

# Managing a World Heritage Site in Italy as Janus Bifrons: A “Decentralized Centralization” Between Effectiveness and Efficiency

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**Abstract** Managing an archaeological, historical and cultural heritage is a challenging task, due to the outstanding universal value of such sites and the involvement of several organizations and multiple stakeholders in their management. The aim of the chapter is to carry out an analysis of the different challenges surrounding the managing of a cultural and historical World Heritage Site (WHS) and the difficulties stakeholders face in developing a coherent, integrated and pluralistic policy of governance. The authors present the case of Aquileia WHS to examine its complex governance and discuss practices to resolve conflicts in order to achieve a homogeneous and coherent management of the site and its universally recognized beauties. This study is based on field research (2009–2011 and 2012–2014), with data collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and analysis of official documents. The chapter provides readers with some of the challenges within the management of the cultural industry sector, especially in relation to a multidimensional cultural heritage WHS, thereby enriching academic discussion and providing practical implications for management within the cultural sector and within other industries.

**Keywords** Cultural artifacts • Institutional change • Professional control • Accountability • Italian cultural system

## 1 Introduction and Theoretical Background

The Italian tradition on cultural heritage management is centered on the concept of “cultural good” and has its roots in the Renaissance, spreading between 1725 and 1755 from Florence to Naples, from the Venetian Republic to the Vatican State (Settis 2002; Casini 2016). Did this original inclination for the “materiality of

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things” produce a public regulatory system, institutional regulations and professional standards related to modern organizational forms and consistent management models?

Within archaeological studies, Olsen (2013) points out: “how systems of ideas and the exercise of regulatory power can never become effective without a material disciplinary and normalizing technology that ontologizes and fixes the desired categories and norms [*à la* Foucault]” (p. 46; for a discussion: Miller and Rose 2008). This chapter investigates the difficulties stakeholders face in developing a coherent, integrated and pluralistic governance within a cultural and historical World Heritage Site (WHS).

The purpose of this work is to contribute to the literature on cultural heritage management through a “critical perspective” (Alvesson et al. 2009), introducing “a family of orientations that take orderly *materially mediated doing and saying* (*‘practices’*) and their aggregations as central for the understanding of organizational and social phenomena” (p. 110; Nicolini and Monteiro 2016).

“Practice-based theories” (Gherardi 2012; Nicolini 2012), the research strategy of the Actor-Network Theory (ANT, Latour 2005), allows us to consider the “archaeological objects” (Olsen 2013): (1) in terms of relational materialism: elements (i.e., archaeological sites, museum collections, historic monuments) whose features become visible through the relations in which they are located; and (2) in their performative dimension (of “social ordering” and “social organizing:” Czarniawska 1997; Callon 1998). These relations fuel collaboration between subjects, professions, traditions, tools, and people, making it possible to observe the creation of “socialized practices” rather than having to investigate the adoption of management models and standardized organizational forms (Nicolini et al. 2012; Carlile et al. 2013).

Within this theoretical framework, the study was able to problematize some common dimensions of analysis at the international level (i.e., in China, Italy, Turkey, Perù: see Zan et al. 2015), which are often neglected in the studies of cultural heritage management (Bonini Baraldi 2007), including the following:

1. cultural organizations (outside the Anglo-American common law tradition) are linked to the processes of transformation of the public sector they belong to (Zan 2006; Zan et al. 2015);
2. institutional change/innovation can be traced back to the rhetoric of “reforms,” “transparency” and “accountability” typical of the New Public Management (Zan 2006; Chapman et al. 2012);
3. transformation processes should have effects on the functioning of business models and organizational designs at a micro level (Miller and Power 2013);
4. management tools should be built, understood and “practiced” in a conscious way within their contexts of use (Miller and Rose 2008; Zan et al. 2015).

