarriage, 10 days sick leave
16.9.95	Employee to <i>Soprintendenza</i>	Notification absence from work, attaching certificate
16.9.95	<i>Soprintendenza</i> to ASL Na 5	Phonogram official medical check request
18.9.95	<i>Soprintendenza</i> to ASL Na 5	Confirmation official medical check request
25.9.95	Archaeologist to <i>Soprintendenza</i>	Notification work restarted
06.3.96	<i>Soprintendenza</i> to ASL Na 5	Soliciting of medical examiner report
10.6.97	ASL Na5 to <i>Soprintendenza</i>	Notification medical check not carried out due to too many requests
25.9.97	Ministry	Decree establishing the employee was off for sickness and has right to sick pay for those days, excluding accessory pay
20.2.98	<i>Soprintendenza</i> to Archaeologist	Notification that sick leave has been granted to the employee with request latter be informed

of working schedule lies with the individual. It might well happen that the team leader opts for the long time schedule while some workers go for two morning and afternoon schedules per week, others for one, some starting at 7:30 a.m., some at 8:00 a.m. Given all the permutations, the team will be at full strength for a period of time far less than 36 hours, with obvious repercussions on efficiency. Worse still, the whole situation is aggravated by the logistical structure of Pompeii, a city in its own right that one can get around only on foot: workers must first go to the changing rooms; if their work is some distance away from the place they clock in at in the morning and at lunch, they sometimes have to cover two, three or even more kilometres. All this means that in the one hour and 15 minutes in the afternoon it is impossible to achieve anything: the worker leaves his post at 12:30 and is unable to get back, all of which means a “useful” working week of around 20–22 hours. The situation in other cases (for example restoration) is beset by the same problem, even in the case of the best motivated employee.

- (b) *Sick leave procedure.* A reconstruction of the following sick-leave procedure gives a good idea of the complexity of the centralized administrative machine at the Ministry. The example is a textbook case: it regards a female archaeologist in charge of one of the excavation offices, seen as trustworthy more than reliable, and the reasons for sick leave were very serious—a miscarriage. Table 5 reports all the documents that this event—whose effects resolved after the ten days leave prescribed—involved. It is best not to even think about the costs of all the paperwork, totally useless in the case in question, and irksome for motivated personnel who are, however, forced to respect the bureaucratic rules.
- (c) *A forced hiring.* At the end of the six-month trial period the *Soprintendente* was not happy with a newly hired employee and asked for the trial period to

be repeated, at the end of which he presented a negative report to the Ministry. However, the Ministry took seven months to process the paperwork and in the end the employee took his case to the labour tribunal (TAR), winning his case and being reinstated.

- (d) *Obstructing work.* If part of the archaeologist's job is research then the Ministry seems to show little understanding if one considers that: the Pompeii archaeologists are not allowed to use the Naples library without special permits; going to a conference means lodging an application with the general headquarters of the Ministry itself (causing considerable frustration throughout the ministry); one's scientific production is not even taken into account let alone rewarded.

The logic of the organizational model

The organization of the *Soprintendenza* (pre-autonomy) is beset by a series of problems, which represent in their turn a serious challenge for any new discourse on the management of such a site: unclear description of job content, but exasperating formal details; prevalence of workers with relatively modest skills; lack in absolute terms of skilled professionals; poor information technology skills; inefficiency; suppression of key positions.

But a word of warning: in speaking of inefficiency I do not wish to imply the existence of any form of absenteeism or an "unwillingness to work"; productivity is above all a result of how work is organized and what kind of managerial and administrative procedures are set in place. All of which in this case—it must be said—would make even the most motivated of employees unproductive (e.g. shortage of computers, usually out of date in any case; working hours and clocking on procedures described above; all the paper work required of the *Soprintendenza* administration by the accounting rules of the Ministry and the State Auditing Court, etc., including a whole mass of photocopies as we shall see later).

However, in addition to inefficiency and waste, what is particularly dangerous in this organizational setup is the inability to cope with critical functions characterizing this activity. On the one hand, the ability to develop and amass technological knowledge regarding restoration is undermined. On the other, were Pompeii to win generous funding in the future, the serious bottle-neck represented by understaffing as regards surveyors, architects and archaeologists would make it difficult to coordinate and control outsourced projects (or it is likely to reduce the number of outsourced project capable to be processed).

If these are the consequences, the reasons are to be found in the nature of the decision-making processes with regard to organizational structure, personnel and organization of labour, with an explosive mix of three aggravating causes: (a) the centralist "ministerial" approach to organization—in the past subject to different kinds of lobbying pressure and certainly distant from the technical and everyday problems that the operative "technology" of an archaeological site raises; (b) the corporative attitude of the trade unions; and (c) the frequent absence of any governance logic at the local *Soprintendenza* level (in the worst of cases, as in the past, exposed to a series of "local pressures", often with legal repercussions; in the

best of cases, suffering from the lack of managerial knowledge of archaeologists and professionals—and here reflecting in large part the debate on the management problems facing museums the world over)⁷.

Aside from the “accidents of history”, this state of affairs is caught between three types of organizational logic and rationale: the political logic (including different levels of ministerial bureaucracy; local politics, especially in the light of the social tensions the whole area faces, with Pompeii “the biggest factory in Campania”; trade union organizations in an economically depressed area); the professional logic (as often occurs in professional contexts, more oriented towards technical rather than “managerial” aspects), and the management logic as a field of knowledge (the expertise of a methodology for analysing, planning and running organizations of a general, and not just archaeological, scope, necessary for “getting things done”). In the context of the “normal” *Soprintendenza*, it is this third dimension that tends to lose out, pointing up the crucial importance of an *autonomous Soprintendenza* and the creation of an empowered administrative director at the head of the organization, cooperating closely with the *Soprintendente*, as the essence of new discourses about managing Pompeii.

Financial Resources and Accounting

Before looking at the innovations of the new “autonomous” institutional form, it is worth considering the mechanisms of resource allocation, budgeting and financial reporting that—historically—have characterized the *Soprintendenza*. It is here, more than elsewhere, that the archaic, markedly pre-modern, nature of this institutional and organizational form emerges, and where innovations can be of great impact in terms of managerial processes and accountability discourses.

Administrative procedure and the accounting system

Within the framework of the more general ministerial budgeting process, the *Soprintendenza* is asked to prepare a three-year spending plan in July on the basis of the work it intends to undertake and general running costs; the first year represents the resources that can effectively be earmarked for the coming budget year. The request is contained within a limited number of highly aggregated expense items (*capitoli di spesa*), which are part of the overall spending plan of the Ministry, while some additional items classified generally as accessory staff spending—e.g. quarterly expenses, productivity funds, meal tickets, etc.—are negotiated centrally⁸.

In December, in line with the requests made by the different regional bodies (the various regional *Soprintendenze*—of Artistic and Archaeological Heritage, etc.—up and down the country) and the resources available, the Ministry issues a decree allocating the overall amounts to the various expense items. At the same time, details are given on the actual funding granted the single *Soprintendenza*, including Pompeii—the spending plan, with the amounts of money earmarked for the various expense items for different projects, usually granting a part of the amount requested. In this way the *Soprintendenza* can carry out its work of organizing tender bids,

purchasing materials needed, etc. It should be noted that funding looks at both qualitative and quantitative aspects of expenditure requests: if within the single items money can be spent differently to meet emergencies, no such transfer is possible across items, making the whole procedure very rigid. Except for small amounts that can be managed via cash withdrawal after setting up the appropriate liquid fund, payments are normally made via an account at the Bank of Italy, which, behind the order for invoice payment issued by the *Soprintendente*, sees to payment, forwarding the documents to the Regional Accountant of the Ministry and, periodically, to the *Soprintendenza*.

Half-yearly reporting is a peculiar feature of this system, whereby the *Soprintendenza* sends the Regional State Accounting Office a list of the different expense items with details on the individual orders for payment and cash transfers (that can be seen from Bank of Italy statements regarding payments made), enclosing all relative documents (invoices, etc.). All this is done distinguishing carefully (with replication of the same type of information) between half-yearly expenses and residual expenses within the half-year. A copy of all the documentation is then sent to the Central Accounting Service of the Ministry and to the Regional Delegation of the state Auditing Court (for a random control).