The case study is based on the conceptualization of “cross-disciplinary collaboration” proposed by Nicolini et al. (2012), combining the role of “archaeological objects” with the organizational evolution and operational dynamics of a UNESCO site in Italy. Inspired by the works of Zan et al. (2015), we propose a combination of management processes and tools with two organizational dimensions: “professional

control” and “administrative fragmentation” (Bonini Baraldi 2007). This allows us to understand the complexity of introducing discourse about managing: (1) cultural organizations always struggling due to institutional change; and (2) a cultural heritage management system where such changes are simply “not managed.” The absence of organizational design and management control at the micro level also feeds “institutional contradictions” (Seo and Creed 2002).

## 2 Research Context

### 2.1 *Public Reforms and Italian Cultural Heritage System: From 1939 to 2007*

According to the Italian system, cultural assets are legal constructs, recognized and regulated by a specific set of public laws. The preservation of cultural heritage is inscribed in the Italian Constitution as a duty of the State (Casini 2016) and since both public and private cultural goods are of public interest, they are subject to public law and control. From 1939 till 1998, the most important aim of the Italian legislation was the preservation of cultural heritage (Law 1089/1939). A top-down and centralized organizational model characterized the Italian cultural heritage tradition, with a key role played by the Ministry for Heritage and Cultural Activities and its peripheral local departments (*Superintendence*). Within the public reforms of the 1990s, for the first time, the functions of management and enhancement were separated from the preservation of cultural heritage (Decree 112/1998). A shift toward a more decentralized system of cultural heritage took place, inspired by Anglo-Saxon practices and international tradition (UNESCO). The outsourcing of specific activities towards foundations or institutions increased the role of the private sector. Competences were redistributed between State and Local Authorities in a process of devolution, while the local branches of the Ministry adopted made use of more managerial tools and increased privatization. The Code of Cultural and Landscape Heritage (Decreets 42/2004 and 156/2006) implemented the changes mentioned above, differentiating protection and conservation from enhancement, management and enjoyment and formalizing the involvement of new actors in several activities.

The efforts and results of the public reforms fragmented resources among centralized and peripheral actors and increased the number of bureaucratic requirements. According to relevant literature, the Italian cultural heritage system has been characterized by a “general confusion over distribution of competences” and a “significant [. . .] fragmentation of unity among professionals” involved in cultural heritage (p. 111; Zan 2006).

## 2.2 *The Archaeological and Historical Site of Aquileia: An Institutional History and Three Steps Towards Its Current Story—1988, 1998, 2008*

Aquileia, located in the northeastern part of Italy, is a reckoned archaeological site declared a WHS in 1998. Aquileia is the largest and most complete example of an Early Roman City in the Mediterranean world; most of the site lies intact and unexcavated beneath the ground (MPC, AV, APU, FA\_#02, see *infra* Table 2).

The Aquileia archaeological site is the result of a long-lasting process that has continuously redefined itself between preservation, conservation, enhancement and promotion of the vast territory over the past two centuries. The stewardship of the Aquileia site overlaps with the Italian cultural heritage tradition and has developed with the help of key professional actors, universities, and research centers. Problems surrounding its maintenance have been described in relation to the complex distribution of competencies and resources between the centralized organizational model and the fragmented public administrations involved.

With the aim of providing insights into managing complex heritage sites, we will focus on the period from 1988 to 2008. Today, the archaeological site is internally divided and managed by several organizations (Table 1), all of which claimed partial control of management at different times, with specific institutional belongings and diverse aims.

The multiple governance in Aquileia is partially the result of cultural heritage reforms. Three specific moments in Aquileia's recent past stand out as particularly important in this context. The first period can be identified around the year 1988, during a period of institutional stability; in this year, the law for Aquileia (L.R. FVG 47/1988) and the Archaeological Park project were implemented. The inscription of the site in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1998 marks the second phase. For the first time, an "outside" player took part in the management of the Aquileia archaeological site, calling for the protection of assets, stronger managerial implementations, and public access to the site. The third and last phase is characterized by the settlement of the Fondazione Aquileia (FA) in 2008; the FA represented a new internal actor entering the governance of the site with promotional aims, according to the public reforms.

## 3 Methodology

This work is an interpretive case study (Marcus and Fischer 1999; Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2009). The approach led us to collect different types of data and materials from different sources, including (Table 2): (a) archives, documents within both the scientific and the popular press, and local newspapers; and (b) interviews and observations.

**Table 1** Actors, activities, and cultural artifacts

Actors		Activities	Cultural artifacts
• Italian Ministry for Heritage and Cultural Activities (MiBAC)		• Preservation • Regulation (of uses of historical finds; inscription of art works/architectures)	• National museums • Archaeological sites • Historical buildings
• Archaeological Superintendence of Friuli Venezia Giulia Region (SBA FVG)	Since 2002	• Preservation • Conservation • Research • Museum presentation	• National museums • Archaeological sites • Historical buildings • Exhibitions
• SoCoBa (Society for Conservation of Aquileia Episcopal Basilica)	Since 1906	• Preservation • Conservation	• Episcopal Basilica • Baptistery and “South Hall”
• National Association for Aquileia (ANA)	Since 1929	• Conservation • Research • Archaeological excavation	• Archaeological sites • Exhibitions • Research (i.e.: <i>Aquileia Nostra</i> , scientific journal; annual conferences)
• UNESCO	Since 1998	• Preservation	• Archaeological site • Episcopal Basilica
• Fondazione Aquileia (FA)	Since 2008	• Conservation • Archaeological excavation	• Archaeological site • Exhibitions
• University/Research Centres		• Archaeological excavation • Research	• examples: “ex-Cossar, private domus”, University of Padua); “Great public buildings” (University of Udine)

Source: authors' elaboration

*Data Sources* Scientific research on Aquileia allowed us to recombine the archaeological history and excavations of the site (since 1720). The documents from local administrations, MiBAC, SBA FVG, FA and UNESCO (Table 1) allowed for the reconstruction of the decision-making processes and organizational logics (Czarniawska 1997) of scientific projects and the latest conservation and enhancement interventions since the 1960s. Press reviews from local newspapers were used to contextualize and problematize the main events and prepare the fieldwork.

The ethnographic part of the research (Garfinkel 1967; Van Maanen 1988) directly involved one of the authors in the approval of the regional law on the creation of the FA (2006–2008), the establishment of the FA, and in the workgroups established to compile the WHS Master Plan (2009–2012). The parties involved in the drafting of the various planning documents were interviewed to identify underlying organizational goals and managerial practices in action.

*Data Analysis* By comparing the institutional history of the Aquileia archaeological site and the evolution of the Italian reforms on the cultural heritage management system, we defined the organizational boundary of the phenomenon (i.e., the