Analysis of actual fund allocations (about 5 billion lira: see Table 6b) points up the decidedly meagre amount of ordinary funding if one bears in mind the complexity of the *Soprintendenza* activities. Of the funding granted for 1997, little more than half went on excavation and restoration work (Chapters 8005 and 2035). This is a paltry amount, that is out of all proportion to the sheer size of the assets in question (both Pompeii excavations and other sites of the *Soprintendenza*) and the conservation problems involved, making recourse to extraordinary funding *de rigueur*. Furthermore, the money spent on actual running costs (2034) tends to create problems, since funding soon runs out once the almost 500 million lire set aside for cleaning is spent, leaving a paltry amount compared with what is really needed. It is again interesting to note the steady and marked cut-back in funding over time (–19% from 1994 to 1997).

An archaic, pre-modern system

The limits of such a system have been pointed up on many occasions but its actual complexity, criticized on many occasions, is surprising (the grinding bureaucracy; the difficulty in managing exceptional and unexpected events, inevitable in situations of uncertainty; the centralism that weighs on the whole administrative procedure).

Yet, from a managerial point of view, and with Pompeii in particular in mind, there is worse: the complete lack of relevance of the system from whatever angle it is viewed (either from top down or bottom up) and the possibility of perverse effects on managing mechanisms.

- (a) Surprising, above all, is the total lack of any kind of local reporting. Simply put, the *Soprintendenza* does not even exist as a “cost centre”; at this level money is simply spent and then entered in the Ministry accounting system. If a modern accounting relationship between “the agent and the principal” requires provisions for local reporting with auditing of original documents by a centre

Table 6 Ordinary funding of the *Soprintendenza* (Million lira)
Table 8a Requests

%	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
203.4	1170	1270	2120	1000	2762
203.5	3972.7	4533	6260.9	1000.9	1621.8
204.7			100	100	100
800.5	4160	3990	7056	5723.2	3003
801.9	1050	1050	1900	1070	1000
Total	10352.7	10843	17436.9	8894.1	8486.8

Table 8b Allocations

%	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
203.4	1170	1200	900	950	1040
203.5	1077.7	1110	1046.9	675.9	967.8
204.7		60	60	60	60
800.5	2880	3010	2466	2538.1	1013
801.9	1050	850	830	800	500
Total	6177.7	6230	5302.9	5024	3580.8

Table 8c Ratio allocations/requests

%	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
203.4	100	94.5	42.5	95	37.7
203.5	27.1	24.5	16.7	67.5	59.7
204.7			60	60	60
800.5	69.2	75.4	34.9	44.3	33.7
801.9	100	81	43.7	74.8	50
Total	59.7	57.5	30.4	56.5	42.2

2034 overheads; 2035 costs for custody, maintenance, caring;
 2047 telephone; 8005 restoration; 8019 restructuring, safety, etc.

which “consolidates” the activities carried out in the peripheral centres, here the opposite is the case: there is no local reporting whatsoever (with a list that merely recapitulates the totals per item, without even adding them up) and original documents and copies are forwarded to the centre (an operation that involves the use of an unusual reporting technology: a truck with three workers on board transports a huge load of documents and photocopies to the three end centres). Put in other terms, there is no modern form of any kind of financial accountability for the *Soprintendenza*, nor is the responsibility for its overall running allocated to anybody.

- (b) Pursuing the matter further, another problem is the extreme difficulty in figuring out how much is spent on Pompeii. In particular, the overall amount spent on personnel is difficult to estimate and “unknown” to our interlocutors in Pompeii (and even to the Ministry), the direct result of a centralized management of

workforce that are lumped all together in the books of the Ministry. To give an idea of the size of the problem, if the overall yearly budget in recent years is around 5–6 billion per year, personnel costs should not be far short of 40–50 billion lire for a total of 711 employees.

- (c) From an organizational point of view—the information itself missing—this means there is no accountability (and no one responsible) for labour costs, which in turn means, given the weight of staff costs, no one answers for the overall volume of resources absorbed by the *Soprintendenza* of Pompeii.
- (d) Furthermore, the administrative procedure deals with only a small part of the resources, given that extraordinary items are not part of normal procedure: the various billions of lire dispensed by way of extraordinary funds (Fio '83, '89 and others) do not appear directly on any financial statement (Ministry and/or *Soprintendenza*). To understand what is ordinary and extraordinary in Pompeii is not simple and the lack of any overall reporting is something that gives rise to further difficulty in understanding the inner economy of Pompeii.
- (e) This system is then, it would appear, characterized by different forms of irrelevance. Even in the most “dirigiste” version imaginable, the Ministry would have a job working out how much is spent in Pompeii for purposes of communications (to underline efforts made and/or promote plans to raise further funding) or decision making (how much to spend on the sites), but the system proves to be more irrelevant when one tries to posit some kind of “managerial” control over the operations of the *Soprintendenza*: given the complexity of operations, setting out budgetary goals for the organization as a whole would undoubtedly be more useful than the ritual of false negotiation between the *Soprintendenza* and the Ministry in a situation where the centre (the Ministry) does not have the knowledge to examine the requests of the periphery (the *Soprintendenza*) and operations. Finally, it is irrelevant if a process of delegation within the organization would have to take place.
- (f) However, a last and unexpected twist is that all this is not just useless but highly damaging too because of the way it distorts the budgeting process. Any real planning—long term as well as short—is impossible, inflating management costs and reducing efficiency via the effect of fragmentation and pulverization of intervention requests.

Relevance lost and perverse effects: the fragmentation of work

One of the unintended effects of the Ministry's allocation of funds is that it makes any attempt at planning extremely difficult even with the limited resources of ordinary funds. It is interesting to look at how the system of request and authorization of expenditure works within the *Soprintendenza* and what effects it produces.

The archaeologists at the different sites present a list of interventions they deem opportune. There then arises the thorny problem of compatibility, i.e. prioritizing what has been requested to the Ministry, since it is well known that funding will not be available over and above a certain amount and that only certain projects will

be financed⁹. This process of scaling back to compatible amounts can at times be draconian; however, in view of the heavy responsibility that may be assumed from the professional point of view, actually having asked for funding can be a way of making sure all bases have been covered (e.g. if a wall collapses, the functionary can always prove that the request was made and then not financed by the powers that be). Even after having cut back, the chances of a request being accepted are not that great (Table 6c)—between 30% and 60% in recent years, with particular impact on the item under discussion here, item 8005 (44% in 1997 and falling), despite a move towards a greater degree of self-regulation and a paring down of the requests made since 1997 (Table 6a).

At a general level, all of this tends to undermine the very sense of any planning process and the game of budgeting practices. In more detail, the paucity of ministerial funds available each year for maintenance, excavation and restoration work throws up the following main problems (Table 7 reports a few examples in this regard).

- (a) The three-year plan often undergoes extensive changes from one three-year period to another since extraordinary events must take precedence and are given absolute priority over what is in the plan. In 1997, for example, the amount earmarked for a particular intervention in the 1995–96–97 plan was foregone so that the amount could instead be used for work that was deemed more urgent. This, on the one hand, may be a good sign of flexibility, showing a capacity to tailor plans to needs, but it does mean many problems are left unresolved with jobs originally seen as necessary left to one side.
- (b) Work which is not given top priority (planned priority or unexpected emergencies) risks being neglected for years even if objectively important and of real interest.
- (c) There is some excavation and/or restoration work that lasts for many years, even more than a decade (see the *Casa dei Casti Amanti*). This comes about because the overall amount set aside in the budget of the *Soprintendenza* for excavation, maintenance and restoration work must be used to cover all eventual necessities, with the result that each single intervention is spread over several years. In such a way the overall funding for a year is split up into several small, sub-optimized projects.
- (d) Quite apart from this dispersion in time and the added complication of having a whole series of jobs that need to be done at the same time, the above mentioned fragmentation means that there is an explosion of valuation reports to be taken care of, given that most of this work will be contracted out. Such an approach gives rise to diseconomies of scale, also resulting in a saturation of scarce professional skills (the surveying work). A perfect example is once again the excavations at the *Casa dei Casti Amanti*, a clearly long-term project from the very beginning. In order to be able to secure funding without compromising other equally urgent jobs, the project was split up into 12 separate lots from 1985 to the present day (Table 8a), each of

Table 7 Examples of programming on item 8005

	Type	Request	Assignment	
				<i>Villa di Diomede: extraordinary maintenance, roofing and structure</i>
1996	s	270	270	The request was not re-presented in 1997 to make way for more urgent work.
1997	p	300		It was re-proposed in 1998 with completion in 1999 (question a in text).
1998	c	300		What also emerges is how each intervention at a single archeological site is split over several years. In fact, the available financial resources are not enough to complete it in one year, unless all the budget assigned on item 8005 for a single job is used (question c)
1997		0		Finally, the 1998 amount does not match the requested amount in the 1997–98–99 plan to the extent that a reduction was necessary to make room for further interventions.
1998	p	300	240	
1999	c	300		
<hr/>				
	Type	Request	Assignment	Restoration of mosaics Casa del Marinaio at Pompeii
1994	s	80	0	
1995	c	90	0	This intervention has always been sidelined, never reaching the priority status necessary to obtain funding (problem b)
1996				
1996	s	150	0	
1997	c	200	0	
1998				

Table 7—continued

Roofing restoration	Type	Request	Assignment	Plastering restoration	Type	Request	Assignment	Boscoreale–Villa Regina
1994	s	200	200	1996	s	150	no	At the <i>Villa Regina</i> , requests were made in the 1994-1996 plan for restoration of the roofing. Then in 1996 it turned out that replastering work was more urgent, and so this intervention took precedence over roofing, which was set aside, only to be requested again in 1998 for completion. As regards assignment, the funding requested for plastering in 1996 was not granted and would be re-proposed with a variation on overall expenditure and dispensed in 1997. In 1998 work to finish roofing was requested and not granted.
1995	p	200	200	1997	c	150		
1996	c	200	no	1998		0		
1998	c	200	no	1997	c	150	150	
1999		0		1998		0		
2000		0		1999		0		
<hr/>								
excavation and restoration	Type <th>Request</th> <th>Assignment</th> <th>Type</th> <th>Request</th> <th>Assignment</th> <th>Pompeii Excavation-<i>Insula IX-12</i></th>	Request	Assignment	Type	Request	Assignment	Pompeii Excavation- <i>Insula IX-12</i>	
1995	s	200	200				As can be seen from the prospectus, a first excavation and restoration intervention was requested in 1995. In the 1996-98 plan only restoration interventions were requested, financed only in 1996. In 1997, funding for excavation work was requested and given, while funds for restoration work were requested but not given. Subsequently no requests were presented for this site.	
1996		?						
1997		?						
1996	p	180	180	Restoration	Excavation			
1997	p	100	no					
1998	c	100	no					
1997	p	150	no		c	150	150	
1998	p	200	no					
1999	c	300						
1998		0						
1999		0						
2000		0						

s: start of work; p: prosecution of work; c: completion of work.

modest outlay and each requiring administrative processing (Table 8b reports lots V and X by way of example). One can imagine what all this means in terms of organization and how all this duplication of paper work leads to an uneconomical ballooning of valuation reports and administrative/managerial work. In another institutional context, it might have been possible to opt for a single solution with administrative and managerial work equal to just one of the 12 lots, all of which also involves an incredible lengthening of the overall timeframe, well above the actual time needed to complete the job (seven out of 25 months in the case of lot V, 15 out of 37 for lot X).

Paradoxically, the procedures of ministerial planning give rise to patterns of behaviour that encourage precariousness, discontinuity and fragmentation.

Extraordinary funding as routine

On top of ordinary funding, there are also extraordinary resources for excavation and restoration work that are used so frequently that one can talk about a routine use of extraordinary funds. Of particular note here are the Fio '83 and Fio '89 funds (literally *Fondi incremento occupazione*, employment development funds) as well as a range of other minor funds (Law 64/86, Funds 449/87, Tourism Funds and private financing).

In June 1984, the CIPE (a governmental body) earmarked 35 billion lire of the so-called If 1983 funds for work at Pompeii. The work, originally planned to end in June 1986, was completed in June 1988, with some of the funds directly managed (6.6 billion) but most in the hands of concessionaires (28.4). The actual granting of the concession for carrying out the work was agreed on between the Ministry for Cultural and Environmental Affairs and a public company, Infrasad Progetti, part of the IRI-Italstat group. The *Soprintendenza* was involved in every decision touching on cultural policy, operative measures and management/control of the work. A central auditing commission, the *Commissione di Alta Vigilanza*, was consulted on cultural, administrative, scientific and technical policy. Apart from execution of the work, the concessionaire did some of the planning, managed the actual work and supplied services and skills. As the data show, at this stage there was more excavation work than restoration (even if this is difficult to assess). A publication specially issued by the *Soprintendenza (Progetto Pompei primo stralcio—un bilancio, 1994)* comments on the overall approach and major results of the Fio '83 funding; from a managerial point of view; however, the data reported here amount to little more than a recapitulation of the interventions described in Table 9.

More complex and controversial (from a legal angle too) is the debate surrounding the use of the Fio '89 funds, which earmarked about 29 billion lire for work on Pompeii on the basis of funding needs approved by CIPE and concentrated in the Pompeii excavation area *Regio I* (Table 10). In this case all the work was contracted out by way of concessions, direct control being maintained only over the execution of works in the different building sites. The contract was signed between the Ministry and the concessionaire, ICLA, a consortium of companies. The work, begun in May 1990 and scheduled to be completed within 3 years, should be finished by the end of October 1999: following a request for

Table 8 The fragmentation of lots: the excavations at the *Casa dei Casti Amanti*

Overview 1985–98					
Lot		Experts report	Date	Amount (itl mil)	Year funding
I	lot	95	19/11/85	300	1987
II	lot	120	13/09/86	200	1988
III	lot	194	08/10/87	200	1989
IV	lot	260	18/07/88	200	1989
V	lot	290	28/10/88	200	1990
VI	lot	346	25/09/89	220	1991
VII	lot	386	07/09/90	150	1992
IIIX	lot	556	16/09/92	200	1994
IX	lot	633	07/07/93	200	1996
X	lot	741	17/11/94	200	1997
XI	lot	806	03/02/96	180	1998
XII	lot	857	30/06/97	150	1998
Total				2400	

Lot V		Date	Months
1	Preparation file	28/10/88	
2	Preparation expert's report	28/10/88	
3	Ministry Decree approval expert's report	31/05/89	
4	Drawing up of fiduciary work contract	27/07/89	
5	Assignment of person in charge of work	06/09/89	
6	Document of start of work	31/01/90	15
7	Communication of formal contract and start of works		
	Expected work completion	01/07/90	
8	Request for extension work	26/06/90	
9	Declaration completion work	30/08/90	7
10	Declaration inexistence assignment of credit		
11	Declaration inexistence assignment of credit	20/11/90	
12	Certification of no outstanding claims	20/11/90	
13	Final summary report on work	20/11/90	
14	Evaluation report work completed regularly	04/12/90	3
Total			25

Lot X		Date	Months
1	Preparation file	17/11/94	
2	Ministry Decree approval expert's report	17/11/94	
3	Outsourcing contract	14/12/95	
4	Assignment of person in charge of work	26/01/96	
5	Document of start of work	15/07/96	20

Table 8—continued

	Communication of formal contract and start of work	04/03/97	
6	Request funds for emergency work	24/03/97	
7	Expert's report on variation	22/05/97	
8	Decree of approval for variation	22/05/97	
9	Submission act	23/05/97	
10	Convention for hiring specialized technical assistance	05/06/97	
11	Request for 60 day extension to <i>Soprintendenza</i>	14/07/97	
12	Request for extension work	05/06/97	
13	Declaration completion work	09/09/97	14
	Notification completion work	25/09/97	
14	Contract to check regular execution of work	24/10/97	
15	Declaration inexistence assignment of credit	12/11/97	
16	Certification of no outstanding claims	12/11/97	
17	Final summary report on work	12/11/97	
18	Evaluation report work completed regularly	08/01/98	4
	Total		38

an extension of 2 years, the courts intervened, sequestering documents after an investigation into alleged irregularities (May 1995). In the meantime, on 14 December 1994, the then *Soprintendente* was moved to another position, and a new *Soprintendente* hired. In the wake of these developments and after the report of the director of works in December 1995, the European Investment Bank (EIB), conduit for the European funds involved, suspended financing by way of precautionary measure, effectively closing down the building sites from May–June 1996 to September 1997, after project refinancing in July 1997 to the tune of 11.3 billion lire. All the projects for completion of the work were presented in November 1997.