**Table 2** Data sources

<i>Primary sources</i>	
<i>MPC</i>	Ghedini, F., Bueno, M. & Novello, M. (eds.) (2009). <i>Moenibus et portu celeberrima. Aquileia: storia di una città</i> . Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato
<i>AV</i>	Forlati Tamaro, B., Bertacchi, L., Beschi L., Calvi, M.C., Bosio, L., Rosada, G. & Gorini, G. (eds.) (1980). <i>Da Aquileia a Venezia. Una mediazione tra l'Europa e l'Oriente dal II secolo a.C. al VI secolo d.C.</i> Firenze: Garzanti-Scheiwiller
<i>APU</i>	Fozzati, L. (ed.) (2010). <i>Aquileia Patrimonio dell'Umanità. Magnus Edizioni</i>
<i>PerAQ</i>	Benedetti, A. & Fozzati, L. (eds.) (2011). <i>Per Aquileia. Realtà e programmazione di una grande area archeologica</i> . Marsilio
<i>SudHalle</i>	Fozzati, L. (ed.) (2015). <i>L'aula meridionale del battistero di Aquileia. Contesto, scoperta, valorizzazione</i> . Mondadori Electa
<i>Archival data</i>	
<i>AQ_Ns-year</i>	<i>Aquileia Nostra: rivista dell'Associazione nazionale per Aquileia</i> , Scientific Journal, National Association for Aquileia, since 1930
<i>FA_#01</i>	Progetto Tortelli (2008). <i>Studio di fattibilità preordinato all'elaborazione del piano strategico di sviluppo culturale di Aquileia</i> (June)
<i>FA_#02</i>	AA.VV. (2010). <i>Piano di valorizzazione per Aquileia. Progetto Scientifico</i> . University of Padua & SBA FVG (first draft: July; final draft: November)
<i>FA_#03</i>	AA.VV. (2010). <i>Aquileia. Un nuovo mosaico del paesaggio. Linee guida del piano strategico e di valorizzazione dei siti archeologici di Aquileia</i> (July)
<i>FA_#04</i>	AA.VV. (2011). <i>Piano di Comunicazione del Parco Archeologico di Aquileia</i> .
<i>FA_#05</i>	AA.VV. (2011). <i>Management Plan pluriennale-WHS Aquileia</i> . University of Udine & Fondazione Aquileia (Consultation draft/Preliminary draft, June)
<i>FA_#06</i>	Bonetto, J. & Ghiotto, A.R. (eds.) (2012). <i>Aquileia – Fondi ex Cossar. Missione Archeologica 2012</i> . University of Padua
<i>FA_#07</i>	Bonetto, J. & Ghiotto, A.R. (eds.) (2013). <i>Aquileia – Fondi ex Cossar. Missione Archeologica 2013</i> . University of Padua
<i>MiBAC_01</i>	AA.VV. (2005). <i>Progetto di definizione di un modello per la realizzazione dei Piani di Gestione dei siti UNESCO</i> (January)
<i>MiBAC_02</i>	AA.VV. (2010). <i>Individuazione linee guida per la costituzione e la gestione dei parchi archeologici</i> (Relazione Gruppo di lavoro MiBAC)
<i>MiBAC_03</i>	AA.VV. (2010). <i>Piano di comunicazione – Direzione Generale per la Valorizzazione del Patrimonio Culturale</i> (Comunicazione e Promozione del Patrimonio Culturale Nazionale)
<i>Park_#01</i>	AA.VV. (1993). <i>Relazione “Piano del Parco Archeologico e Monumentale di Aquileia”</i>
<i>Park_#02</i>	Cherici, A. (2013). <i>Aquileia. Quadri da un Parco Archeologico</i> . La Panarie-Monografie

Source: authors' elaboration

current UNESCO WHS). As such, we identified sequences of “events” that resulted in continuous overlapping between individual roles, facilities and organizational tasks. Seo and Creed (2002) defined these dynamics as “institutional contradictions,” critical episodes that, in this case, prevent the socialization of “practices” (professional values and administrative processes) around the “archaeological objects.” These events focused on the years 1988, 1998 and 2008, during which

problems related to the efficient planning of resources were discovered; these problems included the lack of *accountability* or the failure to share methods to define scientific priorities and cultural projects. The scheme proposed by Zan (2006) was used as an outline concerning the multi-dimensionality of the WHS management.

## 4 Findings

### 4.1 *A Variety of Discourses: Managing the Aquileia WHS*

Table 3 describes the complexity of the Aquileia WHS vis-à-vis the dimensions of the problems (i.e., historical, artistic and archaeological value, users' relations, and the use of resources), according to both effectiveness and efficiency of either substantive or procedural aspects, as per Zan (2006).

### 4.2 *Effectiveness*

Problematically, cultural heritage management poses a trade-off between efficiency and effectiveness (Zan 2006).