If the October 1998 deadline is met, the 1989 work funded by Fio will have taken 8 years instead of the 3 years originally planned. Leaving aside legal niceties that the courts are investigating—and while recognizing that compared with the work financed with ordinary funds, Fio funding is subject to overall reporting of the amounts allocated to each intervention—all the above calls for some thought on, among other things, procedural issues. One of the main reasons for the delays lies in the way the funds are dispensed, bit by bit, in three successive stages (1990, 1992, 1994; see Table 10). This causes a slowdown in surveying/valuation reports since the external contractor will not draw up a report on work in progress until he/she is sure the funds will be available in cash terms. The situation is exacerbated by the procedural slowness in getting the project approved, a process that requires more time than execution of the work itself, as can be seen from the data reported in Table 11 (e.g. the restoration of the insulae 8 and 9, first application, which required 8 months before delivery of the work and only 3 months for execution). All of this is in turn aggravated by constant interruptions in work due to the occurrence of unforeseen circumstances requiring changes to the original plans, which are subject to the same approval process as the plans themselves.

Table 9 Fio '83 interventions: synoptic picture

Item	Type of work	Outsourcing	Internal execution
P/1	Final restoration of areas still damaged after 1980 earthquake	781	
P/2/3	Excavation and restoration <i>Terme Suburbane</i>	2499	
P/2/6	Excavation and restoration <i>Regio II Insulae 1, 8, 9 and Regio I Insula 20</i>	7660	
P/3	Automatic simulation system for analyses to support general planning		885
P/4	Technical support research and planning of roof systems		150
P/5	Additional costs		1218
P/8	Museum restoration of <i>Casina dell'Aquila</i>	1957	
P/9	Cataloguing and studies for preparation of <i>Casina dell'Aquila</i>		50
P/10/2	Removing modern materials	629	
P/11/1	Safety lighting west part of city	690	
P/11/2	Fire extinguishing water system in Pompeii	1157	
P/13	Expropriation referred to item P715	297	
P/14	Improvement of equipment and services, laboratories, <i>Soprintendenza</i> information technology		1315
P/15	Expansion <i>Soprintendenza</i> site and creation new entry to excavations	2873	
P/16	Cataloguing, restoration, publication Pompeii relics		317
P/17	Plan for antiseismic restoration of an <i>insula</i> of <i>Regio IX</i>		180
E/1	Consolidation and restoration sacred area	709	
E/3	Archaeological exploration, geophysical and photographic tests		1600
E/4	Creation of restoration laboratory for wooden materials and restoration of <i>Herculaneum</i>		310
E/5	Expropriation for purchase areas of unsafe buildings	246	
S/1	Work on hill at <i>Varano</i>	5193	
S/2 + E/6	Technological systems	1504	
S/1	Expropriation referred to item S/1	74	
S/4	Roofing for <i>Villa Arianna</i>	486	
S/5	Cataloguing, restoration, publication of objects and monuments at <i>Stabia</i>		330
O/1	Cataloguing, restoration, arqueo. excavations, publication of objects and monuments at <i>Oplontis</i>		205
B/1	Creation antiquarium at <i>Villa Reatina</i>	1666	
T/1	Expropriation in order to acquire the area of <i>Villa Rustica</i>	15	
	Total	28436	6560
		34996	

Table 10 Fio '89 interventions: synoptic picture

Pompei project legislation 11/3/88 n. 67 art. 17 Fio 89 funding							
Tendering institution	Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali						
Company contracted to do work	Temporary joint-venture of which ICLA is main contractor						
Concession convention	16/05/90						
Registered	28/11/90	for total amount of					
Summary picture of work as part of Fio project							
Work	Original allocation	New allocation	1st tranche 15/6/90	2nd tranche 3/6/92	3rd tranche 10/5/94	4th tranche 7/97	Total
Water system	1631	2002	440	150	970	440	2000
<i>Insulae VIII–IX</i>							
<i>via dell'Abbondanza</i>	698	727	440	258	—	—	698
Completion insulae regio I and II	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Insula XI</i>	—	2965	—	—	—	510	—
<i>Insula XII</i>	—	1909	—	—	—	1412	—
<i>Insula XIII</i>	—	1278	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Insula XIV</i>	—	1683	—	—	—	1683	—
<i>Insula XV</i>	—	1166	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Insula XVI</i>	—	2574	—	—	—	1696	—
<i>Insula XXI</i>	—	2470	—	—	—	260	—
<i>Insula XXII</i>	—	1711	—	—	—	474	—
Subtotal	17 359	15 756	4678	1488	3812	6035	16 013
<i>Casa del Menandro</i>	—	2594	—	—	—	2398	2398
<i>Casa del Citarista</i>	—	1967	—	—	—	862	862
Subtotal	3995	4561	1077	—	—	3260	4337
Grande Palestra	3783	4423	1019	1104	1660	434	4217
Boscoreale Museum	1691	1688	204	—	—	1688	1892
Total	29 157	29 157	7858	3000	6442	11857	29157
Total 1st, 2nd, 3rd tranche: 17 300							
Convention							16/05/90
Ministry Decree approval							15/06/90
Document of start of work							17/05/90
<i>Time execution programmed work</i>							36 months
Planned completion							06/11/93
Concession extension—24 mths (Ministry Decree)							04/12/93
Updated completion							06/11/95
Adjunct Act (for reopening sequestered building site)							18/07/96
Approval (Ministry Decree)							07/10/96
Completion after approval Adjunct Act							31/10/98
Memorandum of understanding							06/06/97
Delivery of work after memorandum of understanding							20/06/97
Duration concession until							25/03/99

Table 11 Procedural slowness of Fio '89 work

Front restoration of insulae 8 and 9 on via dell'Abbondanza Total amount: £698 000 000, split in two tranches. New allocation: £727 000 000					
1st tranche	440 mil	Months	2nd tranche	258 mil	Months
Project presented to <i>Soprintendenza</i>	07/12/90		Project sent to Chief Engineer	15/02/94	
Project sent to Chief Engineer	10/01/91		Project sent to the Ministry	27/04/94	
Sent to CAV	25/01/91		Ministry Decree Approval of the 2nd tranche project	07/09/94	
CAV approval	27/02/91		Notification of approval	08/10/94	
Notification of approval	22/04/91		Document of ascertainment	15/12/94	
Document of start of work	03/07/91	7	Document of start of the work	15/12/94	10
Planned completion	30/10/91		Planned completion	13/04/95	
Work interruption	23/07/91		Actual completion	12/04/95	
Re-start of work	27/08/91		Document of completion work	12/06/95	6
Planned completion	04/12/91				16
Request for extension work	29/11/91		Restart of entry-keeping	26/03/97	
Updated completion	02/02/92		Modified expert's report sent to chief engineer	05/06/97	
Declaration completion work	29/01/92	7	Modified expert's report sent to Ministry	22/07/97	
		14	Approval of modified expert's report sent to Ministry	24/09/97	
Restoration and settlement of insula 12—Regio I					
Amount according to new allocation			1909 mil		
1st tranche			454 mil		Months
Project presented to <i>Soprintendenza</i>			16/07/92		
Project sent to the chief engineer			27/07/92		
Sent to CAV			13/10/92		
CAV approval			09/12/92		
Notification of approval			19/02/93		
Document of start of work			22/02/93		7
<i>Planned completion</i>			21/07/93		
Declaration completion work			20/07/93		5
					12
2nd tranche			42 mil		Months
Project presented to <i>Soprintendenza</i>			10/03/95		
Sent back for accounting audit					
Project re-presented to <i>Soprintendenza</i>			03/05/96		
Project sent to chief engineer			31/05/96		
Project sent to Ministry			12/06/96		
Ministry decree approval			18/07/96		
Modified expert's report sent to chief engineer			05/06/97		
Modified expert's report sent to Ministry			22/07/97		
Approval of modified expert's report sent to ***			24/09/97		
Document of start of work			01/10/97		31
<i>Planned completion</i>			30/06/98		
Completion			1412 mil		
Completion project sent to Ministry			26/11/97		

Table 11—continued

Restoration and settlement of Insula 11—Regio I		
Total amount	2965	
1st step	933 mil	Months
Project presented to <i>Soprintendenza</i>	26/06/91	
Project sent to chief engineer	18/07/91	
Sent to CAV	28/10/91	
CAV approval	03/04/92	
Document of start of work 1st step	03/04/92	9
Ministry decree approval	01/08/92	
Planned completion	30/08/92	
Declaration completion work 1st step	28/08/92	5
		14
2nd step	638 mil	Months
Document of start of work 2nd step	27/02/93	
Declaration completion work 2nd step	24/07/93	5
		5
3rd step	680 mil	Months
Document of start of work 3rd step	08/06/94	
<i>Planned completion</i>	31/08/95	
Work interruption and change in project	10/07/95	13
Presentation of changed project	13/11/95	
Changed project sent to chief engineer	29/01/96	
Changed project sent to Ministry	09/05/96	
Ministry decree approval	07/10/96	
Document of start of work	22/10/96	15
Declaration of completion of work	11/12/96	2
		30
Restart of entry-keeping	26/03/97	
Formal document of start of work	24/07/97	
Re-start of work	01/10/97	
<i>Planned completion</i>	31/12/97	
Completion project sent to Ministry	26/11/97	

There also exists a series of other extraordinary funds. The law 64/86 provided funding of 20 billion lire to install a centralized security alarm system for Pompeii excavations as well as the creation of a technological network within the site (electricity pipelines, telephone network, fiber optics, etc.). The Tourism Funds (4.16 billion lire) helped finance the remodernization of the *Casina dell'Aquila*, with restaurants and bookshop; the visitors' route along the walls and green areas; the restructuring of services at *Herculaneum* (in all cases, the work is under way or close to completion). Cultural funds provided 35 billion lire to finance the Neapolis project to set up computer data bases for archaeological finds and related filing¹⁰. The World Monuments Fund and American Express each gave \$50 000, that was used partly to fund the preparation and publication of the book *Un Piano per Pompei*, partly to fund restoration of the Tomb of Vestorio Prisco.

In sum, a wide range of extraordinary funding exists, which, on the one hand, helps top up inadequate ordinary funding for excavation and restoration work but which at the same time creates inherent serious management problems:

- (a) the persistence of a condition of precariousness with a lack of any long-term systemic planning;
- (b) the persistence of a highly centralist model in a situation where in the last 10 years or so the Ministry has played a role of direct state-entrepreneur, and where the *Soprintendenza* has been basically marginalized: from this point of view it is correct to speak of work done *in* the *Soprintendenza* of Pompeii rather than work done *by* the *Soprintendenza*;
- (c) confirmation of a policy of outsourcing a large proportion of the work with all the problems that implies: losing control of the work and how it is executed and not garnering the right experience for subsequent work (the “management of the monument”, we spoke of earlier);
- (d) the missed opportunity for simplifying operations and procedures, with the paradoxical result of managing the private with a public-sector mindset.

An attempt to assess the resources spent on Pompeii

Generally, it should be noted how difficult it is to reconstruct synthetic data, given the practice of analytical elaboration that prevails: simply put, adding up the sums not required by anyone for any kind of analysis is not done. This is perhaps the sign of an emphasis more on formal control, focused on the legitimacy of acts from a merely logical–procedural point of view, than on managerial control using substantive information within a decision-making context. One of the upshots of the situation described above is that there is no clear idea of just how much is spent on Pompeii. This is not intended as a first step to cut resources allocated, but rather a starting point to make Pompeii accountable—in the direction of a more aware use of resources within a more precise logic of financial responsibility.

Table 12 is an attempt to present just how much is spent on average on Pompeii on the basis of the following inputs: a yearly average over the last 14 years of extraordinary expenses; a level of ordinary funding that is in line with that of 1997; an extremely rough estimate of personnel costs (more accurate estimates will require much research: from a procedural point of view, in fact, the possible error in estimating personnel costs is comparable if not superior to the rest of the ordinary funding.). The result is a mean yearly cost of about 55 billion lire, most of which, even factoring in an “average” of extraordinary funding, is spent on personnel costs. This means that any “managerial” approach to running Pompeii must take into account the crucial importance of personnel management without which the whole venture loses sense and credibility.

With its new “autonomous” status, cash inflows from visitor tickets and royalties from additional services will in the future further increase the resources available to

Table 12 Reconstruction of resource consumed on a representative year

Extraordinary funding (L mil)	
Fio '83	35 000
Fio '89	29 000
L 64/86	20 000
Funds law 449/87	11 500
Funds law on tourism	4 160
Neapolis project	35 000
other	170
Total funds from 1984 to 1997	134 830
annual average	8 989
Reconstruction of average annual costs	
Extraordinary excavation and restoration (yearly average)	8 989
Ordinary excavation and restoration (8005)	2 540
Structural and functional upgrading (8019)	800
Stewardship, maintenance & conservation (2035)	680
Direct costs	13 009
Costs for general running (2034)	950
Telephone (2047)	60
Overheads	1 010
Total costs without personnel	14 019
Personnel costs (estimate)	45 000
Yearly resources consumed	59 019

the *Soprintendenza* (at least 18 billion lire); in addition private sponsorship will also have an impact. What that means is that annual resources available for restoration will be at least three times what they have been on average in recent years.

Discussion: Between Past and Future

One of the dangers that could emerge from the above discussion is to consider all that has happened as a perverse result of a situation that no longer pertains following the introduction of the new form of autonomous *Soprintendenza*. This is not the case. The passage between the past and the future is a process whose dynamic needs to be understood if one wishes to identify the conditions for renewing and relaunching Pompeii. This implies, on the one hand, analysing the organizational process that created the crisis visible: a rather sophisticated social process, "managerial" in nature though enacted by professionals (archeologists) more than by general experts of management (or experts in general management). On the other hand, it requires comment on some of the limitations of the new governance structure in terms of its attitude of further fostering managerial discourses in running Pompeii.

The degradation of Pompeii as unmanaged complexity

If the actual terms of the ruining of Pompeii are clear enough (see *Un Piano per Pompei*, and the several newspaper articles quoted above), one might wonder how it was possible in the first place to arrive at such a situation.

The reasons for the area's degradation are legion. First of all there is the problem of conserving an archaeological site exposed to the elements for years, even centuries in some parts, with the consequent irreversible process of decay. Then there are the effects of the earthquake of 1980, which caused considerable damage all round. However, to quote one headline from the *Independent* (Gumbel, 1998), there is another factor that needs to be brought into the equation: "The city is facing its second serious disaster: man". And the damage wrought by man comes in different forms: technical mistakes made in restoration work during the 1950s (extensive use of materials deemed today inadequate); the paucity of funds to maintain a site the upkeep of which would however cost a fortune; the waste of resources squandered on systematic "clientelism" that the courts are still investigating; trade union pressure in a depressed area where unemployment has reached alarmingly high levels.

While all of this is patently true, there is another complicating factor which makes the whole situation particularly acute, i.e. the way these emergencies are actually managed (or not managed), given the Ministry's organizational model and governance structure.

In the first place, a strange mix of political/trade union/business interests, even when licit (probably most cases), means that vested interests take precedence over the stewardship of Pompeii "as such": e.g., when the town mayors of the area succeeded in making employment one of the main aims of the new legislation on Pompeii¹¹; or when the Ministry effectively drew up (DPCM 8.1.97) the organizational chart and the personnel staffing, with all the limits we spoke of earlier, a source of inefficiency and inefficacy, demotivating and mortifying for the skilled personnel and undermining the sense of identity and belonging of the employees; or when the trade union blindly tried to safeguard jobs without regard to quality or future prospects for well trained youngsters who could inject new blood and ideas into work. The outsourcing of all the restoration work together with the inability to exercise any real control over this crucial lever of development constitutes one of the main limitations of this convergence of vested interests, with the loss of an historic opportunity to develop a "centre of excellence" for restoration skills that could help conserve Pompeii.

In the second place, and perhaps even more importantly, the absence of any notion of overall accountability (first of all financial accountability) for Pompeii has had a telling impact. This historically has meant that there has been a lack of responsibility and an inability to organize resources efficiently. No one was or could be seen as responsible for the whole amount of resources spent in Pompeii. Indeed, resources spent were virtually unknown in their total amount: each special project made possible by some particular "extraordinary" funding and law was reported according to specific and different rules to different and separated entities or agencies. In parallel, there was a lack of any form of reporting for Pompeii as such, seen as a mere local branch of the Ministry (not even a cost centre),

rather than an organizational whole in itself. There is a situation where the very lack of accountability makes the problem less visible, the outcome of a game where no one has the legitimacy to be in charge of the wide range of processes involved in managing Pompeii. It is interesting to point up another anomaly of Pompeii with regard to the controversial issue of the managerialization processes of museums. Rather than the usual conflict between the professional values of curators versus those of management, i.e. the dialectics between conservation and marketing orientation, the problem here is more one of the destruction of the sense of professionalism and the mechanisms of knowledge accumulation by a “bureaucratic” mindset.