Effectiveness is defined in terms of the achievement of goals with respect to the stakeholders involved. In terms of substantive aspects, new museum projects have been realized for recent excavations (i.e., South Hall of the Baptistery: *SudHalle*, *FA\_#01*, Table 2) together with temporary exhibitions (e.g., pieces from the Bardo museum of Tunis and the exhibition “Lions and Bulls from Ancient Persia”). At present, the modus operandi and management of the Aquileia WHS archaeological site and its museums, collection and excavation projects lack a long-lasting strategy grounded in scientific priorities (*FA\_#02*, *FA\_#03*, *FA\_#04*, Table 2). The multiple actors do not have a shared management plan or a clear definition of priorities. Moreover (*MPC*, *APU*, *PerAQ*, Table 2), they often compete for resource distribution, and for new projects, excavations, exhibitions, and existing collections (e.g., the mosaics, glass art crafts, sculptures and reliquaries housed in the museums and in the Basilica) and findings, some of which are potentially compromised (e.g., the roman Forum and the port). Regarding relations with users, the “Archaeological Park project” declined over time with regard to its relations with users, as did the level of services (e.g., joint ticket, bookshops) and the cooperation with the regional DMO for cultural tourism development (*Park\_#01*, *Park\_#02*, Table 2). No audience segmentation, analysis of the demand and limited attention to didactics affect the evaluation of the efficacy on the Aquileia WHS. The absence of reporting and self-evaluation of procedural aspects is remarked within the implementation of museum standards (*FA\_#05*, Table 2).

**Table 3** Multidimensional nature of management in the Aquileia WHS

	EFFECTIVENESS		EFFICIENCY
	<i>Historical-Aesthetic value (BACK OFFICE)</i>	<i>Relation with users (DEMAND-SIDE)</i>	<i>Acquisition and use of resources (SUPPLY-SIDE)</i>
SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS	<b>Sites/Buildings/Monuments:</b> - "The Great Aquileia" Project: no "Museum of the City" - The "South Hall of the Baptistery" Project	- no audience segmentation (Scientific Community; Local community; general audience); - partial attention to Didactics (young people, school) - New Exhibitions relatively attractive	- No Master Plan WHS UNESCO - extraordinary founding as routine; - lack of internal human resources (in terms of type and higher professional positions) (FA, SBA) - Strong turning towards externalization (FA) - "relevance lost" and "fragmentation of work" in the allocation of funds between National Museums and Archaeological Sites
	<b>Excavations/Archaeological Sites:</b> - excavation "ex-Cossar" Area - excavation "Great Public Buildings" - Archaeological/Historical Research without a Scientific Plan	- Long-term decline in the level of service (no "Archaeological Park") - Level of service in the National Museums will soon be overcome (Programs of investments and museology exposition evolution for National Museums)	
	<b>Collections:</b> - evolution of museums' collections without priority	- Digital/Virtual Reconstruction	
PROCEDURAL ASPECTS	- Loss opportunities (systematic restoration plan) for National Museums (SBA) - New Exhibitions without strategic coherence (FA)	Partial improvements in the characteristics of the service: - joint ticket in a part of the WHS area; - no systematic analysis of demand - partial attention in the added services (bookshop, restaurant, merchandising) - some difficulties in the systematic reporting of the exhibition activity	- Selective externalization process, turning to external general contractor, without managerial control (FA, SBA) - Need to develop a control systems for WHS, introducing the reporting in an "integrated" way between internal (FA, SBA) and external systems (activities in outsourcing) Organizational problems: - overall design of coordination of the system of the National Museums, the Archaeological Areas, Universities/Research Institutes, FA and SBA; - obstacles in the sizing and management of human resources; - risk of a marginal position of professional competencies in the overall National administration of Cultural Heritage - impossible to define trend towards the reform of institutional setting (a decentralized centralization of accountability)

Source: elaboration of Zan (p. 17; 2006)

### 4.3 Efficiency

Efficiency evaluation is based on economic and human resource employment among the various partners involved in the governance process. With respect to the substantive aspects, the absence of a Master Plan within WHS UNESCO, the extraordinary funding system as routine, and the lack of internal resources with respect to higher professional positions are all representative of the complex management situation. A relevant loss and fragmentation of funds among actors and between the National Museums and the Archaeological Sites worsen the efficacy of the overall Aquileia WHS (FA\_#02, FA\_#05, Table 2). An externalization process toward general contractors without managerial control can be noted in the efficiency of procedural practices and managerial logic. This calls for a WHS control system based on reporting among internal actors (the FA and SBA) and external outsourcing. Procedural problems are linked to the coordination of the actors, the management of human resources, and the risk of marginalizing

professional competencies in the overall cultural heritage administration (e.g., *MiBAC\_01*, *MiBAC\_02*, *MiBAC\_03*, Table 2).