I deliberately used the word “historically”, since this was the picture obtained until only relatively recently when the problem of the crisis at Pompeii and its recovery came firmly to the fore. A clear and deliberate communications strategy via the media—Italian and foreign—was put in place to try to address attention to the *problem* of Pompeii and the mechanisms of its decline. Almost all the articles in newspapers drew on the important book the (new) *Soprintendenza* produced with the World Monuments Fund, *Un Piano per Pompei*, and this was no mere “white paper” but rather a strategic plan in the full sense of the words, which spelled out the extent of the degradation and underlined the need to “stop the growth”, i.e. excavation work, so as to channel all the resources into restoration¹². Within an ecological perspective of “sustainable consumption”, the aim is to identify intervention needs and how much funding they will require. While taking on board the need to make Pompeii more consumer friendly and attractive (by improving the service offered), the plan clearly identifies restoration as the key element and ordinary/extraordinary maintenance as crucial, drawing attention to the need for an overall plan for Pompeii. Indeed in this acute phase, Pompeii seems more like a manufacturing firm (a huge building site, albeit of great value) than a service industry (museum): the “Factory of Pompeii” as the *Piano* puts it.

It is in such a context that the Ministry’s call for a renewal of Pompeii occurred. Apart from an effort at fundraising for the plan of restoration, as well as reform toward an “autonomous” *Soprintendenza*, perhaps the first achievement was simply to accept the logic of halting the growth—a strong call rooted in the professional discourse of the archeologist, without pressing on with new excavations that would have boosted image and pay-off at the political level—according to the logic of politicians’ discourse.

Premises, promises and problems

If the above represents a plausible interpretation of the development of the *Soprintendenza* at Pompeii until recent times, I cannot help but make a brief comment on the recently introduced legislation in the light of the problems mentioned above. What is particularly interesting here is the expectations that can be posed in terms of its contribution to developing more “managerial” ways of running Pompeii and the introduction of forms of accountability much greater than in the past.

At a general level, one must recognize the innovative potential of an independent *Soprintendenza*: independence which means, above all, giving the new *Soprinten-*

denza an accountability of its own (i.e. making it accountable as an entity in itself). Such accountability allows for the production of a financial statement that will allow the *Soprintendenza* to manage its own affairs and make its managers directly responsible for operations and results (for example through the immediate recognition of receipts from tickets sales).

At the same time one must also recognize the importance of an empowered administrative director, even if in this regard the question is perhaps a little more complex than that described by newspapers when they speak of “city manager”, a seductive term which does need to be fleshed out a bit more. In this regard, it seems that the term “autonomy” implies two closely connected processes: the creation of forms of accountability, i.e. enucleating an entity around which resources and information shall be collected; and a process of “managerialization” which means making the actors responsible and focused on managerial action in the organization and the running of a complex task (someone who will take charge, resist pressure, supervise technological conditions of survival, etc.). Aside from the semantic evocation of the word city manager, the two processes are linked, calling for close cooperation between the *Soprintendente* and the administrative director in a situation where the *Soprintendente* assumes already a managerial role in, for example, making “strategic” decisions to halt excavation work, identify the degradation and tap the resources for recovery as described in the book *Un Piano per Pompei*. A situation, moreover, where this vision needs to be carried out and translated in day-to-day operations, in all of its technological details. In analogy with management studies jargon, one could describe such a situation as a separation between business-specific managerial competence held by the *Soprintendente*, and those that are business aspecific, proper to the administrative director.

That said, some uncertainty may nonetheless arise. In the first place the law itself on autonomy is a little fuzzy referring to the degrees of freedom allocated to the *Soprintendenza* in economic/financial matters. For example it is not clear whether it can set “prices” (to date, it seems that the Ministry is oriented towards a positive answer to this question, but the ambiguity of the law could lead a subsequent Minister to change his/her mind). Second, the actual composition of the board of directors of the Autonomous *Soprintendenza* as laid down by the law (the *Soprintendente*, the Administrative Director and the “Senior Archaeologist”) is not based on performative principles but rather on belonging and seniority (seniority in a role, more technical than anything, does not of itself guarantee decisional ability). Third, and more annoying, the autonomy granted the *Soprintendenza* is tarnished to the extent that the latter is forced to accept an accounting system very close to the original ministerial one (cash based), and no doubt different to the one it would have been able to “invent” had autonomy been defined in a broader sense.

However, the main limitation that flies in the face of this much acclaimed autonomy is the fact that personnel management remains firmly in the hands of the Ministry: in fact the law stipulates that it is the latter, “after consulting the *Soprintendenza*”, that decides on staff arrangements for the *Soprintendenza*, with consequences that have perhaps been underestimated by the legislator. I am not here thinking so much about the possible clientelistic use (if not today then certainly in the future, as was the case in the past) of positions created and assigned

at a ministerial level. I am in particular thinking more of all the uselessly and demotivatingly complicated problems that the past experience of the Ministry's personnel management style has thrown up and that the new law does little to address (indeed, perhaps a good opportunity has been lost). However, the most serious aspect of this centralizing tendency is the partial accountability granted the *Soprintendenza*, whose financial statements will not include personnel costs (which are not managed here). Put more bluntly, the receipts from tickets and royalties from extra services (currently about 18 billion lire) will appear on the financial statement of the *Soprintendenza* (along with other ministerial or outside funds, as per art. 9, point 8, the amounts of which I will not quantify here for the sake of simplicity) to finance excavation, restoration and other work. Staff costs on the other hand will continue to appear on the Ministry's financial statement (40–45 billion). Far from being a mere accounting and information issue, an unforeseen outcome of this situation is that there is no incentivisation for the management of the *Soprintendenza* (*Soprintendente* and administrative director) to redesign the organizational structure and the organization of labour towards greater degrees of outsourcing, even in cases where there is no trade union resistance. For the sake of argument, let us suppose that there are forms of outsourcing that are acceptable to the union (e.g. contracting out the guardianship task to an independent firm, maybe a co-operative society of guards), which allows the same services to be had at a much lower cost (e.g. from the present 20 billion lire wage bill of the nearly 400 guards to 10 billion for the security services of the co-operative). Even if such an ideal and idyllic situation were to exist, the management could not accept it, since, while it would certainly reduce the overall costs for the operations, the direct benefit would be felt on the financial statement of the Ministry (and hence there would not be an incentive for a similar decision in a managerially run structure). Worse, it would mean foregoing a large part of the 18 billion lire funds earmarked for the *Soprintendenza* for restoration work (and hence would be disincentivating).

From this point of view it might be interesting to look at the UK experience, and in particular that of the British Museum¹³—prior to the redefinition of the governance structure in 1999, i.e. the introduction of a dual structure (director and managing director) which is in contrast rather controversial (Balley, 1999; *The Observer*, 1999). At first part of the Ministry, the British Museum started to win independence around 1990 with an early phase of partial autonomy that had a good deal in common with the current phase of innovative measures taken to launch the *Soprintendenza autonoma*. In a second phase, however, from 1993, the accountability of the museum became more complete with the so-called “one-block grant”, a one-time funding that the Museum must use to cover all expenses, including personnel, now effectively managed by the Museum, and with no interference from the government; a fixed amount that does not need to be negotiated and that allows greater programmability and flexibility. At present, of the almost 42 million pounds expenditure, 32 are state funded while the museum must self-finance the remaining 10 (from the rent of the buildings, to the royalties on commercial activity and subscriptions) resisting the idea of introducing an entrance fee even at the cost of having to have recourse to a voluntary early retirement scheme, which

led to staff cuts of 40–50 out of 1000 in 1997. In the same spirit, the space freed up by the National Library was offered free of charge by the government to the British Museum providing the latter saw to restructuring costs: for this the Museum has a professional fund-raising team (the Development Trust), underlining its full autonomy (compared with the Ministry run society in the Pompeii case).

In short, if “managerialization” should take place, there do not appear to be any credible alternatives other than complete financial autonomy, including the coverage of personnel costs and their management, also including the whole set of “extraordinary” funding and expenses¹⁴.

Paradoxically however, given the successful communication strategy of the *Piano per Pompei*, the question of financial resources will not be the main problem holding back the relaunch of Pompeii. These rather will be of a different nature: legal and ministerial resistances and contradictions; trade union resistance to management intervention in disciplining labour, even before downsizing efforts (where, as in the case of environmental issues, the trade union can sometimes find itself in a decidedly conservative position); the ability of the top management (*Soprintendente* and administrative director) to set in place processes for retraining skilled staff and (re-) defining managerial structures and procedures. Paradoxically, having called for fresh funding, the biggest risk is being unable to actually spend it; the main problem is one of organization, of creating the conditions and organizational functioning that allow the money to be spent, guaranteeing and monitoring the quality of all stages of the restoration work.