#### **4.4 A Summary: Dynamics Between Substantive and Procedural Aspects**

Table 3 shows that Aquileia management and governance focus largely on substantive aspects and neglect procedural aspects. More specifically, substantive aspects are connected with both the default of the Archaeological Park of Aquileia (dated 1998) and the feasibility evaluation of the Great Aquileia proposal with the Museum of the City of Aquileia. Several new museum projects (i.e., South Hall) and excavations (i.e., ex-Cossar, Great Public Buildings) took place based on vague research priorities and scientific plans and on a fragmented distribution of funds among partners (*FA\_#05*, *FA\_#06*, *FA\_#07*, Table 2). No Master Plan for WHS UNESCO has been clearly defined and a lack of internal competencies and professional characterizes the current situation.

With regards to procedural aspects, a general loss of opportunities for restoration can be identified in the collections of the national museums (for the SBA), together with an undefined coherence to specific strategies in the last exhibitions organized by the FA. Limited improvements in the quality of the service can be attributed to difficulties in reporting and evaluating internal and external activities and the limited human resources and managerial control over the internal and external system and actors (*Park\_#02*, Table 2).

## **5 Discussion and Concluding Remarks**

### **5.1 Materiality, Sources of Conflict and Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration**

To investigate the evolution of the cultural heritage management in the case of the Aquileia WHS with the ANT research strategy, we gave priority to actions that produce and reproduce themselves as socialized practices around the role of *cultural artifacts* (i.e., archaeological sites, museum collections, and historic buildings), rather than focusing on “structures” and “actors” characterized by the function they play in the cultural heritage (i.e., *conservation* versus *enhancement* from the legislative point of view).

Table 4 describes the role of objects in bringing about conflicts and institutional contradictions produced by the evolution of the WHS Management System of Aquileia and compares this evolution with the Italian reforms.

**Table 4** Objects, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and WHS

	Theoretical approach	Main function of the objects	Examples from the WHS Aquileia
Tertiary objects of collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Infrastructure theory</i> (Provide the basic “mundane” infrastructural support of collaboration)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “the work oriented infrastructure”</li> <li>• “the service infrastructure”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical/institutional evolution of museums’ collections</li> <li>• Managing Archaeological and Paleo-Christian State Museums</li> </ul>
Secondary objects of collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Boundary Objects</i> (Facilitate work across different types of boundaries)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “containing and fostering learning across boundaries”</li> <li>• “sense making around and interpretatively flexible artifact”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excavations “ex Cossar Area” and monumentalization of the “domus” area</li> <li>• Master Plan WHS UNESCO</li> </ul>
Primary objects of collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Epistemic Objects</i></li> <li>• <i>Activity Objects</i> (Trigger/sustain/motivate the cross-disciplinary collaboration)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “how working in something that may never exist acts as a source of motivation”</li> <li>• “how the nature of the objects induces different ways of working”</li> <li>• “the emergent nature of the object of work”</li> <li>• “community without unity”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “Great Aquileia” Project</li> <li>• The “Archaeological Park” Project</li> <li>• Digital/Virtual Reconstruction Projects</li> <li>• Project “South-Hall of the Baptistery” and mosaics musealization</li> </ul>

Source: elaboration of Nicolini et al. (2012)

The conflicts in WHS collaborative dynamics are apparent within the “material infrastructures” of museum collections and historic buildings (*tertiary objects and artifacts*), the basic socio-material infrastructure that should be subject to professional practices (protection and preservation) within undisputed organizational boundaries (collections in Aquileia state museums). As underlined by Nicolini et al. (2012), “objects can resolve the tension between local practices within large-scale technologies by creating assemblages of objects” (p. 622). In fact, no official planning document mentions (Table 4): (a) the creation of the “Museum of the City” (as a “work-oriented infrastructure”), as called for by the SBA (*APU, PerAQ*, Table 2); (b) the problem of preserving the scientific standards of the two existing museums and ensuring the development of the collections (as “service infrastructure”).