Concluding Remarks

One of the main interests in studying Pompeii is indeed to investigate the interaction between different kinds of discourse taking place in the managing process of this anomalous organization. Basically, the underlying question beyond these pages is to what extent different contributions to “managing” can be drawn from professionals and/or from management experts (in a sense expert of general management *per se*).

If, normally, a strong conflict between the culture of curatorship and management expert is found in the juxtaposition of diverse professional values (curatorship *per se* as opposed to marketing orientation and focus on attendance), a different picture emerges in this case. For instance, the contrast, that often takes on ideological overtones, between those championing marketing orientation and those championing conservation and stewardship finds a nice balance in the case of Pompeii with the idea of “sustainable consumption”.

In addition, the case of Pompeii shows how the knowledge of management studies can be applied to museums in a much broader context than just marketing and its emphasis on market values, competition, ticket pricing, etc. Apart from the potentially disruptive nature of these marketing aspects *vis-à-vis* deontological–professional values, this also runs the risk of neglecting other possible uses of managerial knowledge, e.g. logistics and operations management (cf. the managing of building orders, the planning of work, controlling of building sites and of work

in progress, etc.), e.g. organizational design (qualitative–quantitative definition of personnel, the design of operating mechanisms, etc.), e.g. allocation of resources and management control.

If doubt has been expressed elsewhere about the direct relevance of management studies (Zan, 1995), the judgement is less negative in the case of Pompeii, where the potential effectiveness of managerial discourse must be recognized (especially when addressing organizational and control issues and not merely marketing ones). Naturally, such a perspective needs to be seen within the framework of a “modest approach” (Jönsson, 1997), keeping in mind all that is “other” to the knowledge of the management expert (abstract and generic, purely methodological), once again trying to couple business specific with business aspecific issues (Zan, 1998).

Without the aim of providing a detailed summary, this indeed is what this study has tried to do, using management knowledge to understand Pompeii at different levels:

- First by starting with a qualification of the notion of “activity” that could be seen as a rhetoric exercise of expressing under “current management language” what archeologists see as characterizing the mission, tasks and operations of this organization. In such an exercise, however, some “general” phenomenon—already available in the tool kit of the management scholars—could be found and applied (the careful attention to inner differentiation, *à la* Lawrence & Lorsh; to multidimensional activities and their “decomposition”, as Simon would put it; and to associated diseconomies of scale), giving new insights on not a few managing issues.
- Second, analysing human resources and organizational design, the limitation of the *Soprintendenza* form before autonomy has been identified in relation to the whole set of its negative (and I argue meaningless, in the sense of representing a sort of negative-sum kind of game) consequences. Here in particular, the lack of knowledge and skills by representatives of the *Soprintendenza* themselves—and by ministry representatives as well—is perhaps an area where the “usefulness” of management knowledge and the fostering of managerial discourses as usually conceived could have major impact. Similarly, the limitations of the current *Soprintendenza* form have been investigated as regards financial resources, in terms of allocation processes, uses and representation.
- Third, the complex social process of decay of Pompeii has been revisited, looking at the crisis of Pompeii primarily as an organizational matter in itself, with a lack of institutional solutions capable of resisting the converging pressure of vested interests exploiting the opportunity that Pompeii could offer them, out and against the logic and the values of the professional discourse by archaeologists. Indeed the very process of construction of the visibility of the crisis has also been analysed as a soft but clear effort by professionals (and by the Superintendent in particular), worthy of “best practices” within stakeholders and societal literature in terms of communication strategy as well as formal planning exercise (Plan for Pompeii).

In this sense, indeed “management knowledge” could be useful in understanding this kind of process for professionals involved (curators, museologists, etc.). For the management expert however (and to some extent for the reader as well) this means a deep contextualist understanding of the organization under investigation, the involvement in time-wasting inquiry of the empirical realm and probably the extensive use of field-work research, in order to couple the process of establishment of managerial attitudes with the development of broad and acceptable forms of accountability. And with a simple but serious implication: that of discovering “management knowledge” as just a part of *managerial* discourses taking place in professional organizations, and the tendential ancillary nature of aspecific managerial knowledge. In this sense, there does not seem to exist any shortcut in the process of “managerialization” of Pompeii (as well as other art organizations, but also educational and health care entities), whereby management experts could avoid the deep understanding of other professional discourses. A rather complex challenge for the diffusion of managerial rhetoric to new “territories”.

Still, and differently from what is often perceived, this is not linked to the overcoming of forms of financial accountability, which are here assuming a crucial role.

In addition to sense-making, however, “management knowledge” could be used by archaeologists and curators in a more proactive way, as a tool to mobilize attention and collective action. On the one hand it could be used as a further way to legitimize the need to restructuring Pompeii, asking for resources for halting its ruining—as already outlined by professionals in the Plan for Pompeii. On the other hand, and more interesting, it could help in underlying the contradictory process pursued by the Ministry bureaucracy, whereby the alleged autonomy introduced by the new law appears as a partial delegation, concerning just one-quarter of resources spent in Pompeii, within a context that does not seem to allow (neither the superintendent or the “city manager”) for a more direct and responsible intervention in terms of managing human resources and the organization of labour. Indeed, calling for “managerial” behaviours without delegating the power to manage resource (human resources included) is a sort of non-sense, if not an unfair game by the Ministry. Rather, a different governance structure can be called for by professional, following the logic and rhetoric of management discourse, with a more consistent frame of responsibility and a more coherent pattern of accountability (cf. the one-block grant of the British Museum).

In this regard, management knowledge can be used by curators and archaeologists in defense of their professional discourse, trying to use it as a tool for disciplining the relationship with the politician counterpart (at the Ministry level, at the local government level, with trade unions, etc.). In other words, the whole issue appears to be a question of emancipation from the political domain, and thus of the recognition of a professional bureaucracy (in Weber’s sense) which does not remain hostage to the short-termism of the political powers (whether ministerial or local). This process however has its costs, in that the professional bureaucracy has to accept becoming accountable, accepting the basic logic of modern forms of managerialism, wherein the relationship with the political is to be disciplined. Within this context, a more thorough notion of autonomy is at once a condition and a compensation for the call of more “managerial” attitude.

Notes

1. The excavation of the *Casa dei Casti Amanti* was financed with about 2.4 billion lire of ordinary funds over 12 years (cf. Table 8); as regards extraordinary funding, about 12 billion of the almost 35 billion Fio '83 funds are earmarked for excavations while all the Fio '89 funds are essentially for restoration except for the work on the *insula XXI* and to a lesser extent on the *insulae XVI* and *XXII*.
2. See the following headlines and the even more significant sub-titles: *Newsweek*, 1997, "Ruining Pompeii. Vandals, tourists and political corruption take a toll on the ancient site"; Ragone, 1997b, "Tourist worse than lava. This way Pompeii is dying"; Gianella, 1997, "Pompeii dies once more: save it with our magazine. What even the terrible eruption on 79 BC and two thousand years of oblivion were unable to destroy risks now to disappear due to negligence and lack of funding. . ."; Gumbel, 1998, "Better off buried. Pompeii crumble as sleaze takes hold. [B]ad management and corruption is endangering one of the world's great archaeological sites".
3. The "total quality", for good or for bad, starts at Naples central station where finding indications for the "Circumvesuviana" trains for Pompeii is almost impossible, customer care being totally absent, especially for foreigners. For example, the writer happened to catch the wrong train because on the platform where the destination sign said "Sorrento", a train stopped which for habitual travellers was obviously going somewhere else (but the customer does not know beforehand what the direction is or whether the train has changed its route and in any case the expectation is that the sign refers to the first train passing through) and was 3 minutes early. Undoubtedly, a hypothetical foreign traveller would see similar disorganization as being part of the poor quality service of the Pompeii visit.
4. See for example the following passage from the proceedings of the *Commissione Paritetica* (a commission formed by the representatives of trade unions and the *Soprintendenza*) on 27 November 1995: "[A trade union representative] proposed the creation of 3 separate work sectors: administrative, research and technical, each with its own secretary. The sectors should then be divided into sections. He felt it was pointless having an administrative functionary of the VIII or IX (contractual) level beneath the administrative coordinator of the IX level. [The trade unionist in question] therefore proposed that the administrative sector should be run by a single director of the IXth level and the respective services entrusted to operating sections run by functionaries of the VIIIth or VIIth level". The reply too sheds little light on who does what: "[The representative of the *Soprintendenza* on the Commission] gave details on the role of the administrative coordinator, who is the most senior of the administrative directors working in the administrative office and who is also the *Soprintendente's* referent. He stressed therefore that on the basis of L805, the administrative office should summon all the administrative directors, the most senior of which will take on the role of administrative director of the *Soprintendenza*".
5. For example there are few fifth level workers, which means that even the most simple scaffolding job becomes a problem even if the third level workers would be able to do the job. Furthermore, though there is an in-house electrician, if the safety switch disengages the general system for some reason—reactivation of which is a simple operation, albeit requiring a degree of caution because of the high tension involved—an outside expert must be called in.
6. The contrast between replicating the central model in the periphery and finding a solution that is more attentive to economies of scale and the fair distribution of workloads even divides the unions themselves, as can be seen from these passages from the proceedings of the Commission on 10 January 1996: "At the peripheral level... the proposal [of a trade union organization] is that all types of technical staff (architects, quantity surveyors, assistants and designers) who assist the head archaeologist in his/her specific competencies by seeing to the tasks they are charged with (blacksmiths, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, builders and laborers) should be present. This distribution across the area applies to the 3 zones or sectors currently established (Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabia)". Another trade unionist then sets out his far from clear position, before an opposing position is finally set out by yet another union representative who "feels the existence of a central operating nucleus in the *Soprintendenza* is important with perhaps some temporary appointments made in the peripheral sites, retaining that the presence of all professional figures at the different work sites is not necessary".
7. Leaving aside previous degenerative phenomena, the experience of the *Commissione Paritetica* is from this point of view most illuminating; the proceedings of the first meetings point to a procedural naivety, a form of improvisation that puts the *Soprintendenza* representatives at an operating disadvantage in their negotiations with the trade unions on how to analyse and reorganize staffing arrangements. The unions themselves point out: "The trade union does not make proposals but counterpro-

- posals”, or “it’s not up to the union to decide how many workers are necessary”. Discussions on the structure—as we saw earlier—always proceed in terms of positions and career levels, leaving to one side the actual contents of jobs and tasks. In particular, referring to the organization of custodian and security services, the subsequent work of the commission does not seem to be particularly incisive, simply modifying slightly (in effect confirming the overall) pre-existing numbers. Either the preceding structure was exactly what was and is needed or one must infer a lack of organizational culture and professionalism, implying a more innovative approach is needed—a sort of “zero-based budgeting”.
8. These are the codes and contents of the ministerial items also used for Pompeii (note, besides the anomalous style of this accounting plan, the overly synthetic structure of aggregated items from a single museum point of view).
 - 2034: Costs for general running, offices, supplies, adaptation, maintenance and cleaning of rooms at headquarters of *Soprintendenza* and other dependent institutes, laboratories, museums, galleries, picture galleries, parks and archaeological sites. Costs of uniforms and work overalls, protective and detoxicating equipment. Books for headquarters of the *Soprintendenze* and dependent institutes.
 - 2035: Costs of stewardship, maintenance, conservation, restoration and promotion of architectonic, archaeological, artistic and historical buildings/objects including property costs for archaeological excavations, underwater research, surveys, tests, historical documentation and working techniques, for the compilation, printing and distribution of publications, for censuses, inventories and catalogues, for aero-photographic services, the purchase and maintenance of machines, equipment, burglar and fire alarm systems, museum activities of cultural and didactic promotion, for the setting up and organization of exhibitions and other initiatives in Italy and abroad, for Italian participation in international exhibitions, for business trips in Italy and abroad, for study trips and stays in Italy by foreign experts, for setting up committees and commissions.
 - 2047: Telephone costs.
 - 2102: Contributions, interventions, subsidies and aid for maintenance, conservation and restoration of architectonic, archaeological, artistic and historical buildings/objects including underwater research, for archaeological excavations, surveys, tests, historical documentation and working techniques, for museum activities and cultural promotion, for national and international exhibitions and expositions.
 - 8005: Costs of recovery, warding, restoration, promotion and maintenance of the architectonic, archaeological, artistic and historical heritage: including costs for modernization work, structural and functional work and upgrading of premises for museums and galleries, for restoration, improvement and accessibility of medieval and modern monuments, of ancient monuments and sites and for archaeological excavations, as well as costs to see through planned accords.
 - 8019: Costs of structural and functional work/upgrading of premises for state museums and galleries, fire prevention measures, installation of burglar alarms and other preventative measures, as well as for the expropriation or purchase, including through the exercise of the right of pre-emption, of property, of artistic and historical interest, to be used as museums and galleries. Costs for carrying out experimental projects regarding models of management, exposition and consumption aimed at improving the national museum network.
 9. In 1996 for example, a request was formally made to the Ministry for 13.3 billion lire on items 2035 and 8005 to finally obtain 3.5, but the whole process was preceded by “internal negotiations” between the various directors of the single digs, who in this way “self-censored” their own initial requests (which—given the problems of Pompeii—are always already emergencies at this stage): though this phase of internal negotiation leaves no document trace and is mainly oral, our interlocutors estimated a ratio between formal requests and requests of one to four. In essence, from basic needs of 53 billion lire there are requests for 13 and 3.5 are obtained.
 10. This case too is symptomatic of the near-sighted way of working, with “extraordinary” funding which does not provide for coverage of running costs. Through a decision and contacts made at a ministerial level, 1986 saw the beginning of work which, besides the supply of hardware and software and provision of the data base, provided for the training of 108 people over a period of 2 years. At the end of this period, and the relative funds, and despite having done a technically sophisticated job, it was realized that, given the other priorities, the *Soprintendenza* did not have the 500 million a year necessary to run the data elaboration centre: after a year in which IBM sponsored running costs, the centre was closed. Ten years on, given the complete technological obsolescence, the costs of

reconversion are being studied to see whether it is possible to recover at least a part of what was done or whether they are simply unrecoverable costs.

11. "Revenues coming from additional services (i.e. bookshop, restaurant, etc.) and from entrance receipts to the excavations and other archaeological areas of the *Soprintendenza* are earmarked for structural and functional work, restoration, archaeological recovery, cultural promotion, consumption and the *fostering of employment*, and other activities to be done in the areas; they are issued in the financial statement of the *Soprintendenza*", Law 352/97, art. 9, para 8 (emphasis added).
12. The different approach to the problem of degradation is striking in these two passages, the first drawn from the reply of the then *Soprintendente* to questions from the right honorable Mussolini, the second from the book *Un Piano per Pompei*: "It is not true that the two-thirds of the ancient city excavated to date are closed to visitors. It is true however that after the earthquake of 1980, which closed off almost all the excavation area to visitors due to the danger, new excavation areas have been gradually reopened" (*Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei*, 1993). The other source strikes a different note: "A first evaluation, summary given the heterogeneity of the information gathered, can be made considering in sequence: (a) usability data of Pompeii in the 1950s; (b) current usability; (c) data on the conservation conditions of what is currently usable; (d) data on the increase in the number of visitors. From the way in which the area of the city open to access has sharply contracted over time, it can be readily deduced that Pompeii is involved in a process of gradual degradation which cannot be stopped either by investments, even though considerable in recent years (estimated 300 billion lire from earthquake to today) or work in progress, which do not offset the large number of buildings that may currently be visited but which because of their precarious state of repair, should be rapidly closed and subjected to restoration. . . Consequently, it seems clear that if intervention is not immediately forthcoming with the necessary decision and the right instruments, Pompeii is on its way towards a crisis point unheard of" (*Un Piano per Pompei*, p. 35). All of which underlines the process of "social construction" of the crisis, the attributing of meaning by the players involved in interpreting the same elements differently.
13. The following data emerged during an interview (19 May 1998) with Mr Gerard Vaughan and Mrs Catherine W. Goodrich, Director and Development Executive of the museum's Development Trust respectively, whom I take this opportunity of thanking.
14. It should be noted that England too suffers the effects of "half Americanization", if we can use this expression. Accountability and the logic of managerial responsibility are germane but, unlike the case in America, there is not the same favourable tax system as regards donations, patronage, etc., which is in effect an integral part of the scheme.

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