*Secondary objects* exemplify the difficult process of formation of stable organizational boundaries within a WHS that does not have a master plan (Table 4). On the one hand, the planning documents should act “as translation and transformation devices across various thought worlds” (Star and Griesemer 1989; Nicolini et al. 2012); on the other, excavations and archaeological discoveries should encourage forms of collaboration between “professional groups” in the various institutions working in the WHS, thereby highlighting the risks associated with the lack of a

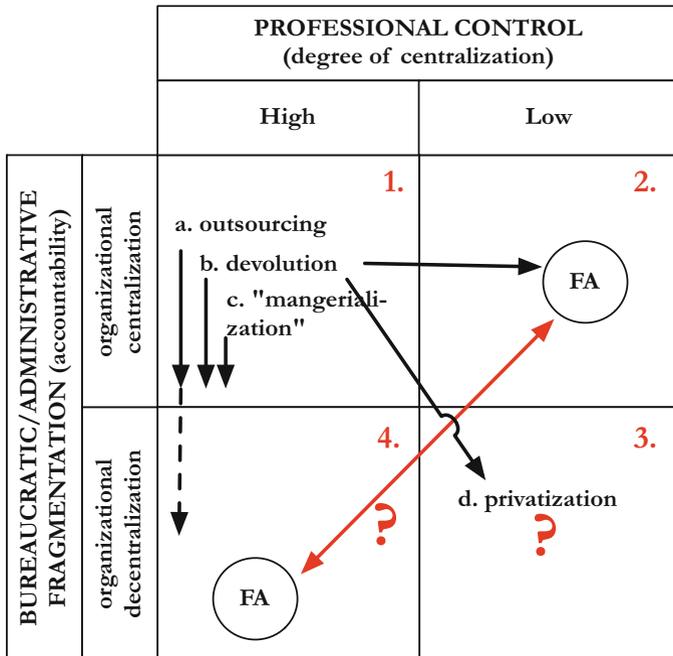
pragmatic approach when they meet “different forms of knowing” (Knorr-Cetina 1997) at different administrative levels (Zan 2006). The sudden “scientific centrality” and “organizational focus” of the ex-Cossar Area and the “musealization” of the *domus* (FA\_#02, FA\_#06, FA\_#07, Table 2) in the absence of stable funding and a management plan (extraordinary funding and procedures as routine, Zan et al. 2015), stand out as examples of such.

The *primary objects* in the context of WHS should bring out “both the why and the how of the collaboration, whereas boundary objects mostly shed light on the how” (p. 625; Nicolini et al. 2012). The expression “Great Aquileia” (unlike the “Museum of the City”) should have a “motivational” connotation. Beyond the feasibility of the project, the expression could be a “common vision” and an idea to which all actors could refer, were it not only fuelled by the SBA (*PerAQ*, Table 2). By contrast, the incompleteness of the Archaeological Park project, linked to the difficult dialogue between local authorities and the MiBAC (*Park\_#01*, *Park\_#02*, Table 2), questions the very idea that “a structure of wanting generated by the object is partially reflected in the organization of the scientific practices that emerge around it” (p. 618; Nicolini et al. 2012).

The digital reconstruction projects of the city stand out the greatness of the past, which the institutions and local communities are called to “preserve and enhance” within the organizational boundaries of the WHS. These types of objects “provide the direction, motivation, and meaning for the activity” (p. 620; Nicolini et al. 2012). This case recalls the warning of Luisa Bertacchi (Superintendent in Aquileia from 1961 to 1988) about the Park project: “They should start from general criteria and everything else must be tuned with them, rather than starting with partial realizations, only because they have the necessary money” (p. 22; *AQ\_Ns-1994*). Finally, the *primary objects* include some artefacts that allow “various skills and conceptual tools to negotiate the object(ive)” (p. 621; Nicolini et al. 2012). The “South Hall” is the first work completed by the FA based on an architectural project developed before the its founding. The time gap has produced a mismatch between what the building could have been, and what it has turned out to be in terms of conflicts and misunderstanding in the local community. The “South Hall” put the “aesthetic” and “collaborative” model of the FA’s future actions within the WHS up for discussion.

## ***5.2 Unmanaged Complexity Between Professional Control and Accountability: Concluding Remarks***

Since the 90s, the Italian cultural heritage system has witnessed a managerial system, shifting from a centralized toward a decentralized stewardship according to trajectories of institutional change (outsourcing, devolution, “managerialization” and privatization).



Notes:  
 a. outsourcing: e.g., externalization of services;  
 b. devolution: e.g., transferring responsibilities;  
 c. managerialization: e.g., the modernization of public administration itself;  
 d. privatization: e.g., sale of cultural property to private owners.  
 FA: Fondazione Aquileia (see Table 1)

**Fig. 1** The decentralized centralization in Italian cultural system. Source: elaboration of Zan in Bonini Baraldi (2007)

These dynamics, related to cross-disciplinary collaboration, have been linked to two dimensions, that of “professional values” and that of the logic of “public administration” that characterizes the Italian heritage management system (Zan in Bonini Baraldi 2007).

Contextualized in the Aquileia WHS case study, the matrix in Fig. 1 considers the level of professional control (high or low) and administrative centralization, focusing specifically on the FA “prototype:” an *ad hoc* organizational form for the promotion of cultural heritage, introduced uncritically as an institutional innovation for the entire state system (Casini 2016).

It is particularly important to position the FA in a single quadrant of the former framework. As a matter of fact, the FA does not correspond to an outsourcing form (a), because it could be simultaneously labeled as exercising high professional control over archeological entities, characterized by a low degree of negotiation, and as having a decentralized organizational form (by the local State department) for the enhancement of activities only. Furthermore, the FA could be a form of devolution (b) *de facto*, though it lacks an adequate degree of professional control

on archaeological professional figures. Last but not least, processes of “managerialization” (c), requiring a system of managerial tools and autonomous decisions, are completely absent (i.e., a lack of a WHS master plan or managerial tools based on scientific plans and an unclear definition of objects and resources); as such, it does not depict the FA collocation within the range of possible trajectories of the Italian cultural heritage management system.

To sum up, through the Aquileia WHS case study, we rephrased the analysis of multiple information sources, introducing various conceptualizations relevant for cultural management (e.g., cross-disciplinary collaboration, effectiveness/efficiency) in order to depict the intricacy of governance via multiple actors. The image of Janus Bifrons is a metaphor of the current processes of organizational and management control in the public sector transformations: the double talk of the two-faced Janus synthesizes the introduction of New Public Management rhetoric as part of an effort to modernize the Italian cultural heritage sector (a “decentralized centralization” in search of autonomy and accountability). Indeed, the absence of managerial control of the trade-off between effectiveness and efficiency is linked to a dualism between centralized and decentralized cultural activities (i.e., preservation, conservation, and research) that require organizational design among the multiple actors involved in governance.

Future research should pay particular attention to the management of change processes (i.e., public reforms) and “institutional resistance” (i.e., professional and administrative traditions with symbolic structures, meaning, and vocabularies). To conclude, “cultural entities are professional organizations” (Zan et al. 2015) making up a social world in which practitioners interrogate “their own activity and explore new ways of doing, saying, and being” (p. 124; Nicolini and Monteiro 2016).

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